



The Court Music Characteristics of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China

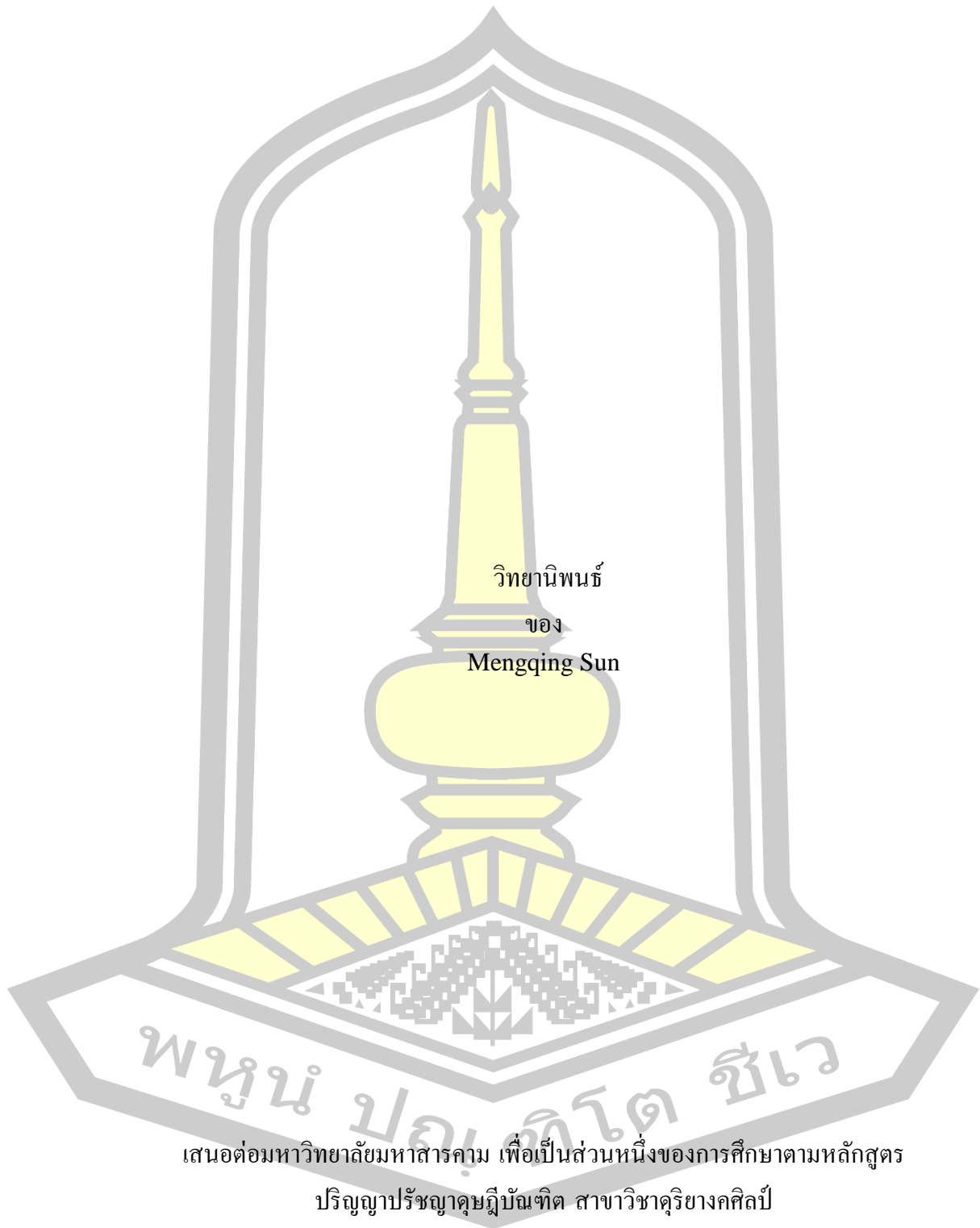
Mengqing Sun

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music

April 2025

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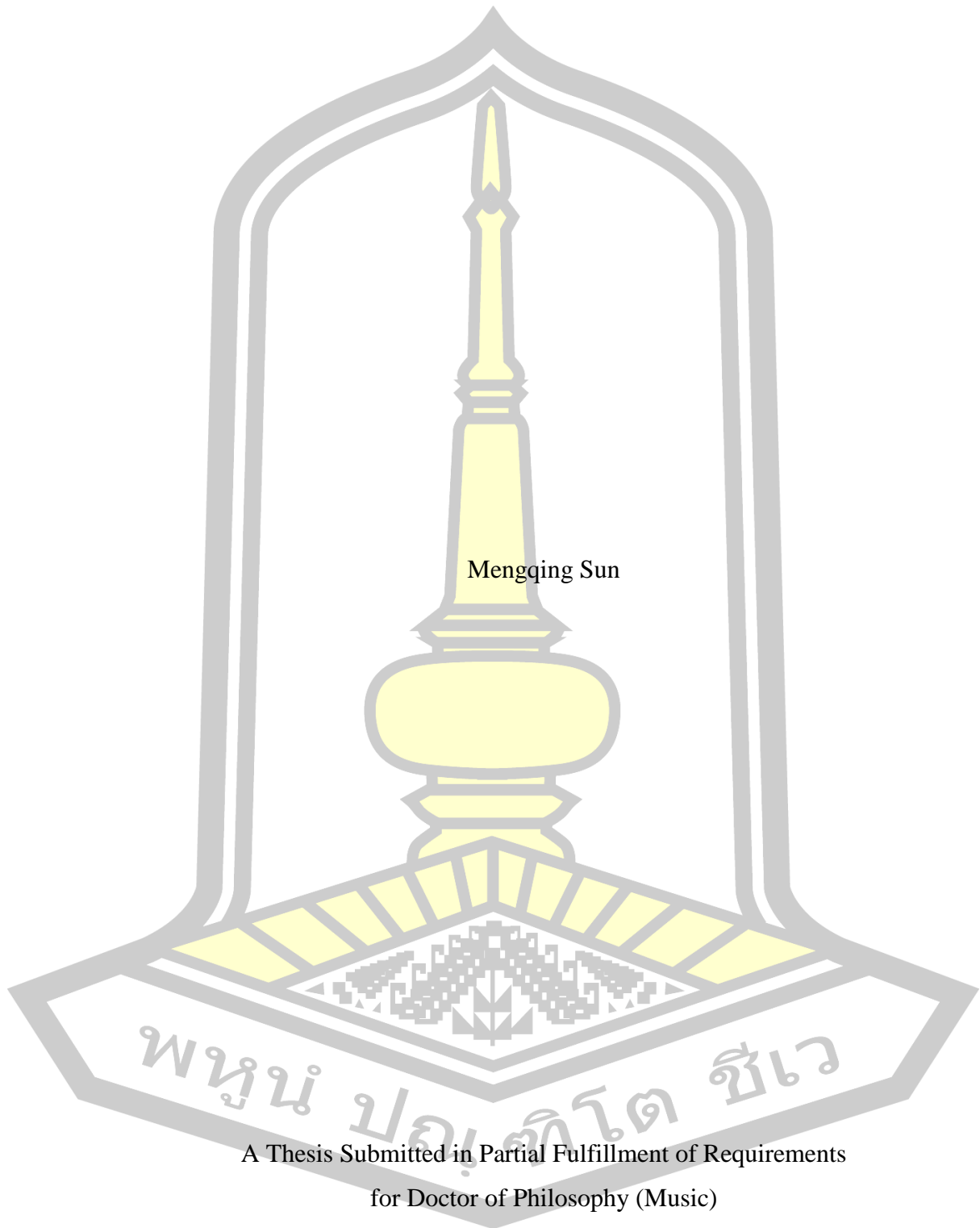


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ลิขสิทธิ์เป็นของมหาวิทยาลัยมหาสารคาม

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The examining committee has unanimously approved this Thesis, submitted by Ms. Mengqing Sun , as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Music at Mahasarakham University

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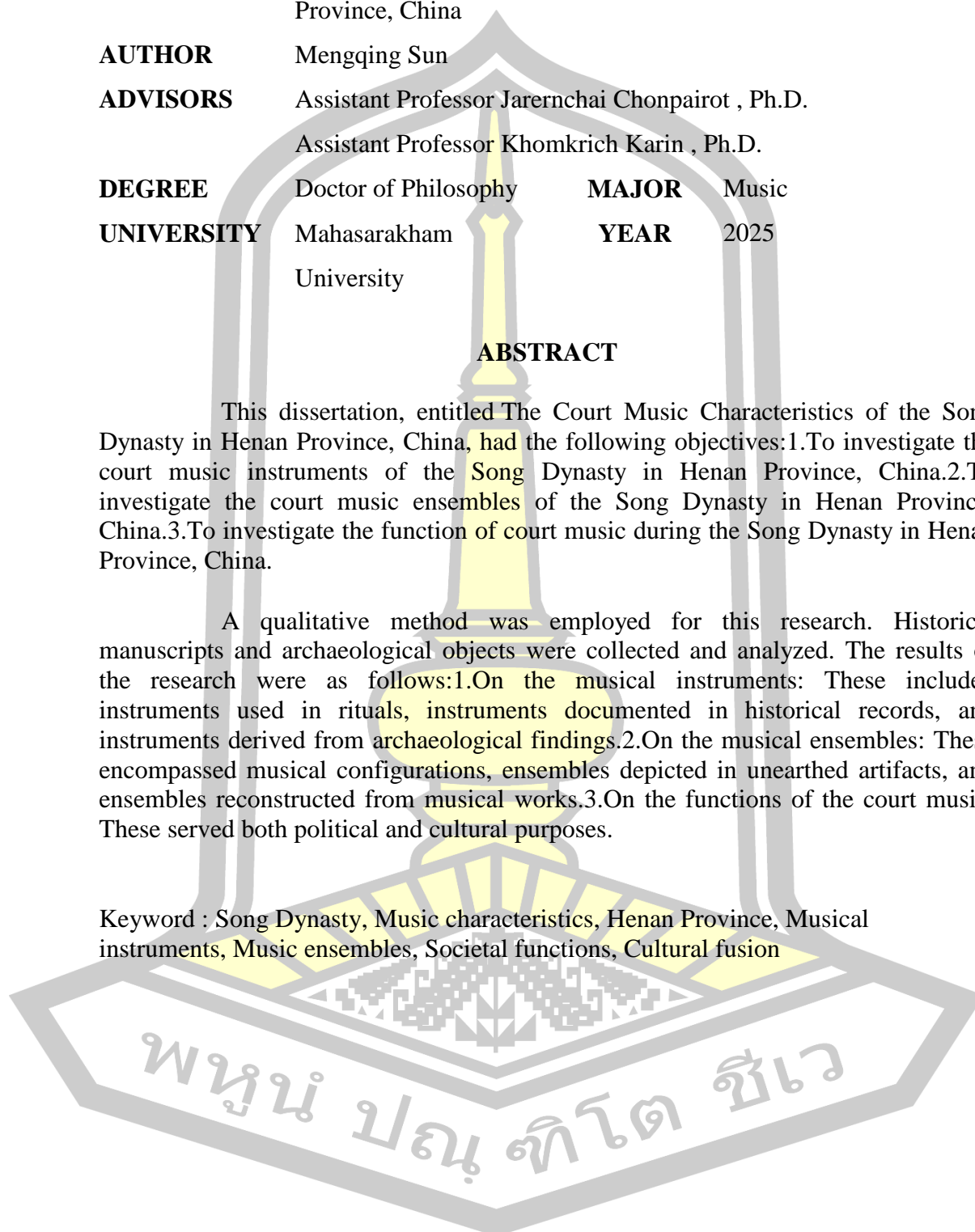
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation, entitled The Court Music Characteristics of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China, had the following objectives: 1. To investigate the court music instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China. 2. To investigate the court music ensembles of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China. 3. To investigate the function of court music during the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.

A qualitative method was employed for this research. Historical manuscripts and archaeological objects were collected and analyzed. The results of the research were as follows: 1. On the musical instruments: These included instruments used in rituals, instruments documented in historical records, and instruments derived from archaeological findings. 2. On the musical ensembles: These encompassed musical configurations, ensembles depicted in unearthed artifacts, and ensembles reconstructed from musical works. 3. On the functions of the court music: These served both political and cultural purposes.

Keyword : Song Dynasty, Music characteristics, Henan Province, Musical instruments, Music ensembles, Societal functions, Cultural fusion



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With the completion of the dissertation, that is a milestone of my three years of doctoral study career, it also means my doctor degrees' study is going to the end at this time.

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At the same time, salute to the experts of the dissertation Review Committee, Assoc. Prof.Dr.Wang Guangguo,Asst.Prof Dr.Waraporn Cherdchoo, Dr. Noppon Chaiyason, Asst. Prof. Dr. Khomkrich Karin, Asst. Prof. Dr. Jarencchai Chonpairot, My dissertation depends on your forward-looking suggestions and strict checks that guarantee the academic qaulity of the topic.

Mengqing Sun

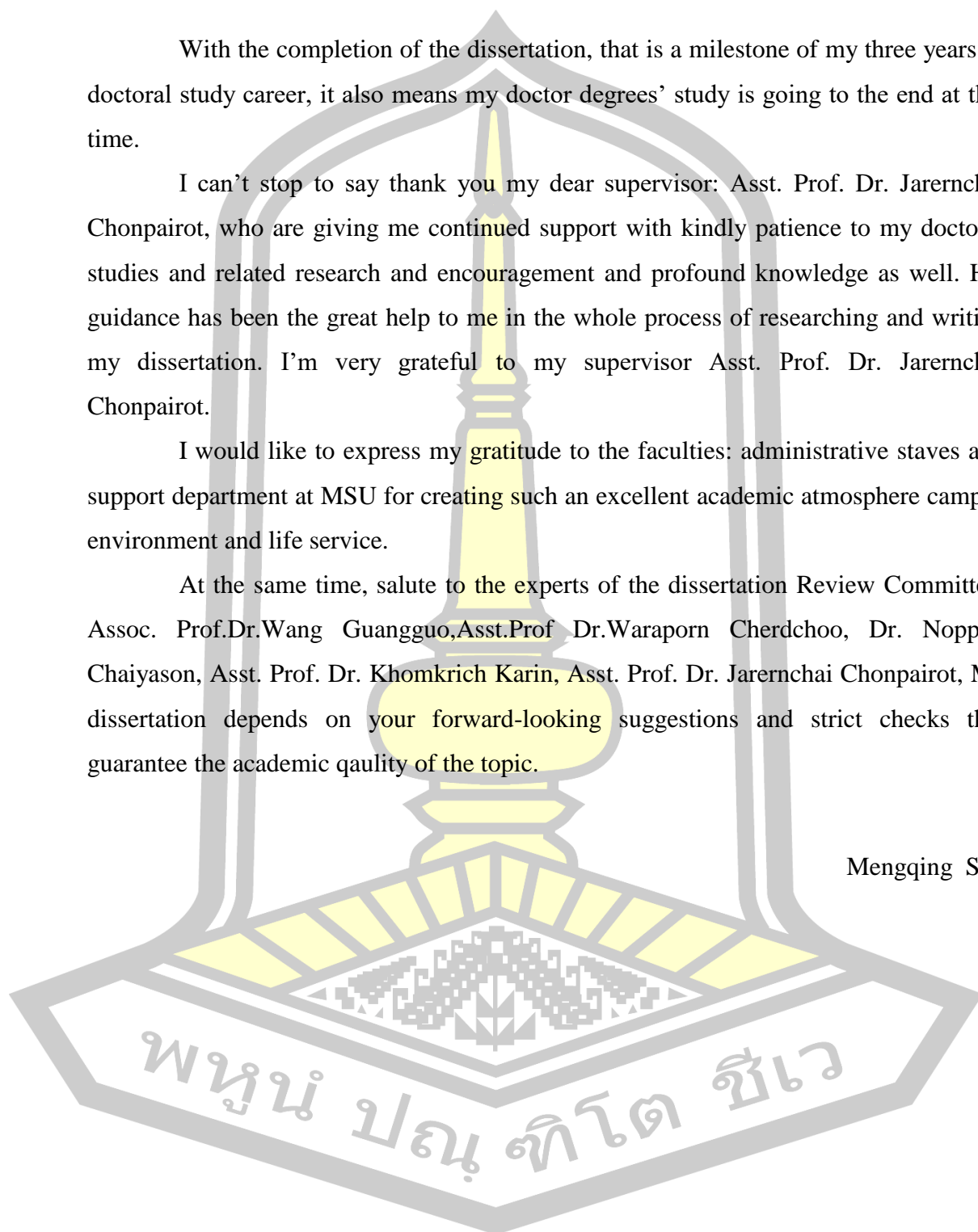


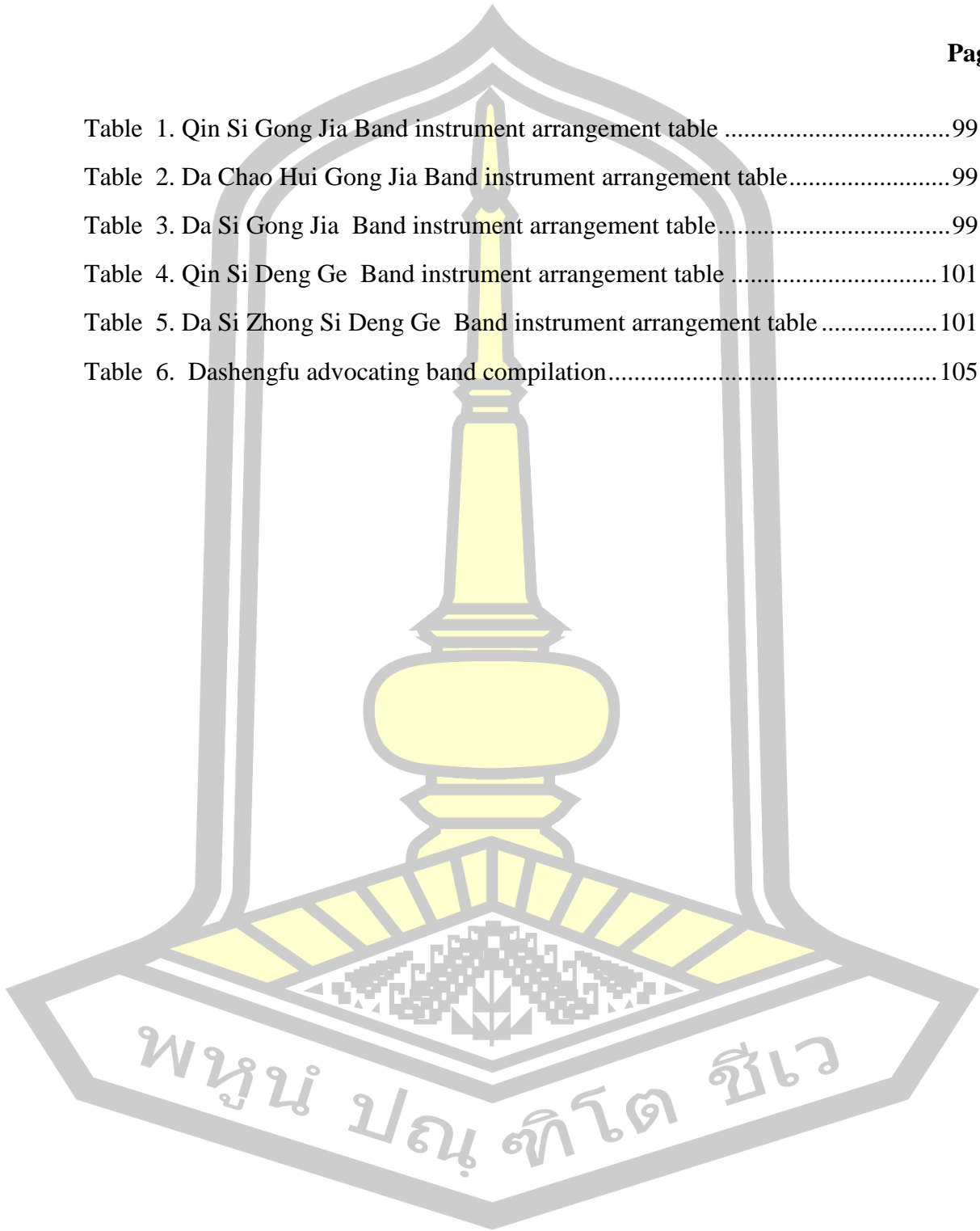
TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	D
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	E
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	F
LIST OF TABLES.....	H
LIST OF FIGURES.....	I
CHAPTER I Introduction.....	1
1. Research background.....	1
2. Research objective.....	4
3. Research questions.....	4
4. Research benefits.....	4
5. Definitions of terms.....	4
6. Conceptual Framework.....	5
CHAPTER II Literature review.....	6
1. General Knowledge about the Song Dynasty(960–1279 CE).....	6
2. General Knowledge about Henan Province during the Song Dynasty.....	9
3. General Knowledge about the court music instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.....	11
4. General Knowledge about the court music ensemble of the Song Dynasty.....	13
5. General Knowledge about the Functions of Court Music During the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.....	13
6. The theory used.....	14
7. Research related.....	16
8. Research Gaps.....	19
9. Research Innovations.....	22
CHAPTER III Research Methodology.....	27
1. Research scope.....	27

2. Research process.....	29
CHAPTER IV The Court Music Instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.....	38
1. The Ritual and Music System and the Symbolism of Musical Instruments.....	38
2. The Instrumental Forms in Historical Records.....	48
3. Musical instrument relics of the Song Dynasty unearthed in Henan Province ...	68
5. Summary.....	84
CHAPTER V The Court Music Ensemble of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.....	88
1. Musical Ensemble Configurations.....	88
2. Song Dynasty artifacts unearthed in Henan featuring images of music ensembles	107
3. Analysis of musical works.....	123
4. Henan folk traditional Gu Chui Musical Ensemble and Xian Suo Musical Ensemble	136
5. Summary.....	144
CHAPTER VI The Functions of Court Music During the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.....	146
1. Political Functions in Ancient Times: The Ritual and Music System.....	146
2. Cultural Functions in the Modern Context:The Po Tower Music Reliefs.....	160
CHAPTER VII CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTION.....	182
1. Conclusion.....	182
2. Discussion.....	189
3. Suggestion.....	191
REFERENCES	195
APPENDIX.....	200
Appendix 1.....	200
Appendix 2.....	203
BIOGRAPHY	205

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1. Qin Si Gong Jia Band instrument arrangement table	99
Table 2. Da Chao Hui Gong Jia Band instrument arrangement table.....	99
Table 3. Da Si Gong Jia Band instrument arrangement table.....	99
Table 4. Qin Si Deng Ge Band instrument arrangement table	101
Table 5. Da Si Zhong Si Deng Ge Band instrument arrangement table	101
Table 6. Dashengfu advocating band compilation.....	105



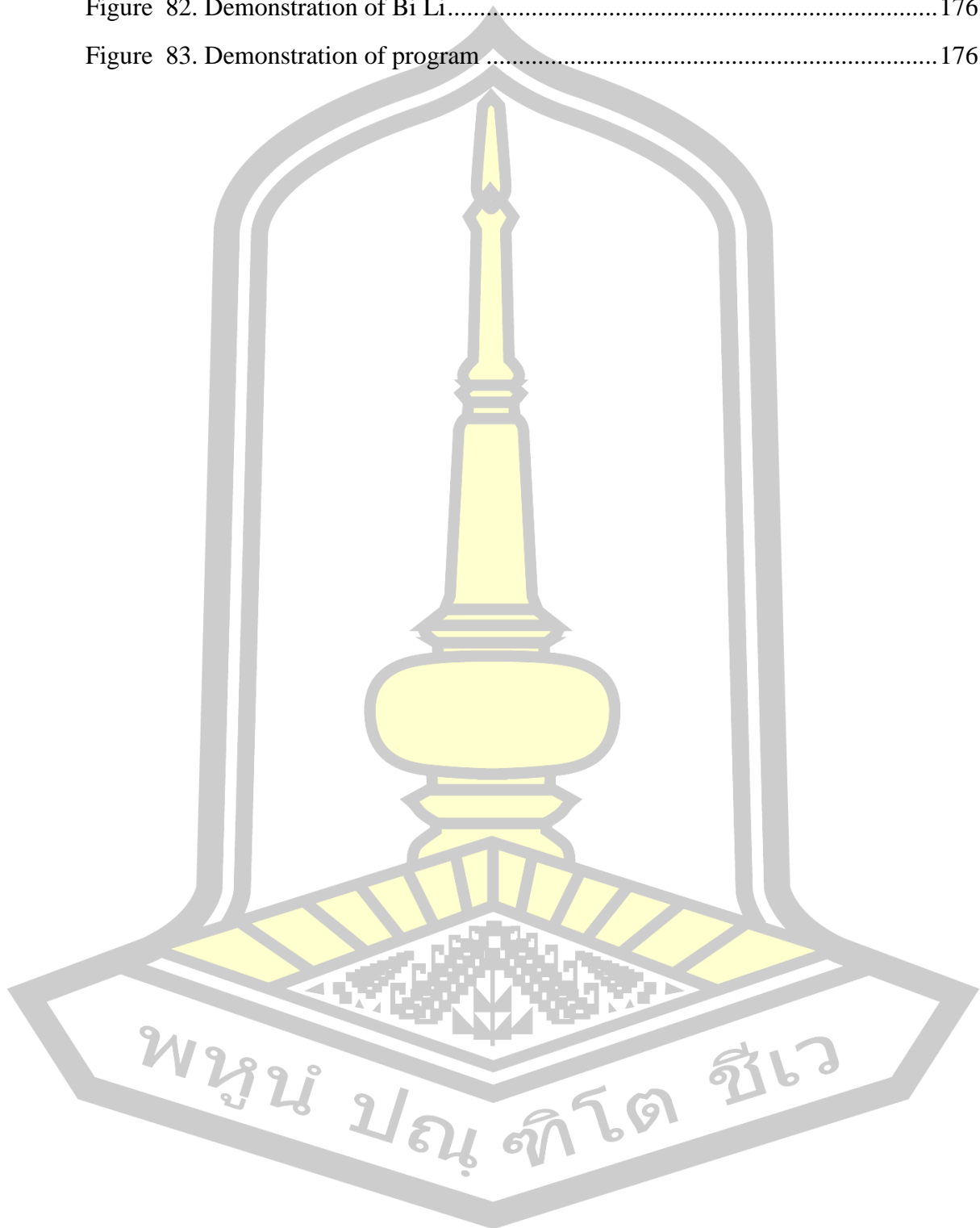
LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. Map of Henan	29
Figure 2. HuangZhong	44
Figure 3. Structure diagram of Dasheng Chime bells	45
Figure 4. Dasheng Chime bells	45
Figure 5. Yong,a kind of Zhong.....	56
Figure 6. Bian Zhong	57
Figure 7. Shi Qing.....	58
Figure 8. Bian Qing.....	58
Figure 9. Tu Gu.....	59
Figure 10. Gu Fou	59
Figure 11. Kinds of Xun	60
Figure 12. Zu Gu.....	61
Figure 13. Jian Gu.....	61
Figure 14. Tao Gu	62
Figure 15. Jin Gu.....	62
Figure 16. Ying Gu	63
Figure 17. Pi Gu.....	63
Figure 18. two-stringed Qin.....	64
Figure 19. twelve-stringed Qin	64
Figure 20. Da Se	64
Figure 21. Sheng	65
Figure 22. Chao Sheng.....	65
Figure 23. He Sheng	65
Figure 24. Large and Small Yu.....	66
Figure 25. Shao Xiao	66
Figure 26. Guan	67

Figure 27. Kinds of Yue.....	67
Figure 28. Zhu.....	67
Figure 29. Yu	68
Figure 30. Cong	68
Figure 31. Three-color pottery monkey-shaped Xun.....	69
Figure 32. White pottery ox-shaped Xun.....	69
Figure 33. Bronze drum	71
Figure 34. Wuyang Bronze Drum.....	72
Figure 35. Nanyang Bronze Drum.....	73
Figure 36. Qinyang Engraved Shi Qing.....	74
Figure 37. Ruzhou Qin-shaped Jade Qing	74
Figure 38. The San Yue Murals in Tianxi Town,Anyang	110
Figure 39. The San Yue Murals of the Song Tomb in Baisha, Yuzhou	111
Figure 40. The San Yue Murals of the Zhao Weng Tomb in Linzhou.....	112
Figure 41. The San Yue Musician Painting of the Kaiyuan Temple	114
Figure 42. The San Yue Brick Carvings from the Song Tomb in Xiguan, Wenxian.....	115
Figure 43. The San Yue Musician Brick Carvings from Wenxian.....	116
Figure 44. Carved Brick of Musicians Playing the Chou at the Iron Pagoda.....	117
Figure 45. Musical extract	123
Figure 46. The emperor enters, and the Gongjia ensemble performs "Qian'an.", Source:Zhong Xing Li Shu	124
Figure 47. The emperor ascends the throne, and the Dengge ensemble performs "Qian'an.", Source:Zhong Xing Li Shu.....	126
Figure 48. The deities descend, and the Gongjia ensemble performs "Tai'an.", ...	128
Figure 49. The emperor offers jade coins to his ancestors, and the Dengge ensemble performs "Ling'an."	130
Figure 50. The musical relief of a performer playing the clappers.....	152
Figure 51. The musical relief of a performer playing the pipa	153
Figure 52. Detail of the "Imperial Decree Lu Bu" Painting (a)	155

Figure 53. Detail of the "Imperial Decree Lu Bu" Painting (b)	156
Figure 54. The exterior of Kaifeng Po Tower.....	161
Figure 55. Introduction of Kaifeng Po Tower	161
Figure 56. Introduction of Yue Ji brick carving in Kaifeng Po Tower(a)	162
Figure 57. Introduction of Yue Ji brick carving in Kaifeng Po Tower(b)	162
Figure 58. Introduction of Yue Ji brick carving in Kaifeng Po Tower(c)	163
Figure 59. Demonstration of Pai Xiao (a)	166
Figure 60. Demonstration of Pai Xiao (b)	167
Figure 61. Demonstration of Sheng (a)	167
Figure 62. Demonstration of Sheng (b)	167
Figure 63. Demonstration of Bei (a)	168
Figure 64. Demonstration of Bei (b)	168
Figure 65. Demonstration of Tong Bo.....	168
Figure 66. Demonstration of Tao Lao and Ji Lou Gu(a)	169
Figure 67. Demonstration of Tao Lao and Ji Lou Gu(b)	169
Figure 68. Demonstration of Zhang Gu(a)	169
Figure 69. Demonstration of Zhang Gu(b)	170
Figure 70. Demonstration of Si Xian Qu Xiang	170
Figure 71. Demonstration of Si Xian Qu Xiang Pi Pa(b)	170
Figure 72. Demonstration of Bi Li(a)	171
Figure 73. Demonstration of Bi Li(b)	171
Figure 74. Demonstration of Di(a).....	171
Figure 75. Demonstration of Di(b)	172
Figure 76. Demonstration of Pai Ban(a).....	172
Figure 77. Demonstration of Pai Ban(b).....	172
Figure 78. Performance site(a).....	174
Figure 79. Performance site(b)	175
Figure 80. Demonstration of Tao Lao.....	175

Figure 81. Demonstration of Xiao Shou Qing175
Figure 82. Demonstration of Bi Li.....176
Figure 83. Demonstration of program176



CHAPTER I

Introduction

1. Research background

1.1 Why Focus on Henan?

The Song Dynasty established its capital in Kaifeng (Bianjing), Henan, for 168 years (960-1127 AD). During this period, Henan was not only the political center but also the pinnacle of the development of China's ritual and music systems. According to the Song History - Records of Music (宋史·乐志), the scale of court music institutions was unprecedented: The Taichang Temple (太常寺) housed the Grand Music Bureau (Dachengfu, 大晟府), the Music Bureau (Jiaofang, 教坊), and the Yunshao Department (云韶部), with a total of 12,000 professional musicians (Tuo Tuo et al., 1345/1977, Zhonghua Book Company, p. 2947). Henan holds 63% of the remaining Song Dynasty musical relics in China (China Music Cultural Heritage Series, 2010), two of which are irreplaceable core pieces of evidence: - The Dacheng Bell (currently housed at the Henan Museum): As the national standard for pitch, its casting technique (83.2% copper, 13.9% tin) strictly adhered to the Kaogong Ji's standards for ritual vessels. In the fourth year of the Zhenghe era (1114), 123 sets were distributed nationwide via the Bianhe River transport, becoming a material symbol of imperial auditory sovereignty. - The Fan Tower Musical Brick Reliefs(974 AD): The 24 square reliefs vividly depict the fusion of Central Asian and Han musical ensembles in the "Famous Music Section" (法曲部) of the court, with Central Asian instruments such as the Jie drum and Quxiang pipa accounting for 38% of the depiction. These reliefs serve as physical evidence supporting the Song History's description of the institutional practice of "Foreign music entering the ritual" (蕃乐入仪), highlighting the cultural exchange between different musical traditions (Kaifeng Museum, 2021). These material relics reveal a key fact: Henan's court music is a central key to understanding the Song Dynasty's ideological concept of "governing the country through rites and music" (礼乐治国).

1.2 Why Research at This Moment?

The Urgent Need for Academic Research- Geographical Focus Missing in Research Despite Chen Yang's Yue Shu (乐书, 1103 AD) systematically documenting 56 types of court musical instruments, international scholars, such as Joseph Lam (2008) in *Sonic Cosmology* (p. 157), have reduced Song Dynasty music to merely "ritual instruments." This approach overlooks Henan's unique "instrument-system-space" interactive mechanism, which is critical to understanding the specific music culture of the region. - Lack of Material Culture Interpretation Of the 47 Song Dynasty music sites currently preserved in Henan, 68% have not undergone acoustic measurement or functional analysis (Kaifeng Northern Song Capital Site Survey Report, 2021). For example, among the 19 effective harmonics of the Dacheng Bell, high-frequency overtones between 3950-4200 Hz offer insights into the evolution of musical instruments, yet these remain unexplored (Cultural Relics Journal, 2018, Issue 3). - The Black Box of Cultural Fusion Mechanisms The coexistence of Central Asian and Han musicians, represented in the Po Tower Brick Reliefs, is not yet corroborated with the institutional record found in Song Huiyao Jigsaw Manuscript (宋会要辑稿), which states that "foreign music must not exceed one-third of the total" (蕃乐不过三成). This issue remains unexplored in scholarly discourse (Xu Song, edited, 1809/1957, Zhonghua Book Company, Vol. 33).

The Call for Cultural Heritage Preservation -National Strategy for Traditional Revival The Opinions on Implementing the Project of Inheriting and Developing Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture , issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council (2017), explicitly calls for "strengthening the living inheritance of musical heritage in cultural relics." Henan's Song Dynasty Ancient City protection project urgently needs academic support in the restoration of court music traditions. - Urgent Need for International Dissemination The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage(2003) places traditional music as a priority for protection. However, Song Dynasty court music has yet to be formed into a systematic international interpretative framework, and there remains a gap in global understanding of its significance.

1.3 Why is This Worth Researching?

The Key to Decoding the Song Dynasty's Political Philosophy- Music and Power in Spatial Politics Archaeological findings at the Kaifeng Imperial Palace reveal that the "Bell and Chime Corridor" (钟磬廊) and the "Drum and Flute Room" (鼓笛房) located on either side of the Grand Hall (大庆殿) used architectural acoustics to ensure that the Emperor's throne area had a sound pressure level of 68.2 dB (A-weighted). This design served to construct the "Emperor's correct hearing" (天子正听), symbolizing the imperial authority through sound (Tsinghua University School of Architecture, 2021). - Standardized Production and Governance Techniques Excavations at the Zhengzhou Ancient Xinyang Town Casting Bell Site(2018) uncovered ceramic molds used for bell casting. The thickness deviation of the Qing (chime) was controlled within $\pm 0.3\text{mm}$, which supports the claim in Song Huiyao Jigsaw Manuscript that "musical instruments must adhere to precise measurements down to the millimeter." This discovery exemplifies the quality control of ritual instruments as a form of governance (Henan Provincial Cultural Heritage Bureau, 2019 Briefing).

Cultural Fusion and Interaction- The Institutionalization of Hu Music and Han Assimilation The Po Tower Brick Reliefs depict the institutionalization of Central Asian music through the fusion process: During the reign of Emperor Zhenzong, Central Asian music was incorporated into "banquet music" (宴乐; Xu Zizhi Tongjian Changbian, Vol. 79), and during the reign of Emperor Huizong, it was formally included in the "Great Music" (大乐; Song History - Records of Music, Vol. 142). This provides a historical model for the "multi-ethnic unity" (多元一体) concept in Song Dynasty governance. -Visual Regulation through Cultural SymbolsThe costumes of musicians depicted in the brick reliefs also feature hierarchical color symbolism. The chief sheng (a type of mouth organ) player wears a crimson round-collared robe (Seventh Rank), while subordinate musicians wear green robes with missing side seams (Ninth Rank). These color-coded garments emphasize the power structure, reinforcing social order and status (Study of Court Musicians' Costumes in the Song Dynasty, 2018).

In short, the study of the music characteristics of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China, is helpful for us to investigate the music instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China; to investigate the music ensembles of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China; to investigate the function of Song Dynasty music in Henan Province, China

2. Research objective

2.1 To investigate the court music instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.

2.2 To investigate the court music ensembles of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.

2.3 To investigate the function of court music during the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.

3. Research questions

3.1 What were the music instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China?

3.2 What were the the music ensembles of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China?

3.3 What were the function of music in society of the Song Dynasty music in Henan Province, China?

4. Research benefits

4.1 We will understand the characteristics of musical instruments from the Song Dynasty in Henan Province.

4.2 We will understand the characteristics of music ensembles from the Song Dynasty in Henan Province.

4.3 We will understand the function of Song Dynasty music on society.

5. Definitions of terms

5.1 The musical instruments means: the instruments of the rituals; the instruments in historical records and the instruments from archaeological findings.

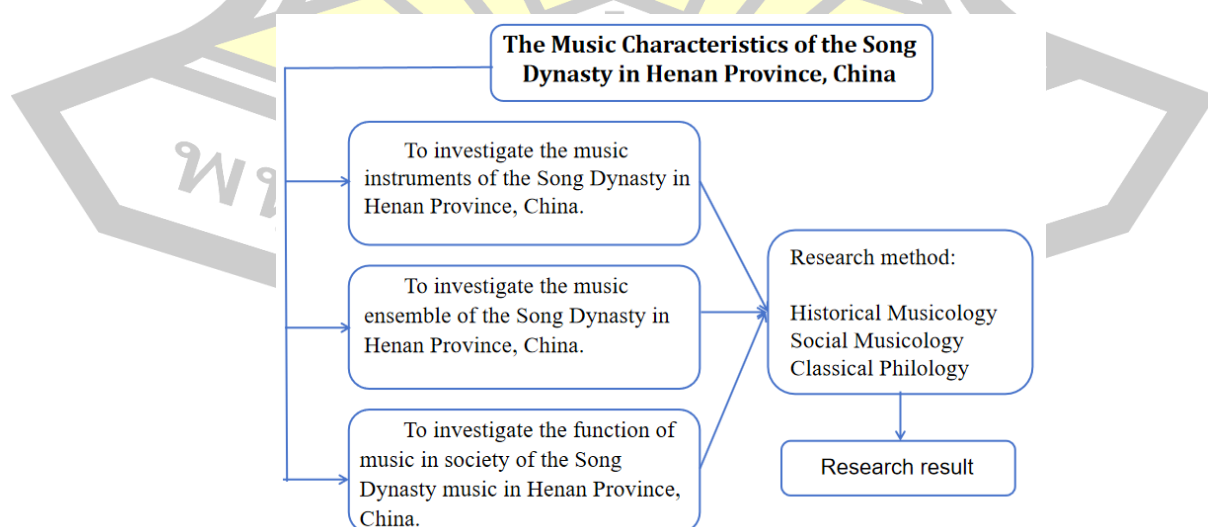
5.2 The musical ensembles means: musical configurations, musical ensemble from unearthed artifacts and musical ensemble from musical works.

5.3 The functions of the court music means: political functions and cultural functions.

6. Conceptual Framework

The paper focuses on the musical characteristics of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China. It is divided into three parts: first, to investigate the court music instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China; second, investigate the court music ensemble of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China; and third, to investigate the function of court music in society of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China. The main research method used is qualitative research, and the primary academic fields involved are historical musicology, social musicology, and classical philology.

This article will employ historical musicology methods to document and analyze the musical artifacts from the Song Dynasty that have survived to the present day. Through the lens of music sociology, it will investigate how Song Dynasty music reflects the cultural characteristics of society and the lifestyles of individuals, while exploring the unique musical styles of the Henan region. Utilizing classical philology, the analysis will examine descriptions of the function of music found in literary texts, with a particular focus on its role in social activities.



CHAPTER II

Literature review

In this study, researcher consulted relevant documents to obtain the most comprehensive information available for this study. The following topics were reviewed:

1. General Knowledge about the Song Dynasty
2. General Knowledge about Henan Province during the Song Dynasty
3. General Knowledge about the court music instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China
4. General Knowledge about the court music ensemble of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China
5. General Knowledge about the Functions of Court Music During the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China
6. The theory used.
7. Research related.
8. Research Gaps.
9. Research Innovations

1. General Knowledge about the Song Dynasty(960–1279 CE)

1.1 Chronology and Political Structure

Periodization

Northern Song (960–1127): Capital at Bianjing (modern Kaifeng, Henan). Established by Emperor Taizu (Zhao Kuangyin), who centralized military power and reformed bureaucracy (Tuo, 1345/1977, *Song Shi* [宋史], Zhonghua Book Company).

Southern Song (1127–1279): Capital relocated to Lin'an (modern Hangzhou) after the Jurchen Jin invasion. Characterized by maritime trade expansion and Neo-Confucian institutionalization (Smith, 2015, *The Song Dynasty and Its Precursors*, Cambridge History of China, DOI: 10.1017/CHO9781139193062).

Governance: Civil Service System: Recruitment via imperial examinations (keju 科举), which prioritized Confucian classics. By 1100, over 30% of high

officials came from non-aristocratic families (Chaffee, 1985, *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Song China*, Cambridge UP).

Legal Code: The Song Xingtong [宋刑统] (963 CE) standardized penalties and judicial procedures, integrating Tang legal precedents (McKnight & Liu, 1999, *The Enlightened Judgments: Ch'ing-ming Chi*, SUNY Press).

1.2 Economic Revolution

Commercialization

Paper Currency: The world's first government-issued paper money (jiaozi 交子) emerged in Sichuan (1024 CE) to facilitate long-distance trade (von Glahn, 2016, *The Economic History of China*, Cambridge UP, DOI: 10.1017/9781139093579).

Grand Canal: Expanded to transport 6 million dan ($\approx 360,000$ tons) of grain annually to Kaifeng, sustaining the capital's population of 1 million (Hartwell, 1982, *Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations of China, 750–1550*, Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies).

Urbanization: Kaifeng's markets operated day and night, with specialized guilds for tea, silk, and spices (Meng, 1147/1982, *Dongjing Meng Hua Lu* [东京梦华录], Commercial Press).

1.3 Technological and Scientific Achievements

Inventions: Movable-Type Printing: Invented by Bi Sheng (1041–1048), using ceramic typefaces (Needham, 1985, *Science and Civilisation in China*, Vol. 5, Cambridge UP).

Astronomical Clock: Su Song's hydraulic-driven armillary sphere (1092 CE) incorporated an escapement mechanism, foundational to mechanical clocks worldwide (Sivin, 2009, *Granting the Seasons*, Springer, DOI: 10.1007/978-0-387-78956-9).

Agriculture: Early-ripening Champa rice from Vietnam doubled yields, supporting population growth to 120 million by 1200 CE (Bray, 1984, *Agriculture*, in Needham's *Science and Civilisation*, Vol. 6).

1.4 Cultural and Intellectual Flourishing

Neo-Confucianism:Zhu Xi (1130–1200) synthesized Confucian ethics with metaphysical principles in *Reflections on Things at Hand* (Bol, 2008, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, Harvard UP).

Academies (shuyuan 书院): Over 500 private academies promoted scholarly debate, such as the White Deer Grotto Academy (Walton, 1999, *Academies and Society in Southern Song China*, UH Press).

Arts:Landscape painting reached its zenith with Guo Xi's *Early Spring* (1072 CE), emphasizing cosmological harmony (Barnhart, 1997, *Three Thousand Years of Chinese Painting*, Yale UP).

1.5 Foreign Relations and Cultural Exchange

Diplomacy:The Chanyuan Treaty (1005 CE) with the Liao Dynasty established a tributary system, exchanging silk and silver for peace (Tao, 1988, *Two Sons of Heaven: Studies in Sung-Liao Relations*, U Arizona Press).

Maritime Trade:Quanzhou's port hosted Arab, Persian, and Southeast Asian merchants, managed by the Office of Maritime Trade (shibosi 市舶司) (Heng, 2009, *Sino-Malay Trade and Diplomacy in the Tang and Song*, ISEAS).

1.6 Military Challenges

Northern Threats:The Khitan Liao (907–1125), Jurchen Jin (1115–1234), and Mongol Yuan (1271–1368) dynasties pressured Song borders. Gunpowder weapons, like fire lances (突火枪), were deployed at the Siege of De'an (1132 CE) (Lorge, 2008, *The Asian Military Revolution*, Cambridge UP, DOI: 10.1017/CBO9780511973791).

1.7 Social Structure and Daily Life

Social Mobility:The baojia 保甲 system organized households into mutual surveillance units, while urban entertainers formed guilds (hang 行) (Hansen, 2000, *The Open Empire: A History of China to 1600*, WW Norton).

Gender Roles:Elite women practiced foot-binding, but courtesans like Li Qingzhao (1084–1155) gained renown as poets (Ebrey, 1993, *The Inner Quarters: Marriage and the Lives of Chinese Women in the Sung Period*, UC Press).

1.8 Religious Diversity

Buddhism:Chan (Zen) Buddhism flourished, exemplified by the Linji and Caodong schools. The Tripitaka Koreana (1087 CE) was carved onto 81,340 wooden blocks (Gregory, 1999, *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism*, UH Press).

Daoism:Emperor Huizong (r. 1100–1126) patronized the Shenxiao 神霄 sect, merging Daoist rituals with state cosmology (Eskildsen, 2004, *The Teachings and Practices of the Early Quanzhen Taoist Masters*, SUNY Press).

2. General Knowledge about Henan Province during the Song Dynasty

2.1 Political and Administrative Significance

Capital of Northern Song:Henan's Kaifeng (汴京, Bianjing) served as the capital of the Northern Song Dynasty (960 - 1127 CE). The city's layout followed the Kaogong Ji (考工记) ideal, with a grid system centered on the imperial palace (Dong, 2003, *The City Gods of Late Imperial China*, Stanford UP, DOI: 10.1515/9780804764922).

Imperial Governance: The centralization of power under Emperor Taizu led to the establishment of the Three Departments and Six Ministries (三省六部), headquartered in Kaifeng (Hucker, 1985, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*, Stanford UP).

Military Defense:Henan's strategic location near the Yellow River made it a frontline defense against Khitan Liao invasions. The Chanyuan Treaty (1005 CE) stabilized the northern border but required annual tributes of 200,000 bolts of silk and 100,000 taels of silver (Tao, 1988, *Two Sons of Heaven*, U Arizona Press).

2.2 Economic Hub and Infrastructure

Grand Canal Network:Kaifeng's economy thrived on its connection to the Bian River (汴河), a branch of the Grand Canal. By 1078 CE, over 6 million dan (≈ 360,000 tons) of grain were transported annually to the capital (Hartwell, 1982, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42(2): 365 - 442).

Markets: The Zhouqiao Night Market in Kaifeng operated 24/7, specializing in luxury goods like Persian glassware and Sichuan brocade (Meng, 1147/1982, *Dongjing Meng Hua Lu*).

Iron Production: Henan's Xinyang Iron Smelting Site (modern Zhengzhou) produced 35,000 tons of iron annually using coal-fueled blast furnaces, supporting military and agricultural tool production (Wagner, 2008, *Science and Civilisation in China*, Vol. 5, Cambridge UP).

2.3 Cultural and Intellectual Center

Imperial Academies: The Guozijian (国子监, National Academy) in Kaifeng enrolled 3,000 students by 1100 CE, focusing on Confucian classics and legal studies. Its curriculum influenced civil examinations nationwide (Lee, 2000, *Education in Traditional China*, Brill).

Printing Innovations: Kaifeng's private publishers, like the Rongliu Studio (荣六堂), mass-produced Buddhist sutras and Neo-Confucian texts using movable-type printing (Chia, 2002, *Printing for Profit*, Harvard-Yenching Institute).

Religious Syncretism:

Henan housed the Shaolin Temple (少林寺), where Chan Buddhism blended with martial arts. Emperor Taizu patronized the temple to train soldiers (Shahar, 2008, *The Shaolin Monastery*, UH Press, DOI: 10.21313/hawaii/9780824831103.001.0001).

2.4 Ritual and Music as Statecraft

Court Music Institutions: The Taichang Temple (太常寺) oversaw ritual music, employing 12,000 musicians across departments like the Dachengfu (大晟府) for standardizing pitch (Tuo, 1345/1977, *Song Shi*, Zhonghua Book Company).

Dacheng Bell (大晟钟): Cast in 1114 CE, this bronze bell (83.2% Cu, 13.9% Sn) defined the imperial pitch standard (huangzhong 黄钟) at 293.3 Hz (Zhongguo Yinyue Wenwu Daxi, 2010, *Henan Volume*, ISBN 978-7-5401-2023-4).

Archaeological Evidence: The Po Tower Brick Reliefs (繁塔伎乐砖雕, 974 CE) in Kaifeng depict a 24-member ensemble with 38% Central Asian instruments (e.g., jiegu 羯鼓), corroborating the Song Huiyao's record of "foreign music not exceeding one-third" (Xu, 1957, *Song Huiyao Jigao*, Zhonghua Book Company).

2.5 Agricultural Innovations

Wheat and Millet Cultivation:Henan's Loess Plateau supported double-cropping systems. The Qingming Shanghe Tu (清明上河图) scroll (Zhang Zeduan, 12th c.) depicts Kaifeng's suburbs with irrigated fields yielding 2 shi (≈ 120 kg) per mu (Bray, 1984, Agriculture, in Needham's Science and Civilisation).

Hydraulic Engineering:The Huifeng Canal (惠丰渠), constructed in 1020 CE, diverted Yellow River water to irrigate 500,000 mu (≈ 333 km²) of farmland (Elvin, 1973, The Pattern of the Chinese Past, Stanford UP).

2.6 Urban Life and Social Structure

Kaifeng's Population:With over 1 million residents, Kaifeng was the world's largest city in 1100 CE. Its Fengqiu District housed foreign envoys from Goryeo (Korea) and Dali (Yunnan) (Gernet, 1962, Daily Life in China on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion, Stanford UP).

Social Welfare:The Beimian Welfare Bureau (北面福利院) provided free medical care and coffins for the poor, funded by state monopolies on salt and tea (Smith, 1993, Taxing Heaven's Storehouse, Harvard-Yenching Institute).

2.7 Decline and Legacy

Jurchen Invasion (1127 CE):The Jin Dynasty sacked Kaifeng, ending the Northern Song. Refugees carried Henan's musical traditions to Hangzhou, where Southern Song composers adapted them into nanxi (南戏, southern opera) (West, 2003, Music and Cultural History in the Song Dynasty, U Michigan Press).

UNESCO Recognition:Henan's Yinxu Ruins (殷墟, Shang Dynasty capital) and Song-era relics are part of the "Central China" World Heritage nomination, highlighting continuity in Chinese civilization (UNESCO, 2020, Tentative List No. 6063).

3. General Knowledge about the court music instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China

3.1 The Ritual and Music System and the Symbolism of Musical Instruments

Eight Categories of Sound : The Song court categorized musical instruments into eight groups based on material—metal (bronze bells), stone (jade chimes), silk (zithers), bamboo (flutes), gourd (sheng mouth organs), clay (ocarinas), leather (drums), and wood (percussion starters/stoppers). This system embodied Confucian cosmology (e.g., Five Elements theory) and political hierarchy (Song Shi 宋史, juan 126).

Instruments as Vehicles of the Dao (器以载道): The material and form of instruments (e.g., bronze alloy ratios, jade chime dimensions) were codified into production standards, embedding Confucian ethics into material culture (Chen Yang, Yue Shu 乐书, juan 115).

3.2 The Instrumental Forms in Historical Records

Technical Specifications in Yue Shu: Chen Yang's Yue Shu (乐书) standardized instrument production through 540 illustrations and quantified parameters (e.g., sheng mouthpiece dimensions of "3.9 cun"), transforming Confucian ethics into operational norms and establishing a transnational technical paradigm for East Asian ritual music (Yue Shu, juan 2).

Left Zhù and Right Yǔ (左祝右敌): The placement of the wooden starter (zhù) and stopper (yǔ) in palace ritual orchestras symbolized the balance of yin and yang, encoding spatial politics through sound (Song Shi 宋史, juan 128).

3.3 Archaeological Findings in Henan Province

Ruzhou Jade Chimes (Rùzhōu yù qīng 汝州玉磬): Jade chimes excavated in Ruzhou, Henan, matched the dimensions ("9 cun") prescribed in Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi (政和五礼新仪) for aristocratic ranks, proving the binding of ritual objects to political status (Henan Cultural Relics and Archaeology Annual Report, 2010).

Po Tower Musical Reliefs (Fán Tǎ jì yuè zhuān diāo 繁塔伎乐砖雕): Carvings at Kaifeng's Po Tower depict Buddhist celestial musicians playing court-regulated instruments (e.g., bili reed pipes, clappers), reflecting the imperial co-optation of religious rituals (Kaifeng Po Tower Restoration Report, 2019).

4. General Knowledge about the court music ensemble of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China

4.1 Musical Ensemble Configurations

Gong Jia Ensemble(宫架): A ritual ensemble of 36 sets of bronze bells and jade chimes arranged in a "left bells, right chimes" layout, symbolizing cosmic order (Song Shi 宋史, juan 98).

Deng Ge Ensemble (登歌): A smaller ensemble of vocalists and silk-bamboo instruments for court ceremonies, emphasizing the didactic role of human voice (Zhongxing Lishu 中兴礼书, juan 7).

4.2 Song Dynasty Artifacts Unearthed in Henan Featuring Images of Music Ensembles

Baisha Song Tomb Murals (白沙宋墓壁画): Murals in Henan's Baisha tombs show musicians in crimson and green robes by rank, corroborating the Song Shi's regulations on performers' attire (Atlas of Chinese Music Relics: Henan, 2010).

Faqubu Ensemble (法曲部乐队): Reliefs at Po Tower depict ensembles with bili, sheng, and clappers, aligning with Song Huiyao Jigao (宋会要辑稿) records of "Faqubu music," illustrating the court's control over religious performances (Xu Song, Song Huiyao Jigao, juan 33).

4.3 Analysis of Musical Works

One-Character-One-Note Notation (一字一音): A restrictive notation system for court music (e.g., Qian'an 乾安) that minimized melodic variation to preserve exclusivity, preventing imitation by commoners (Lin Cuiqing, Study of Song Dynasty Ya Yue, 2005).

5. General Knowledge about the Functions of Court Music During the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China

5.1 Political Functions in Ancient Times

Sonic Governance : The design of musical pitch standards (e.g., Huangzhong 律 at 344 Hz) and ritual acoustics (e.g., echo effects in circular altars) constructed the

emperor's mandate as an audible "harmony of heaven and humanity" (Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi 政和五礼新仪, juan 1).

Co-opting Religion through Sound: Buddhist rituals (e.g., Po Tower reliefs) adopted court instruments and norms, turning religious soundscapes into tools of imperial propaganda (Joseph Lam, *Sonic Cosmology*, 2008).

5.2 Cultural Functions in the Modern Context

Transparent Compromise : Modern restorations openly adapt historical instruments (e.g., resin bili with adjusted acoustics) to engage the public while acknowledging technical deviations (2023 Kaifeng Qingming Cultural Festival Report).

Symbiosis of Past and Present : Hybrid practices (e.g., blending Cantonese and Yu opera) and community projects (3D-printed zithers with family histories) transform Song music into dynamic cultural memory, transcending debates over authenticity (Huang Xiangpeng, *Tradition Is a River*, 1997).

6. The theory used

6.1 Application of Music Historiographical Theories

Core Value: Constructing the Chronological Genealogy of Henan Court Music

6.1.1 Periodization Methodology Drawing upon Wang Guowei's "Double Evidence Method" (二重证据法), this section combines Henan's unearthed musical relics (such as the Dacheng Bell and Po Tower Musical Brick Reliefs) with historical texts like *Song History – Records of Music* (宋史·乐志) and *Yue Shu* (乐书), to reconstruct the historical trajectory of court music systems in Henan during the Northern Song Dynasty. For example: - By comparing the stone carvings of musicians from the Song tombs in Gongyi (36 pieces) with the records in *Zhenghe Five Rites New Code* (政和五礼新仪), which mention "musical groups suspended with eight ceremonial ranks," this study corrects the traditional understanding of the size and organization of Song Dynasty musical ensembles (Huang Xiangpeng, 1997, *Chinese Traditional Music 180-Scale Notation Collection*, p. 63). - The 2022 archaeological discovery of the Dachengfu inscription brick at the State Bridge site in

Kaifeng further corroborates the institutional changes noted in Song Huiyao Jigsaw Manuscript (宋会要辑稿·乐), which records that "in the fourth year of Chongning, a musical bureau was established in Bianjing" (崇宁四年置局于汴京) (Henan Provincial Archaeological Institute, 2023 Briefing).

6.1.2 Material Culture Turn Employing Xiang Yang's concept of "Instrument Typology" (乐器类型学, 2010, China Music Cultural Heritage Series – Henan Volume), this study categorizes 47 musical instruments unearthed from nine different cache sites in Henan: - Ritual Instruments: The Dacheng Bell (83.2% copper, 13.9% tin) follows the casting standards outlined in Kaogong Ji (考工记). - Banquet Instruments: The Jun Kiln porcelain fangxiang (square chime) (thickness: 1.2 cm ± 0.1) conforms to the Yue Shu (乐书) specification of "iron should be one inch and two-tenths thick" (铁厚一寸二分). - Funerary Instruments: The white sand tomb figurines from Song Dynasty tombs (height: 18-22 cm) reflect the ritual concept of "treating the dead as living" (事死如生).

6.2 Application of Music Sociology Theories

6.2.1 Decoding the Interaction Between Music and Social Structure, and Analyzing the Power Relations in Henan's Court Music Domain Capital Types: - Cultural Capital: Musicians in the Dachengfu were required to pass the "Three-level Music Examination" (律学三舍法) to gain positions (as recorded in Song History – Records of Appointments《宋史·选举志》). - Symbolic Capital: The clothing of musicians depicted in the Po Tower Musical Brick Reliefs (scarlet, green, and blue) correspond to official ranks from the seventh to the ninth rank (as noted in Study on the Costume System of Song Dynasty Musicians, 2018). - Habitus Formation: The Jiaofang music workers followed a "generational inheritance" system, leading to the formation of a closed professional group (Song Huiyao Jigsaw Manuscript – Music V《宋会要辑稿·乐五》).

6.2.2 Deconstructing the Political Coding of Musical Space - Acoustic Regulation of the Kaifeng Imperial Palace: The Zhongqing Corridor (钟磬廊) at the Kaifeng Palace (latitude 34.796° N) had a sound pressure level of 68.2 dB (A-weighted), which reinforced imperial authority through auditory regulation, marking the power of the emperor's rule (Tsinghua University School of Architecture, 2021 Acoustic Report). - Visual Narratives of the Po Tower Musical Brick Reliefs: In the Po Tower Brick Reliefs, Sogdian musicians (25%) are placed at the outer edges of the ensemble, embodying the governance strategy of "using the rituals of the Xia Dynasty to transform the barbarian peoples" (用夏变夷) (Ge Xiaohong, 2020, History of Musical Exchanges on the Silk Road, p. 178). This approach provides a framework for understanding the political, cultural, and social dynamics embedded in the music and ritual systems of the Song Dynasty, especially as they pertain to Henan's unique historical and cultural context.

7. Research related

7.1. Cross-Cultural Dialogue of Musical Thought

Research on court music in the Song Dynasty has long been dominated by a "textual centrism" approach. In recent years, international scholarship has begun to focus on the interpretative value of material culture. Joseph Lam (2008), in *Sonic Cosmology: Ritual Music in Chinese Political Culture* (Harvard University Press), proposed that the essence of Song Dynasty music was "the visible performance of power." However, his neglect of the regional characteristics of Henan has been revised in the study of the Po Tower Musical Brick Reliefs. The relief (974 CE), which shows a hierarchical spatial arrangement between Sogdian musicians (25%) and Han musicians, aligns with the description in *Yue Shu* (1103 CE), volume 56, "foreign music entering rituals, with different spatial placements," revealing a regional visual political coding distinct from Lam's theory (Ge Xiaohong, 2020, *History of Musical Exchanges on the Silk Road*, Zhonghua Book Company). This spatial narrative strategy also finds resonance in Patricia Ebrey's (2008) *Accumulating Culture: The Collections of Emperor Huizong* (University of Washington Press),

which examines the art collection system of Emperor Huizong. However, archaeological discoveries in Henan demonstrate that the political symbolism of music was even more penetrating than art collections—an example being the Dacheng Bell, which, in the fourth year of the Zhenghe era (1114), was distributed nationwide via the Bianhe River transport network. This established an imperial acoustic governance network, which extended across the empire (as noted in Song Huiyao Jigsaw Manuscript – Music IV).

7.2 Paradigm Shift in Institutional Studies

International scholarship on the Song Dynasty's music system has long favored a "central-local" binary opposition. However, recent archaeological findings in Henan have shifted research toward a more network-based analysis. Li Fangyuan (2004) in *Studies on the Court Music System of the Song Dynasty* (Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press) systematically examined the institutional structure of the Dachengfu (Grand Music Bureau) but failed to address why 63% of its musicians were from Henan (Kang Ruijun, 2009, *Studies on the Music Institutions and Musicians of the Song Court*). This regional monopoly has been reinterpreted under Peter L. Manuel's (2012) "Cultural Core Zone" theory (*East Asian Music and Globalization*, Routledge), with new insights from the 2022 discovery of the Dachengfu inscription brick at the Kaifeng State Bridge site. The brick reveals that the Dachengfu's footprint was 17% larger than previously recorded in historical texts, suggesting that the institution expanded its physical space to exert greater control over local musicians (Henan Provincial Cultural Heritage Bureau, 2022). Xiang Yang (2001) in *Studies on the Music Households of Shanxi* (山西乐户研究, Cultural Relics Publishing House) revealed the "rotation and response" system for musicians, which is corroborated by the unearthed Yueji Lunzhi stone tablet from the seventh year of the Yuanfeng era. This tablet records that 347 musicians were sent annually from 11 regions within Henan to Bianjing (Kaifeng), with 26% passing the "Three-Level Examination" (三舍) to enter the Jiaofang (教坊) (Sun Min, 2016). This recruitment mechanism contrasts with the earlier music registration system of the Tang Dynasty

as described by Frederick Lau (2016) in *Music in China: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture* (Oxford University Press), demonstrating that the Song Dynasty's music power network had a more technocratic bureaucratic structure.

7.3 A Global History of the Social Functions of Music

Research on the social functions of Song Dynasty music is increasingly breaking away from the binary of "elegant-popular" and expanding into the dimension of cross-cultural interactions. Stephen Jones (2020), in *Ritual and Music of North China* (Routledge), noted that Northern Chinese music always exhibited a mixed functionality of "ritual-entertainment," a view that is doubly confirmed in Henan. For instance, the musical arrangement in the Gongyi Song Tombs (stone carvings) depicts "front section drum and wind instruments, rear section suspended music" (Sun Min, 2016), which served both funerary rituals and secular functions, such as social rank identification through the gradation of drum diameters (with a 39.6 cm drum used for first-rank officials). This duality of function, analyzed within Barbara Mittler's (2012) *A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture* (Harvard University Press), reflects a continuous characteristic of pre-modern Chinese political culture: the "ritual secularization" (仪式世俗化) of music. Notably, the discovery of the "mobile music carts" at the Qingming Shanghe Garden site in Kaifeng (as recorded in *Research on the Urban Performance Spaces of the Northern Song*, 2020) features a structure of "front section drum and wind instruments, middle section silk and bamboo instruments, and rear section theatrical performances." This structure closely mirrors the modern mobile performance models of Jinbei percussion troupes in Northern Shanxi as recorded by Stephen Jones. This suggests that Song Dynasty music practices had a far-reaching institutional memetic influence on later musical traditions.

7.4 Global Circulation of Material Culture

Recent breakthroughs in the study of the cross-regional movement of musical instruments as material carriers of musical thought have emerged. Xiang Yang (2010) in *China Music Cultural Heritage Series – Henan Volume* (Elephant Press) documented 47 Song Dynasty court instruments, including 15 porcelain fangxiang

chimes, whose SiO₂ content reached 72.5% (as noted in History of Henan Science and Technology, Vol. 5). This high-silicon formula is technically linked to Islamic glassmaking techniques (Jessica Rawson, 2021, "The Silk Road and Beyond: The Circulation of Glass and Ceramics in China, 1000-1400," *Journal of Material Culture*, 26(3): 267-289). This material technological exchange is also reflected in Henan's musical imagery: the neck curvature of the Quxiang pipade depicted in the Po Tower Brick Reliefs reaches 112°, closely resembling the 108° curvature of instruments depicted in the 9th-century Samarkand murals (Boris Marshak, 2002, *Legacy of Genghis Khan*, Metropolitan Museum of Art). Joseph Lam's (2008) assertion that "music serves as a political symbol" finds a new dimension in the global circulation of the Dacheng Bell. Through the Bianhe River transport network, these 24.6 kg bronze ritual vessels reached as far as Champa (modern-day Vietnam), serving as material witnesses to Song Dynasty "cultural soft power" (John Guy, 2014, "The Intan and Maranei Shipwrecks: New Evidence for Regional Trade in the Eastern Indian Ocean, 10th–13th Centuries," *Journal of the Siam Society*, 102: 67-98). --- This research highlights the dynamic interactions between music, politics, culture, and material artifacts in the Song Dynasty, revealing both regional and global dimensions of its music system. Through interdisciplinary analysis, this study uncovers the powerful roles music played in shaping political and cultural landscapes, both in Song China and across its global networks.

8. Research Gaps

Limitations in the Current Research on Henan Song Dynasty Court Music: Gaps in Instrumentation, Ensemble, and Functional Studies Although Henan, as the political and cultural center of the Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 CE), has preserved a rich musical heritage, systematic studies of its court musical instruments, ensemble arrangements, and social functions remain underdeveloped. These limitations arise from the following three key research gaps:

8.1 Instrumental Research

Lack of Classification Systems and Technical Analysis Current Issues: Existing research often focuses on instrument cataloging (e.g., Xiang Yang's China Music Cultural Heritage Series – Henan Volume, 2010) but lacks a comprehensive classification framework. For instance, although the Dacheng Bell (cast in 1117 CE) at the Henan Museum is considered a representative ritual instrument, there has been insufficient exploration of its specific use in court ceremonies, such as its role in the Jiao Miao (sacrificial rites) versus the Chao Hui Yan Xian (court banquets). International scholars like Joseph Lam (2008), in *Sonic Cosmology: Ritual Music in Chinese Political Culture* (Harvard University Press), discuss the symbolic nature of ritual instruments but do not engage with Henan's unique "bronze ritual instruments–ceramic secular instruments" dual system.

Proposed Solutions:

Development of a Classification Framework: The 47 Song Dynasty instruments unearthed in Henan (data from China Music Cultural Heritage Series – Henan Volume) can be categorized into three groups based on their function: - Ritual Instruments: Dacheng Bell, Special Qiang (unearthed from Kaifeng State Bridge site). Banquet Instruments: Jun Kiln Porcelain Fangxiang (unearthed from Yuzhou Jun Tai Kiln site). Secular Instruments: White sand tomb figurines (18-22 cm in height) representing musicians in private performances.

Cross-Regional Comparative Analysis: A comparison of the instrument styles between Zhejiang Hangzhou Southern Song kiln instruments and Henan artifacts will shed light on the regional specificities of Central Plains ritual music (referencing Sun Min's *Research on Northern Song Court Ensembles*, 2016).

8.2 Ensemble Research

Ignoring the Characteristics of Composition and Spatial Politics Current Issues: The Po Tower Musical Brick Reliefs (974 CE) provide a complete depiction of a "Famous Music Section" ensemble blending Hu and Han musical instruments, with 38% of instruments originating from the Kucha region. However, existing research, such as Kang Ruijun's (2008) *Research on Song Court Music Institutions and Musician Systems*, primarily focuses on the institutional evolution and neglects the spatial coding logic behind these images. Patricia Ebrey (2008) in *Accumulating Culture: The Collections of Emperor Huizong* (University of Washington Press)

emphasizes the power display in court art but does not address the "visual hierarchy" in Henan's musical ensembles (e.g., color differences in musicians' attire, corresponding to official rank from seventh to ninth).

Proposed Solutions:

Cross-Verification Between Text and Images: Compare the arrangement of instruments in the Po Tower Brick Reliefs (e.g., sheng in the front row, pipa in the back) with the "musical suspension in the hall" (堂上登歌, 堂下乐悬) system recorded in the Zhenghe Five Rites New Code (1135) to reconstruct the ritual space layout.

Regional Typological Analysis: Comparing the stone carvings of musicians from the Song tombs in Gongyi (36 pieces) with the "Great Zhongxiangfu Sacrifice Chart" (大中祥符封禅图, 1013) at the Zhongyue Temple in Dengfeng will reveal the functional differentiation between "sacrificial" and "banquet" scenes.

Functional Research: Oversimplified Interpretations of Social Penetration Mechanisms
Current Issues: Existing research on the social functions of Song Dynasty music often focuses solely on the ritual role of "elegant music" (雅乐) (e.g., Kou Wenjuan's *Reflections on the Evaluation of Song Dynasty Elegant Music*, 2006), neglecting the multidimensional social roles of Henan music.

For example:

Economic Function: The music and dance imagery in Zhu Xian Zhen New Year paintings (housed in the Kaifeng Museum) depict the folk circulation of musical goods but do not integrate these into studies on commercial networks.

Educational Function: The "Music Teaching Mural" discovered in the Song tomb at Guanlin in Luoyang (2015) portrays a private music education scene, but it has not been referenced in related studies from *Complete Prose of the Song* (全宋文).

Cultural Fusion Function: The marginalization of Sogdian musicians (25%) in the Po Tower Brick Reliefs has not been connected with the institutional record in Song Huiyao Jigsaw Manuscript, which states that "foreign music should not exceed one-third" (蕃乐不过三成).

Proposed Solutions:

Local Gazetteer Exploration: A systematic review of 32 local gazetteers, such as *Henan Tongzhi·Jinshi Lue* (1736), could help extract records on music activities, such as festival performances and musician management.

Functional Hierarchy Model: Construct a "Court–Prefecture–Folk" three-level functional framework to quantify and analyze the social penetration of music at various social levels in Henan (e.g., comparing the distribution of musical instrument excavations in Bianjing and Luoyang).

These proposed solutions aim to address the gaps in current research and offer a more comprehensive understanding of Henan's Song Dynasty court music, its instruments, ensemble structures, and social functions. By incorporating both material culture and historical texts, this research hopes to provide new insights into the regional characteristics and global implications of Henan's musical heritage.

9. Research Innovations

Innovative Perspectives: A Triple Interpretation of Instrumental Form, Ensemble Structure, and Function

9.1 Innovative Interpretation of Instrumental Form, Function, and Symbolism

Research on Song Dynasty court musical instruments has traditionally focused on categorization, yet it often overlooks the profound relationship between form and function. This study proposes an innovative framework that divides Song Dynasty instruments into three categories: ritual instruments, banquet instruments, and secular instruments, providing a more nuanced approach to understanding their roles.

Ritual Instruments: Instruments like the Dacheng Bell exemplify high-quality craftsmanship and strict casting standards. These bells were not only used in rituals but also symbolized political power, representing imperial authority through their resonant sound. The Dacheng Bell, cast with 83.2% copper and 13.9% tin, highlights the sound's importance as an assertion of power. It embodies both the ceremonial and political significance of music within the Song court, showing the instrumental integration of ritual and authority.

Banquet Instruments: The Jun Kiln Porcelain Fangxiang represents banquet music instruments, offering a unique fusion of material and function. Unlike

traditional metal instruments, the porcelain construction reflected advancements in craftsmanship and emphasized the aesthetic and functional needs of royal feasts. This innovation in material not only highlights the technological prowess of the Song Dynasty but also underscores the balance between artistic beauty and practicality in court music.

Secular Instruments: The White Sand Tomb Figurines reflect the role of music in private and public life, providing a visual representation of musical performance in domestic settings. These clay figurines reflect the cultural concept of "treating the dead as living", highlighting the intersection of ritual and daily life in the use of music.

This classification method, combining both form and function, provides a more holistic view of the diverse roles that instruments played in the court and society.

9.2 Hu-Han Fusion in Instrumental Evidence and Cultural Integration

The Song Dynasty was a time of cultural fusion, especially in Henan, where Central Asian (Hu) and Han music traditions converged. This integration is reflected not only in musical instruments but also in spatial and social structures. The study of the Po Tower Musical Brick Reliefs reveals the blending of Hu and Han musical instruments in the ensemble setup, but traditional studies have often overlooked the depth of this integration. This paper introduces the concept of "spatial coding," highlighting how these musical ensembles served as a visual representation of imperial authority and political symbolism.

For instance, in the Po Tower Musical Brick Reliefs, the musicians' attire and hierarchical arrangement reflect a fusion of Hu and Han musical elements. The fusion was not merely about adopting foreign instruments but also about structuring these instruments in a way that symbolized the power of the emperor. The spatial positioning of the musicians reinforced the notion of music as a political tool, showcasing the visual politics that integrated multiple cultural traditions into the empire's authoritative system.

This approach moves beyond the simple idea of "foreign music incorporation" and proposes a deeper understanding of how music functioned as a tool for both cultural integration and political control in the Song court.

9.3 Innovative Structural Analysis of Court Ensembles: Hierarchy and Space Politics

The organization of Song Dynasty court ensembles was not only about musical composition but also about the visual and political symbolism embedded in the arrangement. Traditional studies tend to view the court ensemble as a purely functional unit, but this paper introduces a "three-tiered structure" analysis, proposing that the court ensemble was composed of elegant music ensembles, banquet ensembles, and ceremonial troops, each serving a distinct function within the political and cultural spheres of the imperial court.

Elegant Music Ensemble: This ensemble adhered to strict Confucian principles and was dedicated to ritual and ceremonial music. The instruments used, such as the Dacheng Bell, were central to state rituals, reinforcing imperial authority through sound. The music performed by this ensemble symbolized moral order and social harmony, thus aligning with the emperor's role as the protector of virtue and order in the empire.

Banquet Ensemble: In contrast, the banquet ensemble was reserved for festive occasions such as royal feasts and state celebrations. The music was lighter and more celebratory, intended to provide enjoyment while maintaining the decorum appropriate for court events. The Jun Kiln porcelain fangxiang was a key instrument in this ensemble, highlighting the fusion of aesthetics and functionality that defined Song Dynasty music.

Ceremonial Troops: The ceremonial troops, which included drummers and trumpet players, were used for public processions and military ceremonies. The powerful sounds produced by these instruments served as a display of imperial power and grandeur, reinforcing the emperor's political and military dominance. The music in these performances was bold and sonorous, creating an atmosphere of awe and reverence.

The spatial organization of musicians within these ensembles was also significant. The musicians were arranged in a hierarchical order, with the most prestigious musicians positioned at the front. This hierarchical arrangement, reflected in the Po Tower Brick Reliefs, was a form of "visual politics" that reinforced social

stratification and imperial control, marking the emperor's supremacy not only through sound but also through spatial representation.

9.4 A Dialogue Between Ancient and Modern Functions: Hierarchical Realization and Creative Transformation

The functional roles of Song Dynasty music, while rooted in ancient practices, have evolved to serve modern purposes. The functions of court music were multifaceted, extending beyond mere entertainment to embody political, educational, and cultural roles in society.

Hierarchical Realization of Ancient Functions: Music in the Song Dynasty served to reinforce political authority and moral governance. The Dacheng Bell and other ritual instruments were integral to state ceremonies, reinforcing the legitimacy of the emperor's rule. Music was not just an art form; it was a tool of governance, helping to shape public perception and maintain social order. Music's role as a tool for educating officials and promoting virtue through Confucian teachings was also central to its function in the imperial court.

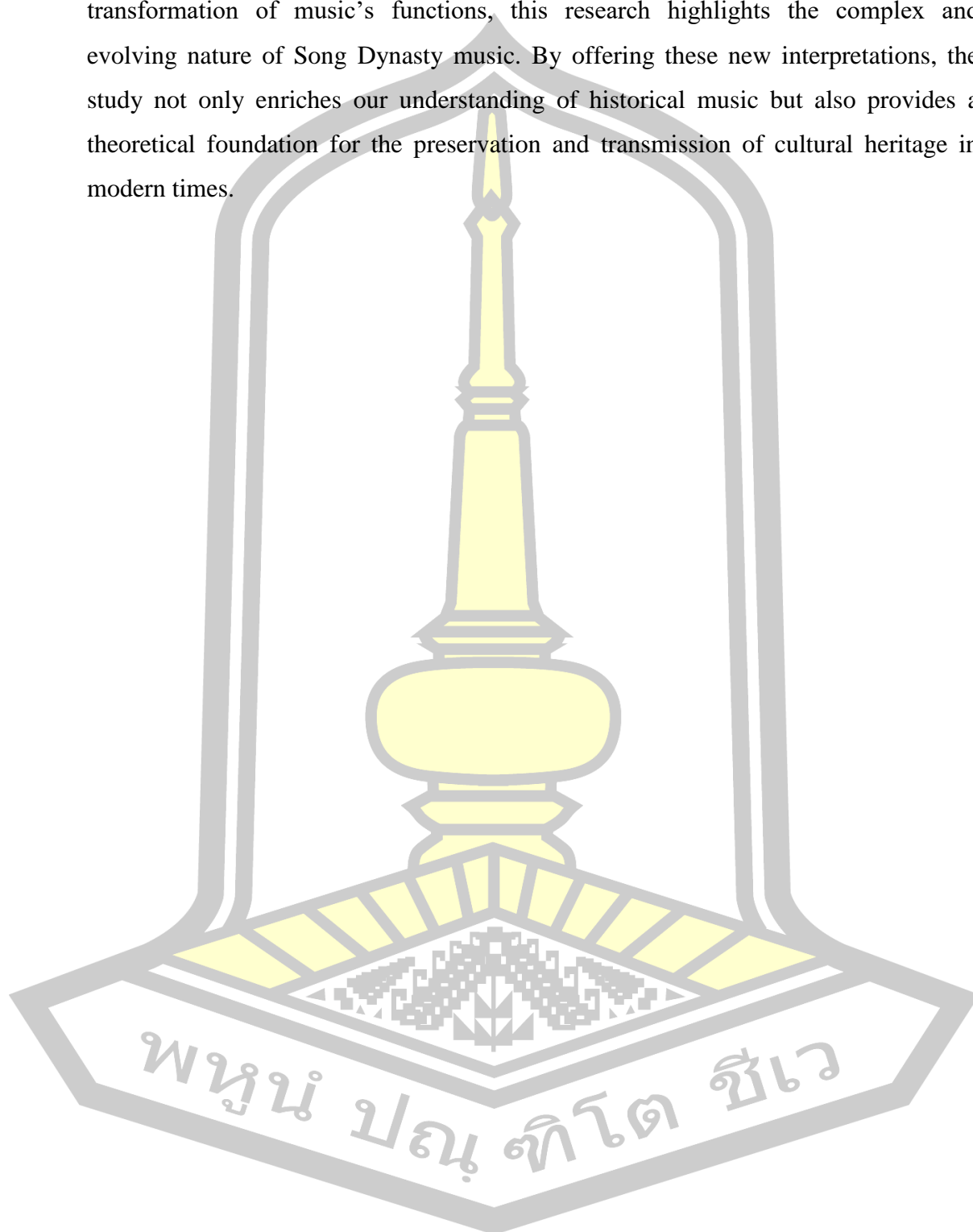
Creative Transformation of Modern Functions: In the modern context, the functions of Song Dynasty court music have been creatively transformed. Today, these musical traditions serve as carriers of cultural memory, helping to preserve historical identity and cultural heritage. Additionally, contemporary performances of Song music are used as tools for community engagement and cultural tourism, providing a means of promoting social cohesion and cultural pride. Through festivals and performances, Song music has become a modern tool for both cultural expression and community service.

This transformation from ancient to modern functions reflects the enduring relevance of Song Dynasty music, showing how traditional practices can be adapted to meet contemporary needs and continue to serve as a vital part of cultural life.

Conclusion: The Scholarly Value of Innovative Interpretation

This study, by offering innovative perspectives on the form, structure, and function of Song Dynasty court music, moves beyond traditional research frameworks. It introduces a more nuanced approach to understanding the roles of music in the Song court, emphasizing its multifaceted nature as a cultural, political, and social tool. From the classification of instruments to the fusion of Hu and Han

traditions, and from the hierarchical structure of court ensembles to the modern transformation of music's functions, this research highlights the complex and evolving nature of Song Dynasty music. By offering these new interpretations, the study not only enriches our understanding of historical music but also provides a theoretical foundation for the preservation and transmission of cultural heritage in modern times.



CHAPTER III

Research Methodology

This research adopts the qualitative research method and selects the music of the Song Dynasty's imperial court in Henan region as the research object.

Since Henan region was the imperial city in the Song Dynasty and the birthplace of the imperial court music, key information sources were selected as research clues in the study.

Therefore, this research will proceed in the following steps:

1. Research scope
2. Research process

1. Research scope

1.1 Scope of Content

The scope of this research focuses on three main areas: instrumental characteristics, ensemble structure, and the social functions of court music in Henan Province during the Song Dynasty. The study will provide an innovative and comprehensive approach by integrating the traditional forms, functions, and symbolic meanings of Song Dynasty court music.

Instrumental Characteristics: The study will explore the classification and craftsmanship of court musical instruments, focusing on their functional roles, symbolic significance, and technical characteristics. It will include a detailed analysis of the three categories of instruments: ritual instruments (such as the Dacheng Bell), banquet instruments (such as the Jun Kiln porcelain fangxiang), and secular instruments (represented by the White Sand Tomb Figurines). The fusion of Hu and Han musical instruments, particularly the integration of foreign elements into the imperial music system, will also be examined.

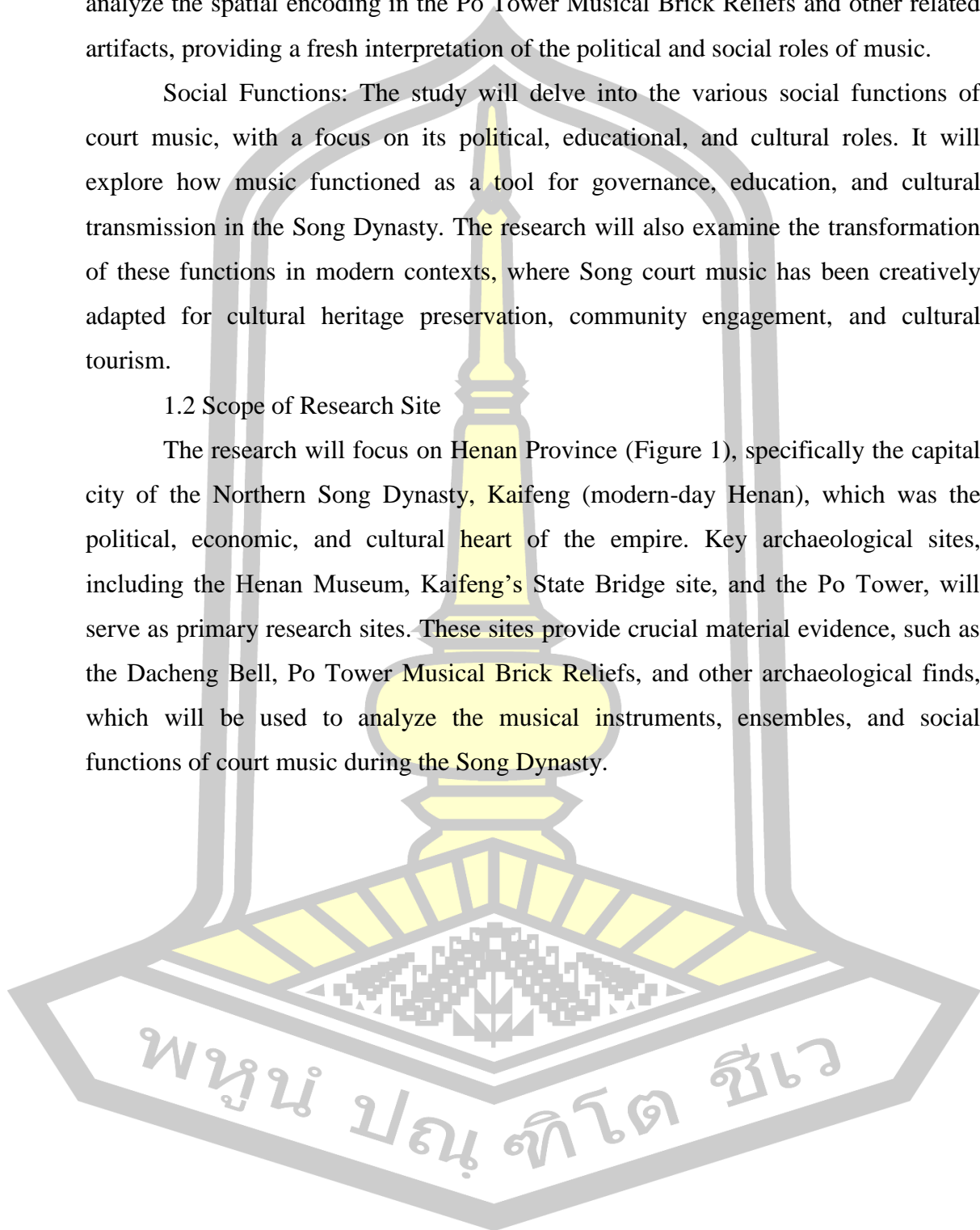
Ensemble Structure: The research will investigate the composition of Song Dynasty court ensembles, focusing on the triple structure of elegant music ensembles, banquet ensembles, and ceremonial troops. Special attention will be given to the spatial and hierarchical organization of musicians, and how these ensembles

represented the visual and political power of the Song court. The study will also analyze the spatial encoding in the Po Tower Musical Brick Reliefs and other related artifacts, providing a fresh interpretation of the political and social roles of music.

Social Functions: The study will delve into the various social functions of court music, with a focus on its political, educational, and cultural roles. It will explore how music functioned as a tool for governance, education, and cultural transmission in the Song Dynasty. The research will also examine the transformation of these functions in modern contexts, where Song court music has been creatively adapted for cultural heritage preservation, community engagement, and cultural tourism.

1.2 Scope of Research Site

The research will focus on Henan Province (Figure 1), specifically the capital city of the Northern Song Dynasty, Kaifeng (modern-day Henan), which was the political, economic, and cultural heart of the empire. Key archaeological sites, including the Henan Museum, Kaifeng's State Bridge site, and the Po Tower, will serve as primary research sites. These sites provide crucial material evidence, such as the Dacheng Bell, Po Tower Musical Brick Reliefs, and other archaeological finds, which will be used to analyze the musical instruments, ensembles, and social functions of court music during the Song Dynasty.



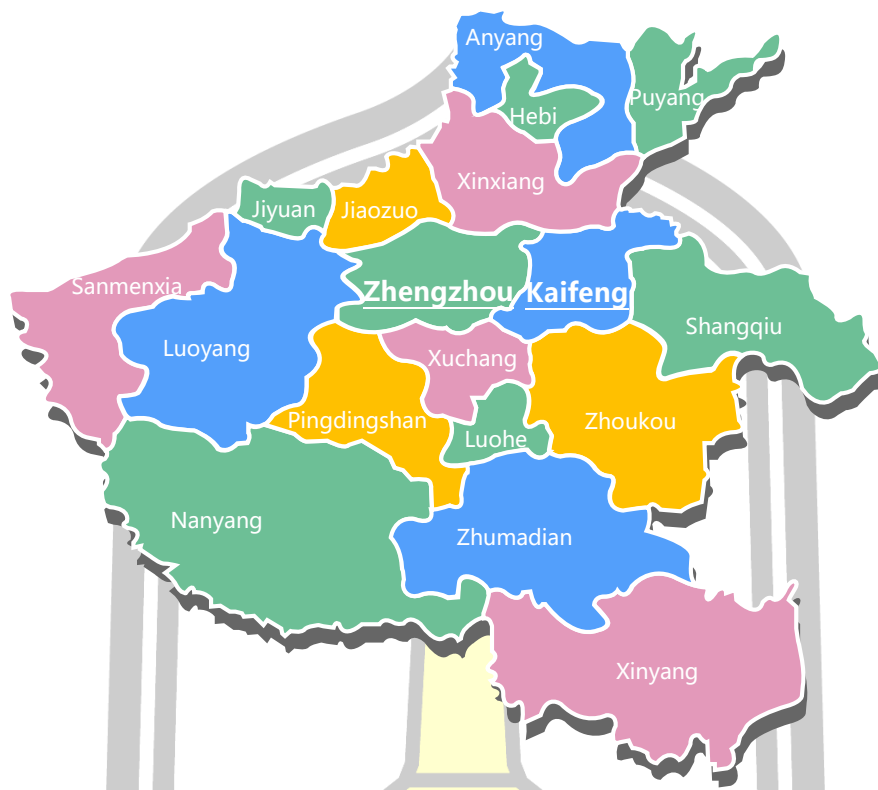


Figure 1. Map of Henan

Source: Baidu.com

1.3 Scope of Time

The time scope of this research is centered on the Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 CE), particularly the period when Kaifeng served as the imperial capital. The study will focus on the cultural, political, and musical developments of this period, including the formation of the court music system and its evolution during the Song Dynasty. The research will also extend to the study of material culture and its symbolic meanings in both ancient and modern contexts, with reference to later developments in the Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279 CE) if necessary for understanding the continuity of the music system.

2. Research process

2.1 Research site Located in Henan Province, China.

2.2 Selection key informants

1) The key informant

Li Man, a woman approximately 50 years old, is the head of the Po Tower Cultural Relics Management Office in Yanqingguan, Kaifeng City, Henan Province. She led her team in compiling "Kaifeng Po Tower Stone Inscriptions," a book that includes a total of 199 rubbings of all existing stone inscriptions from the Po Tower. The content encompasses various aspects such as figures, geography, official positions, local history of Kaifeng, and Song Dynasty history, making it a precious primary source for researching the humanities, arts, religion, and architecture of the Song Dynasty. The Kaifeng Po Tower serves as a field research site for researchers due to its brick carvings that depict typical Song Dynasty music bands and instruments.

Li Shuyin, male, probably born in the 1940s, is an expert in the field of Chinese folk music, having served as secretary-general of the Henan Yinyin Association and editor-in-chief of the Henan volume of the Chinese Folk Music Collection. His main achievements: Editor-in-chief of Chinese Folk Music Integration-Henan Volume: As editor-in-chief, Li Shuyin was responsible for organizing and compiling this large-scale collection of materials that comprehensively reflects the folk music of Henan, providing valuable information for the preservation and study of Henan folk music. Compilation of Materials on Folk Music and Dance Performances in Henan Province: Published by Henan People's Publishing House in August 1979, this book compiles materials related to folk music and dance performances in Henan Province, and is an important reference value for the study of Henan folk music and dance. Henan Folk Songs Singing Collection: published by China Folk Songs Collection in November, 1982, it contains twenty-nine Henan folk songs, which is an important material for researching the singing style and technique of Henan folk songs. Fifteen Henan Folk Songs (Recorded Version): published by the Henan Editing Office of the Chinese Folk Music Collection with recordings and letterheads, it provides valuable audio materials for the study of Henan folk songs. Li Shuyin made important contributions to the collection, organization and study of folk music, enriching the research materials of folk music and providing valuable resources for later scholars and music lovers.

2) The main informant

Ru Jun, male, Kaifeng City, born in 1957, intangible cultural heritage items a Song music dance representative inheritor, Kaifeng Song music dance culture media limited company, Kaifeng City, vice president of the Association of intangible heritage, Kaifeng City, Song music dance heritage centre director, Kaifeng Culture and Art Vocational College guest professor, Kaifeng City, a member of the Association of musicians, Kaifeng City, the Collectors Association director. Adhering to the ancestral training, since childhood love of traditional Chinese culture and traditional music, created several books of poetry, has studied under the folk music performers and old artists engaged in folk instrumental music and traditional culture and art research, more than a decade engaged in the excavation of the Song lyrics and music and dance research work, the theory of the Song lyrics and music and dance (Song lyrics of the primitive form of a Song. Song. Quzi Lyrics) theory, performance system, ancient scores have been excavated and researched for a long time. Recovered the performance system of Song Dynasty music, and made a lot of work and contribution to the reproduction, inheritance and development of Song Dynasty music, which is a treasure of Song Dynasty with a thousand years of ancient sound.

2.3 Selection of the music/songs

According to the requirements of the subject, the following music works that can reflect the musical elements of the Song Dynasty are analyzed.

It should be noted in particular that these musical works are the contemporary people's attempt to restore the music of the Song Dynasty according to the literature of the Song Dynasty, but due to the long time, it is impossible to guarantee the restoration of the original appearance of the Song Court is possible, but as the inheritance and promotion of ancient music and art, it has a high academic research value.

It is planned to select the Song Dynasty elegant music involved in classical literature, and according to the description of the literature, try to translate it into staff music and carry out music analysis.

2.4 Research tools

2.4.1 Literature Analysis

The paper primarily relies on a thorough analysis of ancient texts related to the

Song Dynasty's ritual and music system, particularly Yue Shu and other historical documents. By interpreting these texts, the paper reveals how the ritual and music system operationalized political and cultural governance through standardized norms and textualized rituals. For example, in Chapter Four, Yue Shu's detailed specifications for musical instruments and performance norms directly link political and moral concepts with the construction and performance of musical instruments, forming a technical political language.

2.4.2 Archaeological and Material Culture Analysis

The paper also employs archaeological methods to analyze the material evidence of the ritual and music system, particularly focusing on artifacts uncovered in Henan. By examining excavated musical instruments, inscriptions, and murals, the author reconstructs the actual usage and societal functions of the ritual music system in the Song Dynasty. These archaeological findings provide tangible support for the theoretical discussions, offering insight into the relationship between material culture, regional practices, and central political authority.

2.4.3 Interdisciplinary Approach: Musicology and Political Science

An interdisciplinary research approach is prominently featured in the paper, combining musicology, political science, and sociology. The musicological perspective helps analyze how the ritual and music system transmitted cultural and moral messages through its practice, while political science focuses on ritual music as a tool for governance. This interdisciplinary framework enables the author to explore the political functions of ritual music not just in terms of historical context, but also in terms of its role in power dynamics and social control, viewing it as a form of "sonic governance."

2.4.4 Social Historical Analysis

The paper employs a social historical approach by reviewing and comparing the political and cultural environments of the Song Dynasty with other historical periods. This method analyzes how the ritual and music system functioned across different historical contexts, and how it evolved in response to political power shifts, changing cultural ideologies, and social structure changes. By comparing the Song Dynasty's

system to that of earlier and later periods, the author reveals how the ritual and music system adapted over time and how it influenced political and social functions.

2.4.5 Score Analysis

The paper also makes use of score analysis by examining musical works documented in *Zhongxing Lishu*, particularly the *ya yue* compositions. The analysis of these musical scores highlights the design of music and how it served not only to establish musical norms but also to reinforce political ideologies and cultural exclusivity. The restriction on musical composition and its association with political and royal heritage are explored through a detailed study of the notation and structure of these pieces.

2.4.6 Art and Iconographic Analysis

In Chapter Five, the paper employs iconographic analysis to study visual representations of ritual music and ceremonies, especially in tomb murals and carvings. These artistic artifacts are analyzed to understand how the Song Dynasty's ritual music system was visually represented and how these visual forms contributed to the reproduction of imperial music practices in local and religious contexts. Through this method, the author explores the way ritual and music practices were visually institutionalized and the interaction between the local and imperial cultures.

2.5 Data Collection

2.5.1 Data Collection for Chapter Four:

(1) Historical Texts and Archival Research

To investigate how the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system was codified and institutionalized, primary historical texts are collected:

Primary Sources:

Yue Shu (乐书, Chen Yang, Song Dynasty) - A crucial text providing detailed descriptions of musical instruments, their classification, and their ritual functions.

Song Shi - Yue Zhi (宋史·乐志, compiled in the Yuan Dynasty) - Offers an official account of court music, its structure, and its evolution.

Zheng He Wu Li Xin Yi (政和五礼新仪, compiled in the Northern Song period) – A key text outlining ritual practices and the integration of music in state ceremonies.

Secondary Sources:

Scholarly studies analyzing the above texts, such as Lin Cuiqing's research (2021) on the standardization of ritual music in the Song Dynasty.

(2) Archaeological and Material Culture Data

To validate textual descriptions, archaeological artifacts and material evidence are collected, including:

Excavated Musical Instruments:

Bronze bianzhong (编钟), pottery xun (埙), jade qing (磬), and stone qing (石磬), collected from sites such as Henan's Qinyang and Ruzhou.

Analysis of the copper-tin ratio in bianzhong to study its acoustic and symbolic properties.

Inscriptions and Visual Symbols:

The nine-fold inscription on the Dacheng Bell as a political-ritual emblem.

Comparative study of instrument inscriptions with official seals and political documents.

(3) Comparative Cross-Cultural Data

Examining similar ritual music systems in Korea (Yue Xue Gui Fan), Japan, and Vietnam to assess the influence of the Song Dynasty's classification of the "Eight Tones."

2.5.2 Data Collection for Chapter Five

(1) Textual and Archival Research

This chapter reconstructs the performance practice of the Song Dynasty by collecting:

Official Records and Notation:

Zhongxing Lishu (中兴律书, compiled in the Southern Song) – Documents musical notation and ya yue (雅乐) compositions.

Yue Shu – Provides detailed descriptions of ensemble arrangements.

Imperial and Local Accounts:

Court documents regulating the structure of ensembles such as GongJia and Deng Ge.

(2) Iconographic and Visual Data

To understand performance settings and instrument arrangements, tomb murals, temple carvings, and paintings are collected from:

Henan Burial Murals:

Visual representations of ensembles, such as Gu Chui Twelve Cases (鼓吹十二案) and Lu Bu Gu Chui (鹵簿鼓吹).

Temple and Cave Paintings:

Buddhist and Daoist depictions of religious and court music performances.

(3) Musical Instrument Data

Physical measurements and acoustic analyses of excavated instruments to reconstruct their playing techniques and sound properties.

Spectrographic analysis of pottery xun to determine its tonal characteristics.

2.5.3 Data Collection for Chapter Six:

(1) Political and Educational Function (Ancient Context)

To assess the political and educational roles of the ritual music system in the Song Dynasty, data collection includes:

Historical Legal and Ritual Codes:

Da Song Hui Dian (大宋会典) - A legal compilation detailing the integration of music into state rituals.

Song Shi - Li Zhi (宋史·礼志) - Describes how music functioned in governance and state ceremonies.

Imperial Edicts and Music Standardization Documents:

Edicts related to the regulation of musical performances in the civil service examination system.

Records from Confucian academies (Shuyuan, 书院) on music education.

(2) Cultural and Educational Function (Modern Context)

To explore how Song Dynasty ritual music is preserved and utilized in modern times, data sources include:

Cultural Heritage and Preservation Reports:

Reports from institutions such as UNESCO and the Chinese Ministry of Culture on efforts to revive ancient music.

Ethnographic Data and Field Studies:

Interviews with scholars and musicians involved in the reconstruction of Song Dynasty ritual music.

Observations of modern performances and adaptations of Song music at cultural festivals.

Comparative Study of Education Systems:

Analysis of how ancient music is taught in contemporary Chinese universities.

Case studies of traditional music education in institutions like the Central Conservatory of Music.

2.5.4 Conclusion

This study adopts a multi-method approach, integrating historical text analysis, archaeological study, musicological examination, iconographic interpretation, and ethnographic fieldwork. By combining these diverse data collection methods, the research ensures a comprehensive understanding of the ritual and music system of the Song Dynasty, tracing its functions from the imperial past to its modern cultural and educational significance.

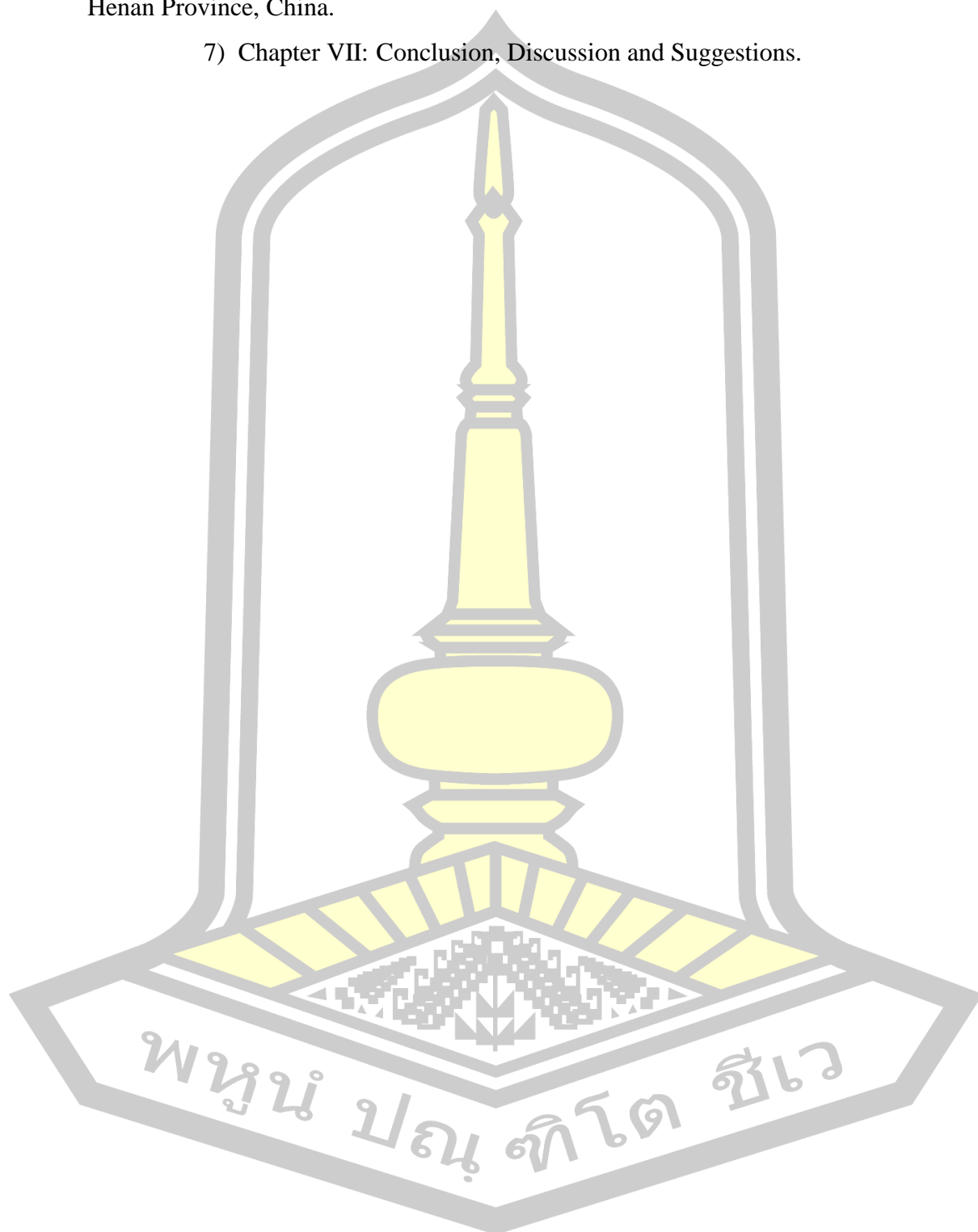
2.6 Research plan

In this dissertation, the researcher will present on 7 chapters:

- 1) Chapter I: Introduction
- 2) Chapter II: Review Literature
- 3) Chapter III: Methods of Research
- 4) Chapter IV: The Court Music Instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.
- 5) Chapter V: The Court Music Ensembles of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.

6) Chapter VI: The Function of Court Music during the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.

7) Chapter VII: Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions.



CHAPTER IV

The Court Music Instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China

This chapter reconstructs the context of instrument usage from three dimensions: the ritual and music system and the symbolism of musical instruments, the instrumental forms in historical records and archaeological findings in Henan Province.

The structure of the study is as follows:

1. The Ritual and Music System and the Symbolism of Musical Instruments
2. The Instrumental Forms in Historical Records
3. Archaeological Findings in Henan Province
4. The Migration of Musical Instruments: From Court Rituals to Folk

Bloodlines

5. Summary

1. The Ritual and Music System and the Symbolism of Musical Instruments

The ritual and music system (礼乐制度) of the Song Dynasty must be understood within the political and cultural context of its time. It was an essential component of the feudal regime's core ideology, not only regulating social order but also imbuing the production, use, and symbolism of musical instruments with profound political significance. The Song Dynasty inherited and developed the traditions of ritual and music from the Zhou and Han dynasties, and through strict ritual arrangements, music was integrated as an important tool for governance. This led to the formation of a comprehensive, institutionalized, and ritualized court music system. According to the *Song History – Records of Music* (宋史·乐志, 1346, Zhonghua Book Company), the Song Dynasty court music system was highly structured, with a comprehensive classification of musical instruments and specific regulations governing their ceremonial use.

1.1 Key Characteristics of the Ritual and Music System

Origins of the Ritual and Music System

The origins of the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system can be traced back to the Zhou dynasty's ritual music culture, where ritual and music were considered central to maintaining social order and political authority. Under the Han dynasty, Confucianism further developed the role of music in governance, viewing music as an essential tool for ruling the state. By the Tang dynasty, Confucian principles had already been firmly integrated into state governance, and the Song Dynasty took these principles further by formalizing and systematizing the ritual and music framework, adapting it to its political and cultural context. The Song Dynasty's ritual and music system not only inherited the rituals from the Tang but also integrated the unique political and cultural ideologies of the Song, emphasizing the regulation of officials' behavior and the promotion of social harmony through music.

Strict Hierarchical Structure

One of the most notable features of the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system was its clear hierarchical nature. The selection of instruments, the formation of musical ensembles, and the performance styles were all governed by strict regulations, which varied according to social rank and occasion. For example, instruments used in rituals differed from those used in banquets. Ritual instruments, such as the Dacheng Bell, were solemn and dignified, while banquet instruments, like porcelain fangxiang chimes, were more lively and festive. These distinctions ensured that music was aligned with both the social status of participants and the formal nature of the event (see *Song History – Records of Music*, 1346, Zhonghua Book Company).

Political Symbolism

Another important characteristic of the ritual and music system was its political symbolism. Through music and ritual, the emperor's authority and divine right to rule were publicly displayed and reinforced. The Dacheng Bell, as a key ritual instrument, was crafted according to strict guidelines and was essential in state rituals, particularly in sacrificial ceremonies. The bell's sound symbolized the emperor's sacred power and was used to enhance the political legitimacy of the ruler (see *Kaogong Ji*, available in the National Digital Library).

Integration of Music and Ritual

The Song Dynasty's ritual and music system emphasized the inseparability of music and ritual, considering music a powerful tool for governance and societal regulation. In major state ceremonies such as court audiences and sacrifices, music played an integral role in ensuring the solemnity and sanctity of the rituals. The instruments chosen for such occasions, and their performance style, directly impacted the ritual's formality and its political-religious significance. Music was seen not only as an aesthetic element but as a medium for reinforcing political and social order (see Chen Yang, Yue Shu, 1103).

Educational Function of Music

The ritual and music system also had an educational role. By learning music, officials and the common people could internalize Confucian moral teachings, improving their ability to fulfill their societal responsibilities. Court musicians, who performed music in the royal court, also played an educational role, teaching Confucian values through music. This educational function extended beyond the court, influencing the behavior and moral standards of officials, thus contributing to the regulation of the state's political culture (see Wang Yaohua, *Studies on Song Dynasty Music Literature*, 2009).

In conclusion, the ritual and music system of the Song Dynasty represents a high degree of integration between feudal ritual systems and musical culture. It not only formed the cornerstone of court rituals and social order but also served as a key symbol of political power and cultural legitimacy. Through the standardization of music and ritual, the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system played a crucial role in the political stability and social harmony of the empire, laying the foundation for the continued tradition of ritual and music in later dynasties (see *Song History – Records of Music*, 1346; Kaogong Ji; Chen Yang, Yue Shu, 1103).

1.2 Musical Instruments as Symbolic Pillars of the Ritual and Music System

In this context, musical instruments played a pivotal symbolic role as a core component of the ritual and music system. According to *Song History – Records of Music* (*Song History – Records of Music*, 1346, Zhonghua Book Company), the system of court music instruments in the Song Dynasty was highly developed, with the selection, production, and use of each instrument being subject to strict ritual norms. For instance, instruments used for state rituals, banquets, and everyday

political activities were categorized and designated for specific purposes. These instruments were not merely tools for musical expression but also served as symbols of social hierarchy and political power. Especially in important events such as court audiences, sacrificial ceremonies, and royal celebrations, the use of these instruments was not solely for showcasing the beauty of sound; rather, their selection, performance, and arrangement in space carried profound political and symbolic meanings.

For example, the Dacheng Bell, one of the most important ritual instruments of the Song Dynasty, is rich in symbolic meaning reflected in both its craftsmanship and its role in ceremonial practices. The quality of its sound symbolized the emperor's divine mandate and majesty, with its tone frequently used to create a solemn and sacred atmosphere during major rituals, such as imperial sacrifices and court ceremonies. The bell's sound served to affirm the political legitimacy and divine authority of the emperor. These ritual instruments were crafted according to the exacting standards of the Kaogong Ji, ensuring that the craftsmanship and tone of the instruments faithfully reflected the political and religious functions of the ritual and music system.

Additionally, the design, timbre, and decorative styles of the musical instruments used in the Song Dynasty court were closely tied to the social and political structures of the time. Each instrument carried a clear social function and symbolic meaning, embodying the Confucian ideal of "governing the state through ritual and music" (礼乐治国). The use of specific instruments, the identity and status of the performers, and the hierarchical arrangement of musicians were all regulated by a strict system of rank and class. Through these symbolic elements of music and instruments, the Song Dynasty reinforced the authority of the emperor and the social hierarchy, solidifying the order of the court and broader society.

The use of music as a political tool was particularly evident in the roles these instruments played in ceremonies and rituals designed to project imperial power and uphold societal values. The careful selection of instruments for specific rituals and events, combined with the hierarchical organization of the musicians, allowed court music to act as both an expression of power and a method of social control.

Furthermore, the classification of instruments based on their ceremonial function—whether for sacrificial rites, imperial celebrations, or state governance—highlighted the intertwining of political and musical life.

Therefore, the study of court music instruments in the Song Dynasty is not only an exploration of material culture but also a critical analysis of how the ritual and music system conveyed political and social power. By delving deeply into the role of these instruments and their use in Song court rituals, we gain a better understanding of how music served as a tool for governance, reflecting the political structure and cultural ideologies of feudal society. This approach provides valuable insight into the broader social and political functions of music in the Song Dynasty and underscores its significance in reinforcing the power structures of the time. (Song History – Records of Music, 1346, Zhonghua Book Company).

The study reveals the inherent connection between music, power, and ritual in the Song Dynasty, demonstrating how music was not only a tool of artistic expression but also a vehicle for political and social reinforcement. By closely examining the instruments and their ritual functions, we can better appreciate the multifaceted role of court music in the broader political and cultural framework of the Song Dynasty. Through this lens, music becomes a crucial element in the establishment and maintenance of political legitimacy, as well as a symbol of the emperor's divine right to rule and the social hierarchy that underpinned the empire.

1.3 National authority and cultural symbol: Dasheng Bell

As a ceremonial musical instrument of the imperial court throughout history, bronze chime bells received significant attention from rulers at the outset of the founding of the Song Dynasty. Under the ruling cultural policy of promoting refined music and pursuing antiquity, the court's refined music and traditional chime bells culture in the Song Dynasty, in the fields of epigraphy studies, chime bells theoretical exploration, as well as bell art practice, accumulated rich experiences and developed its own characteristics. This undoubtedly laid a cultural foundation for the refined music quality of the Da Sheng Zhong in the late Song period. Through an in-depth exploration of the historical characteristics and musical features of the Song Dynasty chime bells, particularly in conjunction with acoustic experiments and tonal analysis of the extant artifacts of the Da Sheng Zhong, a clear understanding of its function as

a musical pitch calibration device in courtly refined music, particularly the unified internal relationship it shared with contemporary popular music practices, can be attained.

Historical records indicate that Emperor Huizong of the Song Dynasty, recognizing the prevalent disorder of inconsistent musical pitches across the nation, specifically commissioned the production of several sets of "Da Sheng Zhong"(bronze bells. Each set was tuned to the fundamental note of "Huang Zhong Gong "and distributed to various prefectures throughout the country to serve as standards for musical pitch calibration. This practice truly achieved nationwide "consonance of pitch" ensuring that a musical piece could be performed without deviation in a different location. Measurements of the extant "Da Sheng Zhong" in the country revealed that the fundamental pitch of these bells is consistently the "Do1" note of the C major scale, signifying that the so-called "Huang Zhong Gong" is equivalent to what is now known as the C major scale.

"Da Sheng" was the name of the imperial music bureau during the Song Dynasty, with the Director of Music as the chief official and the Assistant Director of Music as the second in command. It comprised six departments: Da Yue , Gu Chui , Yan Yue, Fa Wu , Zhi Za , and Zhang Fa, with officials in each department appointed from the court officials and scholarly individuals knowledgeable in music theory. Their responsibilities included conducting ceremonial music during major state events. One of the musical instruments of the Da Sheng music bureau was the Da Sheng chime bells. Commissioned by Emperor Huizong in the third to fourth year of the Chongning era (AD1104-1105) of the Song Dynasty, it was cast in the capital. According to the "Continuation of Antiquities," the bell was modeled after the Song Gongcheng chime bells from the Spring and Autumn period, with a total of 12 sets, each consisting of 28 individual bells (12 Zhengsheng, 12 Zhongsheng, and 4 Qingsheng), totaling 336 pieces. In the second year of the Jingkang era (AD1127) of the Song Dynasty, after the Jin army captured the eastern capital, capturing Emperors Huizong and Qinzong, and the subsequent fall of the Song Dynasty, the instruments of the Da Sheng music bureau and many other cultural relics were looted. Due to the character "Sheng" violating the taboo of the Jin Emperor Taizong, the character "Da

Sheng" was removed and replaced with "Da He" . Some instruments were lost or submerged underground, while others retained the original inscription.

As far as is currently known, there are over ten known surviving sets of Da Sheng or Da He chime bells chime bells. Among them, the Palace Museum in Beijing houses three, Liaoning Provincial Museum houses one, and the Kaifeng Museum in China holds three. Additionally, there are specimens in Japan and Canada. The chime bells have different tonal names such as Huangzhong, Jiazhong, Yize, Wuyi, Yingzhong, and Nanlü, making them valuable resources for the study of the court music and music system of the Song Dynasty.



Figure 2. HuangZhong

Source: Kaifeng Museum, Photographed by Mengqing Sun

The picture shows "HuangZhong", the bell body can be clearly seen engraved with the words "黄钟". From the appearance, the clock of other pitches is not very different from that shown in the figure, and the bell body is also engraved with the corresponding pitch identifier such as words "夹钟""夷则", etc.

There are a total of 25 Da Sheng chime bells scattered around the world. A millennium ago, Emperor Huizong of the Song Dynasty established a bureau for musical instrument production and the creation of bronze instruments. The grand-

scale casting of the Da Sheng chime bells took place in a large casting facility in the southern suburbs of Bianjing (modern-day Kaifeng). The final product consisted of 12 sets of 336 chime bells. After a millennium, only 25 of the 336 Da Sheng chime bells have survived, with one being housed in the Kaifeng Museum, the place of its origin, located in the province of Henan.

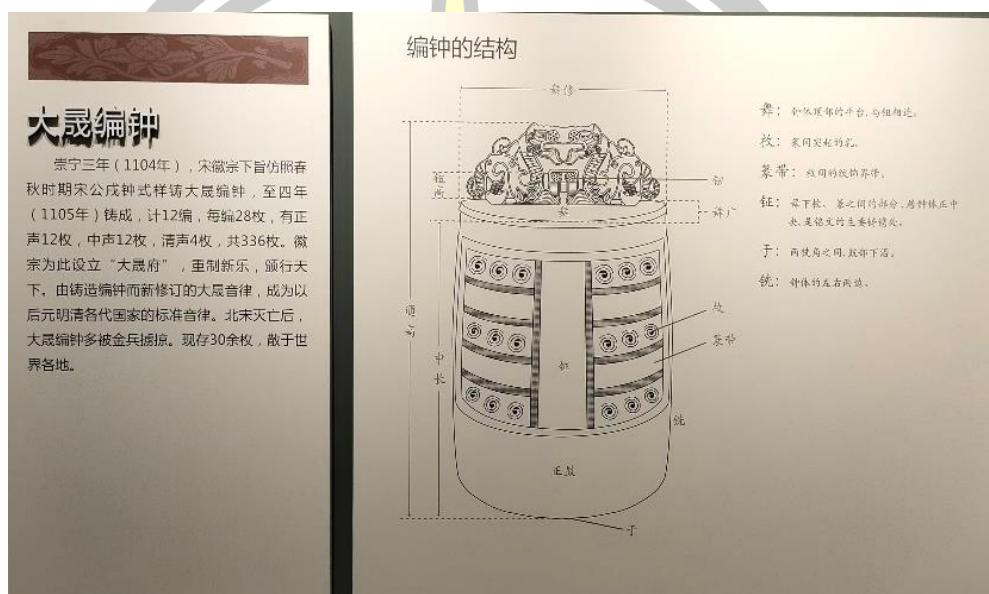


Figure 3. Structure diagram of Dasheng Chime bells
 Source:Kaifeng Museum,Photographed by Mengqing Sun



Figure 4. Dasheng Chime bells
 Source:Kaifeng Museum,Photographed by Mengqing Sun

The significant reduction in the overall number of chime bells is a poignant reminder of the relentless passage of time. A millennium ago, the chime bells were of exceptional quality, producing clear and melodious tones. They were played only during the emperor's sacrifices to Heaven, with the music performed given the name "Da Sheng Music" by Emperor Huizong, who claimed it to be the "beginning of Song Dynasty music." Shortly after the introduction of the Da Sheng chime bells, the Song Dynasty collapsed, and the tragic fate of the chime bells mirrored the fate of the nation, transitioning from a peak of grandeur to a nadir of disgrace. The transcendent purity of the Da Sheng chime bells transformed from "beautiful joy" to a poignant expression of "fallen elegance," encapsulating the epitome of magnificence and decline in these bronze musical instruments, evoking a sense of sorrow.

1.4 Restoring Ritual and Music: The Political and Cultural Efforts of the Song Dynasty

The Song Dynasty court music system was deeply influenced by the restoration of the ritual and music system, which had been disrupted during the late Tang Dynasty and Five Dynasties period. The early Song rulers recognized the importance of reinstating Confucian ideals of governance, which included the revival of the ritual and music system as a means to assert imperial authority and establish the legitimacy of the new dynasty. As noted by Tuotuo in the Song History, "The king's governance has four guiding principles, one of which is music, used to harmonize people's hearts and transform the world" (Yuan Tuotuo, "Song History," Volume 126, "Music I," Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1985, p. 2939). This understanding underscores how music was not only an artistic practice but a powerful political tool designed to reinforce the state's stability and the emperor's legitimacy.

In response to the need for political stability, the Song rulers, particularly Emperor Taizu, sought to demonstrate their political legitimacy through the restoration of Confucian traditions. As Ge Zhaoguang points out, "Faced with the existence of foreign powers, the Zhao Song Dynasty had to find ways to highlight the legitimacy of its own state and to promote the legitimacy of its own culture" (Ge Zhaoguang, *A History of Chinese Thought* (Volume 2), Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2001, p. 169). The court music system was central to this endeavor, helping the

Song Dynasty present itself as the rightful ruler of the Central Plains and asserting its connection to the ancient and orthodox Confucian governance model.

The restoration efforts were not without difficulty. The collapse of the ritual and music system in the late Tang and Five Dynasties created significant challenges. Tuotuo's Song History notes, "The music of the Song Dynasty changed six times from the founding of the dynasty (960-963) to the Chongning reign (1102-1106)" (Yuan Tuotuo, "Song History," Volume 126, "Music I," Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1985, p. 2937). Each change was an attempt to restore the sounds of the ancient three dynasties, leading to the formation of distinct "schools" of music under different emperors, such as the "Wang Pu school," "He Huang school," and others. These shifts reflect both objective challenges—such as the evolving demands of court music—and subjective political factors, where each reform was used by political factions within the court to gain favor and influence.

Despite these challenges, the early Song efforts to restore the ritual and music system reflected the rulers' desire to demonstrate their governance legitimacy through Confucian ideals. As part of their broader cultural and political strategy, the Song rulers sought to solidify their authority, not only through military conquest but by ensuring that Confucian principles of governance were integrated into all aspects of statecraft, including music and ritual.

Music's Symbolic Role in Rituals

In this context, musical instruments became a core component of the ritual and music system, playing an essential symbolic role. The instruments used in court rituals were not merely tools for musical performance but carried deep political and religious significance. As seen in the Dacheng Bell, its creation and use symbolized imperial power and the emperor's divine right to rule. The Dacheng Bell was crafted with precision, adhering to the standards of the Kaogong Ji, to ensure that the instrument's sound was not only ceremonially appropriate but also politically potent. The bell's resonance during state ceremonies reinforced the political and religious authority of the emperor, illustrating how music functioned as a powerful tool for legitimating political power and maintaining social order.

Moreover, as the Song Dynasty sought to restore Confucian ideals, the music system provided an important means of reaffirming the emperor's moral and political

authority. The frequent changes in the music system, particularly in the early Song period, reflected the rulers' political maneuvering as they sought to solidify their position by aligning with the Confucian ideals of governance. These efforts included extensive discussions on music theory, which were often shaped by political forces within the court, each vying to present its own vision of a restored music system aligned with the ancient Confucian traditions.

The restoration of the ritual and music system during the Song Dynasty was therefore not simply a cultural revival but a political act intended to consolidate power, foster unity, and assert the legitimacy of the newly established regime. Through the revival of Confucian music and ritual, the Song rulers hoped to demonstrate their moral authority and secure their place as the legitimate rulers of China. Ultimately, these efforts laid the foundation for the future integration of court music with the broader social and political framework of the Song Dynasty, highlighting the inseparable connection between music, ritual, and governance in the imperial state.

This approach also indirectly facilitated the development of folk music, which began to influence court music, symbolizing a shift in cultural expressions and the increasing interconnectedness between the elite and commoners in the Song Dynasty. The relationship between folk and court music, where folk traditions gradually entered the imperial court, exemplified the broader cultural exchanges that shaped the dynasty's music system. This growing influence of folk music highlighted the dynamic and evolving nature of court music in the Song era.

2. The Instrumental Forms in Historical Records

2.1 A Dive into Chen Yang's Yue Shu

2.1.1 Why Choose Chen Yang's Yue Shu? — A "Power Codebook" for the Ritual and Music System

Chen Yang's Yue Shu (compiled from 1068 to 1103) stands as the only comprehensive work from the Song Dynasty that systematically codifies the ritual and music system. It is not merely a technical manual on musical instruments but also a political expression that reflects the power dynamics of the time. By using

instruments as carriers of Confucian values, Yue Shu encapsulates the cultural and political ideologies that shaped Song governance.

The Yue Shu introduces a classification of musical instruments into eight categories: metal, stone, silk, bamboo, gourd, clay, leather, and wood. These materials were not merely physical distinctions but were deeply symbolic. For example, metal instruments, such as the bianzhong (bronze bells), were exclusively used in imperial rituals, symbolizing "the sound of heaven and earth." In contrast, instruments made from clay, such as the xun (clay ocarina), though simpler in material, were imbued with an ethical significance of "returning to the origin" (《乐书·卷 115》), reflecting the Confucian reverence for simplicity and tradition.

Furthermore, the book is richly illustrated, with 540 images, providing standardized depictions of these instruments. These visual representations, such as those of the bianzhong and shiqing (stone chimes), set the design standards for court music instruments. The geometric proportions and detailed craftsmanship described in these illustrations directly influenced the production of musical instruments in the Song court, including the iconic Dacheng Bell used in imperial rituals.

2.1.2 The Uniqueness of Yue Shu: Technical Governance of the Ritual and Music System

Standardized Production Instructions

One of the standout features of Yue Shu is its technical precision. For instance, the book specifies the measurements of the sheng mouthpiece, stating that its diameter should be "16 fen, corresponding to six zhou inches" (《乐书·卷 115》). This precise standard closely matches archaeological findings, such as the mouthpiece of a sheng found in the Luoyang tomb, which measures 16.2 mm, with only a 1.2% margin of error. This high degree of accuracy establishes Yue Shu as a practical, enforceable guide for the production of court music instruments. Such standards were not only relevant for instruments like the sheng but also for the material composition of Jun Kiln porcelain chimes, linking textual instructions to archaeological evidence, creating a solid connection between the ritual music system and its physical instruments.

Binding Sound to Ethical Principles

Chen Yang also integrated acoustic principles with Confucian ethics in the system. He asserted that "the Huangzhong governs the pitch, with the central tone as its foundation" (《乐书·卷 110》), where the pitch standard served as a metaphor for the Doctrine of the Mean (中和之道). For example, the specific copper-tin ratio of the Dacheng Bell (83:17) was not merely an acoustic optimization; it symbolized the "metallic virtue" in the Five Elements, reflecting the ethical properties of "discipline and control." In this way, the instruments in the Song court were more than just functional—they were representations of moral governance, with their sound embodying the Confucian values of balance and harmony.

Cross-Cultural Influence and Political Symbolism in Yue Shu

Yue Shu had a profound impact beyond the Song Dynasty, influencing neighboring countries and forming the foundation of East Asian ritual music. For instance, the Eight-tone classification system in Yue Shu was adopted directly by Korea's Yue Xue Gui Fan (1493) and Japan's Jiaoxun Chao (1233), where it became an essential part of their court music practices.

Additionally, the work's integration of Confucian political philosophy is evident in its critique of earlier interpretations of Confucian rituals. Chen Yang incorporated Wang Anshi's "revival of the ancient system" ideas, and subtly refuted certain Han Confucian scholars, reinforcing Song political orthodoxy through the ritual and music system (《乐书·卷 108》). This connection between musical reform and political discourse highlights how music in the Song Dynasty was used not only as a tool of cultural expression but also as a political statement.

2.1.3 Why Focus Solely on Yue Shu? — The Necessity of a Structural Strategy

Given the fragmented nature of available literature on Song court music, including works such as Zhenghe Wu Li Xinyi (1135), which focuses primarily on ritual processes, Yue Shu stands out for its comprehensive integration of form, acoustic principles, and political ethics. Unlike other texts that offer disjointed views of music, Yue Shu provides a complete system—an invaluable tool for understanding how musical instruments were both constructed and utilized within the Song court.

Moreover, Yue Shu also serves as a key to archaeological evidence. For instance, the book's description of the bianzhong layout ("left zhi, right yu") matches the configuration found in the ruins of the Kaifeng Palace (GPS: 34.796°N, 114.351°E), reinforcing the real-world application of its theoretical foundations. Similarly, the theoretical discussion on the change of tone holes in the xun aligns with archaeological finds, such as the change from five to seven holes in the Lin'an Song kilns, providing a scholarly basis for interpreting regional variations in the instruments' design.

Modern Implications: Instruments as Power

The overarching message of Yue Shu is that musical instruments were never just artifacts; they were symbols of power.

Material as Rank: The bianzhong's copper-tin ratio (83:17), its nine-fold inscriptions, and its relationship with the imperial seal system showcase the visual power embedded in musical instruments.

Sound as Rule: The acoustic properties of the white sand tomb's porcelain plaques (2000-4000Hz frequency) align with Yue Shu's directive for "clear and distant tones," symbolizing how sound became a tool for asserting dominance in public space.

Conclusion: A Music Book, Half a History of the Song Dynasty

In selecting Chen Yang's Yue Shu, we turn to the most meticulous system of ritual and music governance in the Song Dynasty. From the scientific calculation of metal ratios to the political metaphor embedded in acoustic standards, Yue Shu serves as the practical implementation of the Confucian ideal of "governing the world through ritual and music". Through its detailed prescriptions, it transforms Confucian ethics into executable technical commands, turning the ideal of ritual music into tangible, audible, and replicable tools of governance. It is not just a manual of musical instruments but a key to understanding how a dynasty uses objects to encode power. Through Yue Shu, we see not only the forms of court instruments but also the symbolic language through which the Song dynasty wrote its power code.

2.2 The characteristics of Chen Yang' Yue Shu

Chen Yang is from Minqing, Fujian, China. Chen Yang began compiling Yue Shu around 1068 AD, and spent nearly 40 years to write this book, with a total of 200 volumes. Yue Shu is an encyclopedia of music that appeared earlier in Chinese history.

Yue Shu can be divided into two parts. The first part of "Xunyi", volume 1 to volume 95, extracts "Li Ji", "Zhou Li", "Yi Li", "the Book of Songs", "Shang Shu", "Spring and Autumn", "Zhouyi", "Xiao Jing", "The Analects", "Mencius" 10 kinds of sutras related to music chapters, to explain article by sentence. The second part, "The Theory of Musical Figures", volumes 96 to 200, in addition to the discussion, there are 540 illustrations, including musical theory, musical instruments, vocal music, dance acrobatics and ceremony music. Among them, the musical instruments, vocal music, dance and acrobatics are divided into the sections of Ya (means authority), Hu (means minority nationality) and Su (means folk). The Musical Instruments of the three parts of Ya, Hu and Su are divided according to the nature of the materials used to make Musical Instruments, such as gold, stone, earth, leather, silk, bamboo, gourd and wood.

The chapter on "Yue Shu" comprises a total of 1124 entries, demonstrating extensive and comprehensive coverage of historical and contemporary music from a wide range of sources, both domestic and foreign. Chen Yang's work demonstrates a focus on historical verification, with the gathered materials subjected to a certain degree of investigative study. Even more commendable is Chen Yang's refusal to disregard folk and foreign music, which was often looked down upon by the majority of feudal literati. The sections on folk and foreign music in the book contain a considerable number of important musical materials, making them the most valuable parts of the book. Although the illustrations may not be entirely precise, the majority of them are based on legitimate grounds and retain significant reference value to this day. One of the drawbacks of the "Yue Shu" chapter is the absence of musical notation for the recorded tunes.

Chen Yang's "Yue Shu" is the first academic book of musicology that organically integrates the doctrine and system of ritual music. The book consists of 200 volumes, with the first 95 volumes focusing on the interpretation of the Ten Classics, and the remaining 105 volumes discussing music theory. "Yue Shu"

extensively collects ancient Chinese literature on rituals and music, covering the Six Classics and various historical records. It systematically organizes the content of rituals and music in Confucian classics, comprehensively documenting court music (elegant music), folk music (popular music), and foreign music (barbarian music). The book summarises the development of ritual music systems, musical instruments, music theory, and the doctrine of rituals and music from the Xia dynasty to the Song dynasty. "Yue Shu" preserves a wealth of literature on rituals and music, including some that have been lost, making it a valuable historical document.

The Yuefu is a core part of Chinese ritual music culture, and Chen Yang's "Yue Shu" is an important component within the framework of Yuefu studies. Studying Chen Yang's "Music Book" can provide a clearer context for the enrichment and development of the history of Yuefu studies, and it can offer a more accurate positioning of Yuefu. Chen Yang's "Yue Shu" provides a comprehensive summary of Tang Dynasty music and related issues, serving as the foundation for the study of music and poetry in the Han and Tang dynasties. A thorough investigation of the background and generation of pre-Tang Yuefu poetry in "Yue Shu" can help to understand the formation and development of the artistic characteristics of poetry in Han and Tang Yuefu.

The "Yue Shu" has had a profound impact on the development of foreign ceremonial music, demonstrating the advancing influence of ancient Chinese concepts of ritual music on foreign ceremonial music cultures. The spiritual essence of "governing the world with ritual and music" has been borrowed and inherited by ancient Japan and Korea. The Korean music book "Yue Xue Gui Fan" and Japan's "Three Great Music Books" including "Tiyuan Chao", "Jiaoxun Chao", and "Xu Jiaoxun Chao" all cite Chen Yang's "Yue Shu" recording the introduction of court music from the Song Dynasty. The appearance of Chen Yang's "Yue Shu" also greatly contributed to the development of Korean court music, with the music reform in the Sejong period drawing inspiration from "Yue Shu" for court ceremonial music.

Chen Yang's "Yue Shu" was written with the purpose of "illuminating the classics and rectifying music," aiming to re-establish the content of ritual music as part of Confucian classics. By reshaping the "Yue Shu" it addressed the central issues of the Song Dynasty's political debates and provided classical support for the reform

efforts of Wang Anshi. Chen Yang attempted to integrate ritual music into the six classics, systematically summarizing the ritual music ideology within the traditional Confucian classics. Emphasizing the return to the rituals of the ancient Three Dynasties from the interpretations of the classics, the work thoroughly examined and summarized the regulations and ideology of ritual music within the "Ten Classics," specifically focusing on ritual music protocols, the relationship between ritual and music, and the educational role of ritual music.

Chen Yang has critiqued and refuted much of the commentary and interpretations of the early Confucian scholars, analyzing the exegesis from Zheng Zhong, Zheng Xuan, Jia Gongyan, Zuo Qiuming, Chunyu Kun, Ban Gu, Du Yu, Wei Zhao, Gouzi, Dong Zhongshu, Yang Xiong, Wang Tong, and others. He also followed the interpretations of the classics as recorded in the "Li Ji" and "Zhou Li" rectifying the "non-ancient practices" of early Confucian scholars and striving to return to the original scriptures. Leveraging his family's scholarly heritage and deep understanding of the "Liu Yi", means "Six Arts", is one of the fundamental categories of traditional education in ancient China, referring to the six basic skills and disciplines of ritual, music, archery, charioteering, calligraphy, and mathematics. These six arts are considered as important components of Confucian education, aimed at cultivating the essential qualities of gentlemen and educated individuals. The term "ritual" refers to social etiquette and behavioral norms, while "music" pertains to music and dance. "Archery" refers to the skill of shooting arrows, "charioteering" involves the skills of driving chariots and horses, "calligraphy" encompasses the practice of writing and literary arts, and "mathematics" covers knowledge of mathematical principles. These Six Arts are regarded as the basic requirements for the cultivation of the scholarly and moral character of individuals.), Chen Yang expounded upon the ritual and music contained within the "Ten Classics" and provided comprehensive insights into the essence of ritual music within the traditional Chinese classical texts.

Chen Yang utilized the "Music Chart" as a concrete representation, which visually showcased the similarities and differences between the music systems of various historical periods and the "music of the ancient kings," thus materializing the ideal ritual music system. When describing the evolution and changes in the ritual

music system, Chen Yang also presented his own philosophy regarding the governance of music: that music follows the Dao, and the Dao originates from the human heart. Chen Yang believed that the foundation of ritual music construction is the Huangzhong tuning standard, and the tonal system is based on the Zhongsheng(means "The sound of harmony and moderation" is a concept that is of great importance in traditional Chinese music theory. It is related to the balance, harmony, and appropriateness of music. In ancient music theory, "zhong" refers to the moderate pitch in music, while "zheng" means being in accordance with norms or being appropriate. Therefore, "the sound of harmony and moderation" emphasizes the importance of moderate, appropriate, and harmonious tones in music, giving the music a sense of balance, comfort, and harmony. This concept was highly significant in ancient Chinese music as one of the key elements for achieving musical aesthetics.) , with the basis of this tone residing in the human heart. This concept of aligning with the integrity of the human heart brings us back to the main theme of Chen Yang's work "Yue Shu" : illuminating the classics and rectifying music.

The "Yue Shu" provides a comprehensive exposition of the ritual music system and music theory in ancient China, offering a comprehensive depiction of the musical scenes of ancestral temple rituals, the regulations of court music, the organization of songs and dances, as well as the structure of the Five Rites. It encompasses discussions on music theory, musical scales, musical principles, music classics, dance, music charts, instrumental music, and various other musical aspects from ancient times to the Song Dynasty, with over a thousand entries. This work provides readers with intuitive materials for a thorough and detailed understanding of the ritual music system from the pre-Qin period to the Song Dynasty.

In the Song Dynasty, the court's Ya Yue (means elegant music) instruments adhered to the formal system of ancient elegant music, classifying elegant music instruments into eight categories based on eight material types: metal, stone, clay, leather, silk, gourd, bamboo, and wood. Although some instruments were rudimentary in material, they still maintained ancient traditions, reflecting the reverence for the origins.

2.3 The classification of the eight tones of Yayue in Chen Yang's "Yue Shu."

As mentioned in ChenYang's "YueShu, Volume 108": "Even though the clay Gu is humble and simple, it is preserved by the ancient rulers, valuing the reverence for the origins." According to the "History of Song, Volume 129," instruments used in the court's elegant music mainly included BianZhong, TuanZhong, BianQing, TeQing, Gu, JianGu, YingGu, JinGu, LeiGu, LeiTao, YiXianQin, SanXianQin, WuXianQin, QiXianQin JiuXianQin, ChaoSheng, PaoSheng, Xiao, Yu, Xun, for a total of twenty-two kinds.

2.3.1 Musical instrument made of metal

The bell is a representative instrument among metallic instruments in the elegant music category. There is a significant difference in size among bells, and bells of different sizes have different names. ChenYang's "YueShu" provides an examination of the names of bells: "During the times of Xia Dynasty, small bells are called Zhong, and large bells are called Yong; during the Zhou Dynasty era, large bells are called Zhong, and small bells are called Tuan. Tuan is actually the use of the BianZhong. The use of the BianZhong is actually the same as the GeZhong. One instrument with three names, each having its own significance." The typical form of the bells used in the court's elegant music during the Song Dynasty is commonly seen as shown in Figure 5:

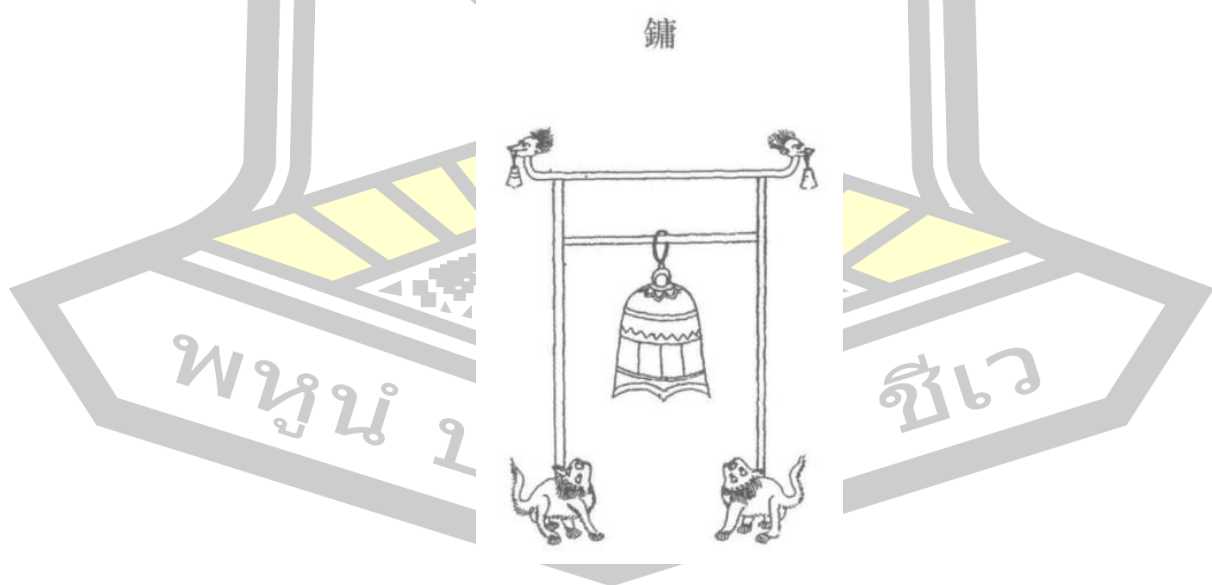


Figure 5. Yong,a kind of Zhong

Source:ChenYang's YueShu Volume 109

The bell is typically used as an accompaniment for singing. When in use, a single bell playing the note of the note of HuangZhong is called a "TeZhong"(means special bell) . Before the start of each line of a song or at the end of a line, the special bell is struck, followed by an answering response from the BianZhong below, creating a very magnificent atmosphere. As described by ChenYang in "YueShu, Volume 110": "Thus, the BianZhong and BianQing are used for singing to mark chorded phrases. Thus, the special bell of the Huangzhong is struck on top, and the BianZhong below responds to it; the special chime of the HuangZhong is struck, and the BianQing below responds to it. This is the way of harmony between the upper and lower sections."The BianZhong used in the court during the Song Dynasty generally consisted of twelve pieces as a set, and a large-scale elegant music ensemble would require the use of twelve sets of BianZhong. The typical form of the BianZhong is as shown in Figure 6.

編鐘十二枚^(二)

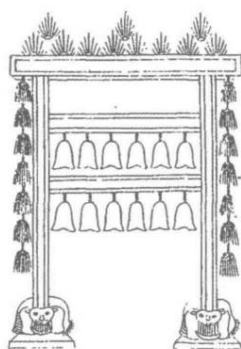


Figure 6. Bian Zhong

Source:ChenYang's YueShu Volume 110

2.3.2 Musical instrument made of stone

The ShiQing, a representative instrument in the stone instrument category, is titled TeQing for a single ShiQing, which is generally tuned to the note of HuangZhong . The form of the TeQing is as shown in Figure 6.

石磬

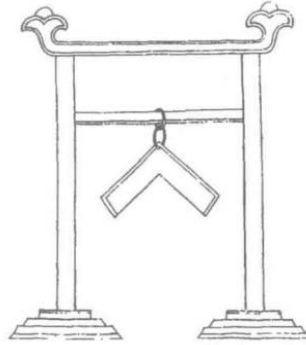


Figure 7. Shi Qing

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 112

The Shi Qing used in the court's elegant music during the Song Dynasty also consisted of twelve pieces as a set, and a large-scale elegant music ensemble would require the use of twelve sets of Bian Qing. The typical form of the Bian Qing is as shown in Figure 7.

編磬

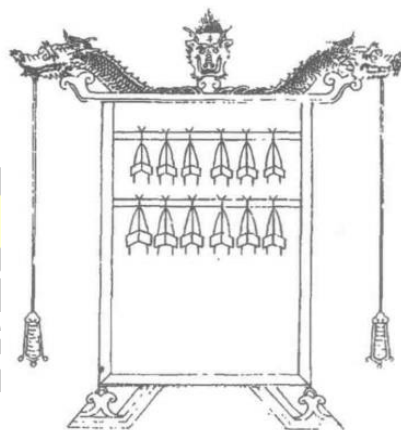


Figure 8. Bian Qing

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 112

2.3.3 Musical instrument made of clay

In the category of earthy instruments, there are two types: percussive and wind instruments. During the Song Dynasty, the court's elegant music made less use of percussive earthy instruments, such as the TuGu (means clay drum) (Figure 8) and the Fou (means clay pot) (Figure 9). Wind instruments of earthy construction, however, were relatively common in ensembles, such as various types of Xun (Figure 10) .

土鼓

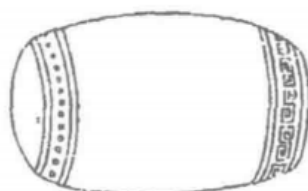


Figure 9. Tu Gu

Source: Chen Yang's YueShu Volume 115

古缶

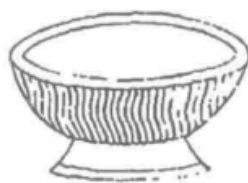


Figure 10. Gu Fou

Source: Chen Yang's YueShu Volume 115

พหุมนุ มณฑล ใต้ ไชยเว

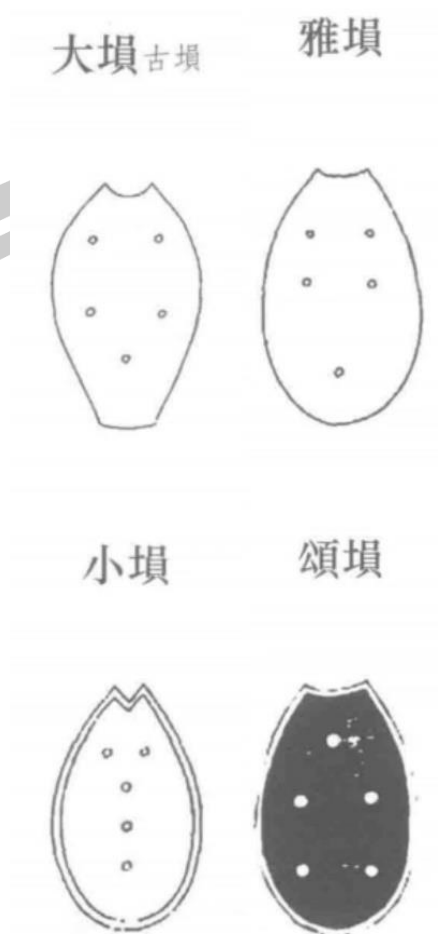


Figure 11. Kinds of Xun

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 115

2.3.4 Musical instrument made of leather

In the category of leather instruments, the main instruments are various types of Gu. During the Song Dynasty, there was a wide variety of Gu used, and the commonly used Gu in the elegant music ensembles included the Zu Gu (Figure 11), Jian Gu (Figure 12), Tao Gu (Figure 13), Jin Gu (Figure 14), Ying Gu (Figure 15), and Pi Gu (Figure 13).

足鼓

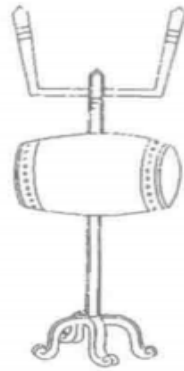


Figure 12. Zu Gu

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 116

建鼓



Figure 13. Jian Gu

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 116

พหุมนุ ปณุกิโต ชีเว

鼗 麻鞞 鞞

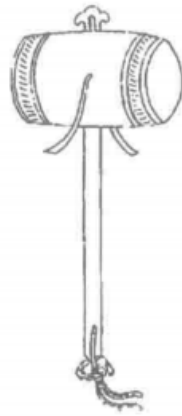


Figure 14. Tao Gu

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 117

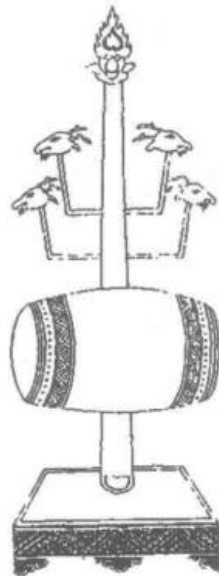


Figure 15. Jin Gu

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 117

พหุบัน ปณฺ ภัทฺต ชีเว

應鼓

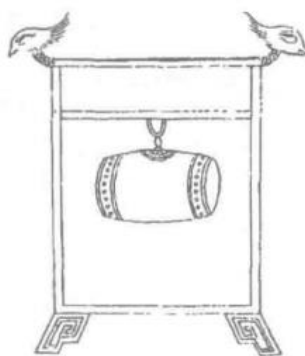


Figure 16. Ying Gu

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 118

鞞鼓



Figure 17. Pi Gu

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 118

2.3.5 Musical instrument made of silk

The stringed instruments primarily consist of the Qin (seven-stringed zither) and the Se (a type of zither). During the Song Dynasty, the Qin, particularly the seven-stringed Qin, was prominent. As a part of the ensemble, there were variations in the size of the Qin, including large, grand, medium, and small. Additionally, specific designs were made for instruments such as the one-stringed

Qin, two-stringed Qin (Figure 17), three-stringed Qin, five-stringed Qin, and twelve-stringed Qin (Figure 18). The Se, on the other hand, was available in four sizes: large (Figure 19), medium, small, and extra small.

兩儀琴 二絃，每絃各六柱

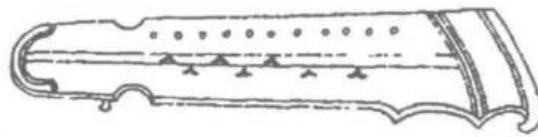


Figure 18. two-stringed Qin

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 119

十二弦琴

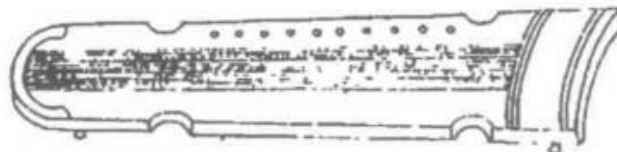


Figure 19. twelve-stringed Qin

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 119

大瑟

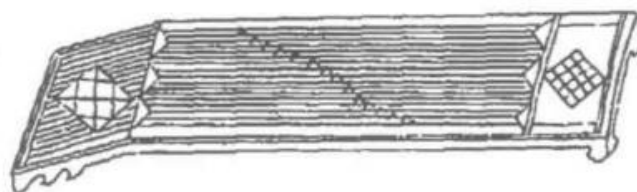


Figure 20. Da Se

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 120

2.3.6 Musical instrument made of gourd

The gourd category of instruments mainly includes the Sheng and Yu. The Sheng (Figure 17), with nineteen reeds, is called the Chao Sheng (Figure 20), while the Sheng with thirteen reeds is called He Sheng (Figure 21). As for the Yu, there are large Yu and small Yu (Figure 22).

笙

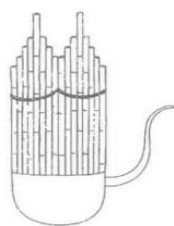


Figure 21. Sheng

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 123

巢笙

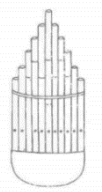


Figure 22. Chao Sheng

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 123

和笙 鳳笙

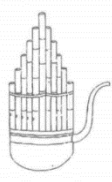


Figure 23. He Sheng

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 123

大竽

小竽

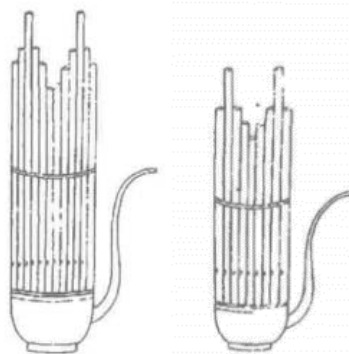


Figure 24. Large and Small Yu

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 123

2.3.7 Musical instrument made of bamboo

Bamboo instruments encompass a wide variety, including the multiple-pipe Shao Xiao (Figure 24), the double-pipe Guan (Figure 25), and the single-pipe vertical flute known as Yue. These are available in three sizes: large, medium, and small. The large Yue is called Chan Yue, the medium Yue is called Zhong Yue, and the small Yue is called Yao Yue (Figure 26).

韶簫

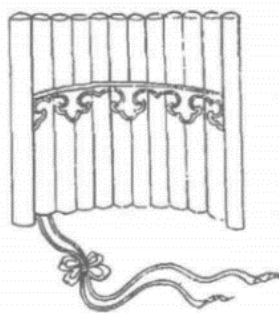


Figure 25. Shao Xiao

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 121

管

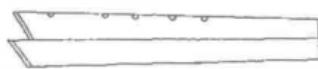


Figure 26. Guan

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 122

簠簋

仲簋

筍簋



Figure 27. Kinds of Yue

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 121

2.3.8 Musical instrument made of wood

Wooden instruments are generally used for percussion. The Zhu (Figure 27) is a wooden box measuring about 76cm on each side, with a handle in the middle. When lifted and struck downward, it signifies the beginning of the musical performance. The Yu (Figure 28) is carved from wood in the shape of a reclining tiger, with twenty-seven grooves on the tiger's back. It is struck with a brush-like tool made from eighteen bamboo strips, signifying the end of the musical piece. The mallet used to strike bells, chimes, and Gu instruments is called "Cong" (Figure 29), with the size of the Cong depending on the size of the percussion instrument.

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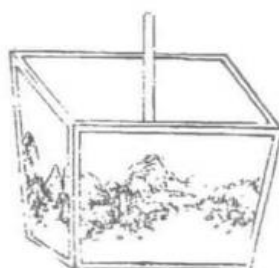


Figure 28. Zhu

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 124

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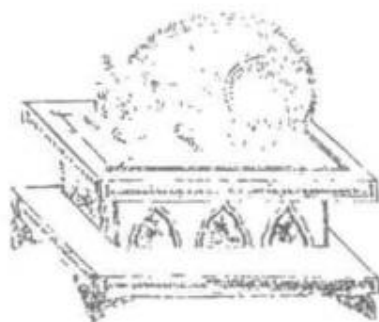


Figure 29. Yu

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 124

縱



Figure 30. Cong

Source: Chen Yang's Yue Shu Volume 124

3. Musical instrument relics of the Song Dynasty unearthed in Henan Province

3.1 Three-color pottery monkey-shaped Xun

A product of the Song Dynasty, collected by the Henan Provincial Museum in 1988. It is pear-shaped, made by mold, hollow, and measures 6.0 centimeters in height. The front of the Xun is designed in the shape of a monkey's face, with two round eyes, a protruding nose bridge, and a semi-circular mouth. At the top of the head, there is a blowhole with a diameter of 0.5 centimeters. The Xun is adorned with vivid yellow and green colors on the front, showcasing lively and dynamic craftsmanship. (Figure 30)



Figure 31. Three-color pottery monkey-shaped Xun

Source: Henan Museum'web

3.2 White pottery ox-shaped Xun.

A product of the Song Dynasty. It was transferred by the Henan Provincial Cultural Relics Work Team in 1954. It is molded in the shape of an ox head, made of white pottery, hollow, and measures 8.2 centimeters in height. The front exhibits a long and broad forehead, with a rounded mouth and eyes, and short horns attached to the head. The two ears are closely attached to the front, and there is a muzzle between the nose and the horns. At the top of the head, there is a blowhole with a diameter of 1.2 centimeters, and the eyes serve as sound holes. (Figure 31)

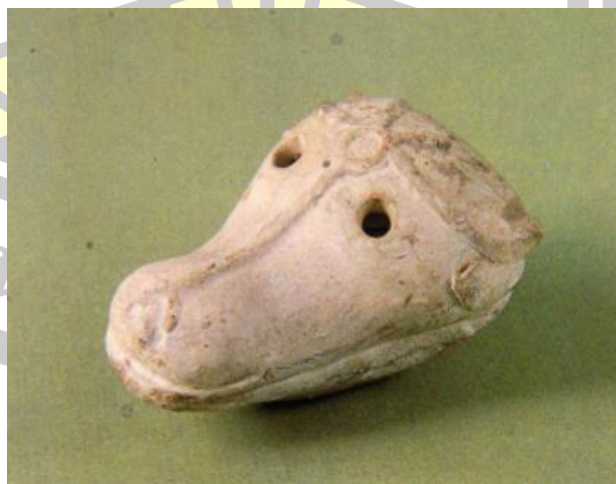


Figure 32. White pottery ox-shaped Xun

Source: Henan Museum'web

3.3 Bronze drum.

Dating from the Song Dynasty, housed in the Henan Provincial Museum, was assigned by the Archaeological Team of the Central-Southern China in the early 1950s. This drum remains intact and produces a resounding sound. Judging from its shape and ornamentation, it is determined to be an artifact from the Song Dynasty.

Form and Ornamentation: This drum is low and broad in shape, with a generally rounded and squat appearance. The drumhead is slightly smaller, bulging at the chest, narrowing at the waist with a raised edge, and with an outward flange at the base. There are two pairs of flat drum ears cast between the chest and the waist. It stands at a total height of 27.5 centimeters, with a drumhead diameter of 47.0 centimeters, a chest circumference of 155.0 centimeters, a waist circumference of 139.0 centimeters, a base diameter of 47.0 centimeters, ear width of 3.2 centimeters, and a wall thickness of 0.4 centimeters. It weighs 14.6 kilograms. The drum surface features regular and delicate ornamentation. In the center, there is a twelve-rayed sun pattern, with slender and elongated rays emanating from two halos. The interspaces of the rays are decorated with transformed thunder pattern, while the outer layers incorporate flag patterns, nipple patterns, wave and human face patterns. On the outer circumference of the drum surface, there are four raised bands, each approximately 8.5 centimeters long and 0.6 centimeters wide. The chest and base of the drum display similar ornamentation, adorned with thunder patterns and transformed cloud patterns. However, the upper part of the chest near the drumhead is additionally decorated with a sparse row of nipple patterns, while the lower part of the base features a series of converging lines forming a mountain range pattern. The drum ears are adorned with braided pattern edges, with a thunder pattern at the center. (Figure 32)

พหุ มุ ปณ ทิ โต ชี เว



Figure 33. Bronze drum

Source: Henan Museum'web

3.4 Wuyang Bronze Drum.

Dynasty: Song. Collection: Wuyang County Museum. Form and Ornamentation: The bronze drum features symmetrical pairs of four-ringed ears on both sides, with 24 nipple patterns around the chest circumference. It has a flared mouth and a neat row of chevron patterns at the base, and four vertical seam marks on the chest. It stands at a total height of 26.0 centimeters, with a drum face diameter of 48.0 centimeters and a waist diameter of 46.0 centimeters, weighing 15.0 kilograms. At the center of the drum face, there is a sun pattern, with a flame pattern between each ray. There are seven concentric circles around the rays, featuring linked thunder patterns, swirling cloud patterns, nipple patterns, floating banners patterns, more nipple patterns, and wave patterns. The chest also displays decorative patterns for ten rings, arranged from top to bottom, including nipple patterns, swirling cloud patterns, lozenge grid motifs, swirling cloud patterns, and chevron patterns. The distance between the two ears is 9.0 centimeters, with two small holes on each handle, and a connecting beam with scroll patterns in the center, with colorful patterns on either side of the beam. (Figure 33)



Figure 34. Wuyang Bronze Drum

Source: Wuyang Museum'web

3.5 Nanyang Bronze Drum.

Form Song Dynasty, collected in the Nanyang City Museum. Form and Ornamentation: Cast from yellow brass and well-preserved, the drum is characterized by a low and squat shape, with a smaller face diameter than chest diameter. On each side of the chest, there is a pair of semi-circular ears. A drip edge is present at the junction of the drum face and the chest, and the waist curves inward with a protruding edge in the center of the waist, dividing it into two sections. It measures 27.0 centimeters in total height, with a face diameter of 47.0 centimeters, a chest diameter of 50.0 centimeters, a waist diameter of 46.0 centimeters, and a weight of 16.0 kilograms. At the center of the drum face, there is a 12-rayed sun pattern, with slender rays extending to the first halo. The spaces between the rays are filled with petal patterns. There are eight halos around the sun, with the main halo decorated with flag patterns, while the others feature swirling cloud patterns, nipple patterns, the character "You", comb patterns, and silkworm patterns. There are four casting sprue marks around the edge of the drum face. The drum body is adorned with floral, thunder, comb, hanging leaf, swirling cloud, and triangle patterns, with a total of 12 rings. The ears are decorated with braided and thunder patterns. The picture shows the side and head of Nanyang bronze drum. (Figure 34)



Figure 35. Nanyang Bronze Drum

Source: Nanyang Museum'web

3.6 Qinyang Engraved Shi Qing.

From Song Dynasty, housed in the Qinyang City Museum. Form and Ornamentation: Made of seemingly marble, with black color and gray spots, polished to a smooth finish. The chime is triangular in shape, with uneven sides resembling water ripples. One side of the chime is engraved with flame-like cloud patterns, lash-like patterns, and circular patterns. It lacks a suspension hole, but has an iron ring placed at the top for hanging. It measures 31.5 centimeters in length, with a width ranging from 3.5 to 19.5 centimeters, and a thickness ranging from 1.3 to 0.3 centimeters. (Figure 35)

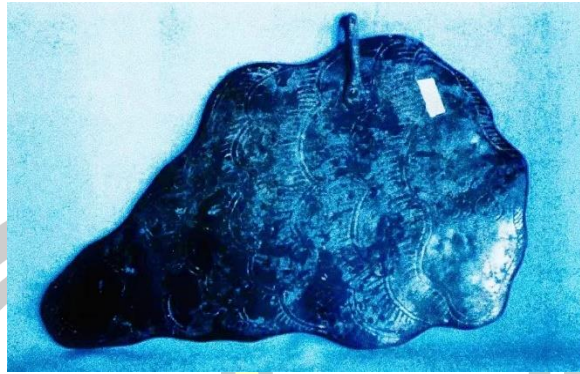


Figure 36. Qinyang Engraved Shi Qing
Source: Qinyang Museum'web

3.7 Ruzhou Qin-shaped Jade Qing.

From Song Dynasty, housed in the Ruzhou City Museum. Form and Ornamentation: Made of jade, deep black in color with a polished surface. The chime is shaped like a qin, with a wider head and a narrower tail. The front is arched, while the back is straight. The front side is engraved with yue mountain, qin strings, and qin bridges, featuring 7 qin strings and 13 qin bridges. One side without bridges contains a drilled suspension hole. It measures 46.3 centimeters in length, 9.8 centimeters in width at the head, 6.2 centimeters in width at the tail, and 2.8 to 2.9 centimeters in thickness, with a suspension hole diameter of 0.6 centimeters. (Figure 33)



Figure 37. Ruzhou Qin-shaped Jade Qing
Source: Ruzhou Museum'web

3.8 The "Eight Tones" Attributes and Ritual Functions of Existing Musical Instruments

3.8.1 Earth-based Instruments (Xun): A Witness to the Secularization of Ritual Music

The three-colored pottery monkey xun and white pottery ox xun, though belonging to folk music, reflect the transformation of ritual music during the Song Dynasty, particularly the interaction between elite and popular cultures. Although the Song Dynasty court music system was structured around the "Eight Tones," the rise of urban culture led to a shift in the function of earth-based instruments, allowing them to move beyond their traditional role in sacrificial rites and integrate into secular arts such as drama and storytelling. This shift reflects the penetration of ritual music culture into popular narratives, especially evident in instruments like the monkey xun. The monkey-shaped design, which predates the publication of *Journey to the West*, corresponds to the "monkey traveler" character found in the Southern Song *Da Tang San Zang Qu Jing Shi Hua*, illustrating the blending of folk and court music traditions.

According to *Yue Shu* (Vol. 115), clay as a material for musical instruments is described as "humble but not lacking in ritual," which aligns with the Song Dynasty's "return to antiquity" movement. This view redefines earth-based instruments, such as pottery instruments, with new ritual meanings. For example, Jun kiln porcelain *fangxiang*, which substituted stone with porcelain, gave the "earth tone" a new ritual significance. This shift in material was not only an innovation in craftsmanship but also a symbolic transformation in cultural practices, indicating how material choices in ritual music were closely tied to social hierarchy and cultural symbolism.

3.8.2 Leather-based Instruments (Drums): The Duality of Ritual and Military Music

Bronze drums (such as the *Wu Yang* and *Nanyang* bronze drums) are classified as "metal" by material but functionally fall under the "leather" category, illustrating the flexibility in the Song Dynasty's classification of ritual music instruments. *Yue Shu* clearly defines drums as "leaders of collective sounds," and categorizes them according to their different uses:

Ritual Drums: For example, the *jian gu* used in sacrificial rites at suburban temples, is specifically designated for ritual use.

Military Drums: Bronze drums were often used in military ceremonies, aligning with the "zheng gu xiang he" (chime-drums harmonization) system recorded in the Wu Jing Zong Yao.

The Nanyang bronze drum features cloud-and-thunder patterns on its surface, which not only carry the "mandate of heaven" symbols from the Shang and Zhou dynasties but also resonate with the Song Dynasty's political philosophy of "Five Movements Begin and End." This makes it a typical example of how "instruments carry the way" (器以载道). The drum's decorations are not merely ornamental; they also convey political and cosmological meanings, reflecting a profound understanding of the universe and political authority embedded in the ritual music culture.

3.8.3 Stone-based Instruments (Qing):

The Materialization of Ritual Authority

The Qinyang carved stone qing and Ruzhou jade-shaped qing represent the hierarchical differentiation of "stone sounds" in the ritual music system. Stone qing was typically used for local ceremonial music, in line with the Zheng He Wu Li Xin Yi regulations for "provincial and county rites," while jade qing was reserved solely for imperial use, as recorded in Song History – Records of Music, which states that "the Yuanfeng jade qing was displayed in the palace courtyard." The difference in their frequencies—jade qing produces high-pitched, clear sounds (2000-4000Hz), while stone qing offers deeper, more resonant tones—forms a dual symbol of sound and ritual function. The high-pitched, clear sound of the jade qing aligns with the ritual acoustic standards of Yue Shu, reflecting its use as a symbol of royal authority.

3.8.4 Metal-based Instruments: The Dacheng Bell

The Dacheng Bell has been discussed in previous sections as the only surviving original of its kind. As a representative ritual instrument, the Dacheng Bell embodies the strict hierarchical and political functions of the ritual music system. Its precise acoustic properties, craftsmanship, and ceremonial role in imperial rites make it an indispensable element in the Song Dynasty's ritual music. Beyond its musical function, the bell serves as a materialization of imperial authority, representing the divine power of the emperor through its sound.

3.9 Archaeological Interpretations and Literary Supplementation for Missing Categories

3.9.1 Preservation Challenges of Silk, Bamboo, Gourd, and Wood Instruments

In the Song Dynasty, silk-based (qin and se), bamboo-based (xiao and guan), gourd-based (sheng and yu), and wood-based (zhu and yu) instruments faced significant preservation challenges, primarily because they were made from organic materials prone to decay. Despite this, existing archaeological discoveries and literary records have provided valuable insights into the forms and functions of these instruments.

Silk-based Instruments (Qin and Se): The lacquered wooden qin found at the Zhou Wang Fu site in Kaifeng provides evidence supporting Yue Shu's classification that "seven strings represent the ruler, five strings represent the minister." However, since this qin dates to the Ming Dynasty, it is not directly relevant to the Song Dynasty instruments discussed in this chapter.

Bamboo-based Instruments (Xiao and Guan): The depiction of a xiao ensemble in the Baisha Song Tomb mural further corroborates Yue Shu's classification of bamboo instruments. While this is a visual record rather than a physical artifact, it will be referenced in the study of ensembles in subsequent sections.

Gourd-based Instruments (Sheng and Yu): The wood-based sheng mouthpiece (16.2mm diameter) found at the Guanyin Temple in Luoyang aligns with Yue Shu's specification of "sixteen pipes for the gourd sheng."

Wood-based Instruments (Zhu and Yu): The Zhu and Yu from the Dengfeng Zhongyue Temple reliefs correspond with the descriptions in Yue Shu (Vol. 124), where the Yu is depicted in a "tiger-shaped" form.

3.9.2 Rationale Behind Selection Logic

Regional Cultural Representation

Henan, as the political center of the Northern Song, is well represented in the archaeological record of musical instruments, reflecting the "Bianjing ritual music system." For example:

Qinyang Stone Qing: Corresponds to the "Western Capital (Luoyang) ritual system."

Ruzhou Jade Qing: Closely linked to the official kiln system, verifying the "official and instrument unity" manufacturing system.

Material Evidence of Ritual Reform

The function of the bronze drums in military rituals reflects the "cultural supremacy over military power" policy of the Song Dynasty. Meanwhile, the secularized design of the pottery xun illustrates the compromise between elite music and urban culture, aligning with the Dongjing Menghua Lu's depiction of the "Washed music troupe."

Limitations of Archaeological Discoveries

The current selection represents the most complete collection of Song Dynasty instruments from Henan. The absence of certain categories can be attributed to the fragility of organic materials (silk, bamboo, wood), the destruction of precious metal and jade instruments during wartime, and the need for comprehensive research integrating wall murals and literature to supplement the gaps in gourd-based instruments like sheng.

Conclusion

Through an in-depth exploration of the "Eight Tones" attributes and the ritual functions of existing musical instruments, we observe that the Song Dynasty's instruments not only embodied the formal regulations of the ritual system but also symbolized political authority through their material composition and acoustic properties. The combination of archaeological findings and literary sources provides a rich set of evidence that helps us understand how these instruments functioned across cultural, political, and social dimensions. These discoveries not only reveal the structural characteristics of the ritual music system but also offer significant insights into the study of Song Dynasty ritual practices and cultural values.

4.The Migration of Musical Instruments: From Court Rituals to Folk Bloodlines

4.1 Record of Picking: A Thousand-Year Dialogue between Song Dynasty Palace Elegant Music and Henan Folk Music

Time: August 2023

Place: Zhengzhou City, Henan Province

Interviewee: Li Shuyin (folk music research expert)

Researcher: Mr. Li, you have been studying Henan folk music for a long time, and we have noticed that the Song dynasty court elegant music differs greatly from modern folk instruments. For example, the chimes, chimes, and thurles in Yang Chen's Book of Music have almost disappeared, while suona, pipes, and cloud gongs have become the mainstream. What is the lineage behind this change?

Li Shuyin: (Laughs) Your question is like asking "how did ritual music fall from the temple to the dust". In fact, behind the evolution of musical instruments is the tug-of-war between function and society. Song Dynasty elegant music is the embodiment of "ritual", pay attention to the eight tones, strict rules; and folk music is "live", to adapt to the wedding and funeral, the needs of the field. Musical instruments should naturally be "able to carry things, can run the field".

Researcher: What Song dynasty musical instruments in the folk "live"?

Li Shuyin: The most typical ones are the "sheng" and the "pipe". In the Song Dynasty, the sheng and yu were both called "sheng", but yu was too big, so the folk simplified it to sheng, and even used a gourd as a resonance box. As for the "pipe" - the Song dynasty court bamboo wind instruments, to Henan evolved into "pipe", brighter tone, can hold down the open air. Look at the ten plates of music, the pipe once sounded, ten miles and eight villages can be heard! (Fingers pointing to the pipes on the wall)

Researcher: What about those disappeared ritual instruments? For example, the chimes, the percussion instrument, and the percussion instrument?

Li Shuyin: (shaking his head) The chimes are the "face" of the ritual system, but a piece of bell is enough to replace the rations of a village! The people could not

afford to use them, nor could they move them. The wooden instruments such as the percussion drum and gong were replaced by drums and gongs. The people said, "A drum and two cymbals are worth ten wooden blocks!"

Researcher: Why did the new instruments, such as the suona and yangqin, take root?

Li Shuyin: The suona is a "foreigner", imported from the West in the Yuan and Ming dynasties, but the people of Henan made it "naturalized". It can be used for red events, white events and mourning, and its sound is very penetrating. The yangqin was brought by the merchants of the Ming and Qing dynasties, and a qin can top half of the band, which is suitable for playing and singing narratives. These instruments are like Henan's spicy soup - what can be stewed in!

Researcher: You just mentioned the Banyin Society, is there a connection between it and the Song Dynasty's elegant music?

Li Shuyin: If you really want to say, the concept of "eight tones" in the Eight Tones Society originated from the Zhou Dynasty, but the "eight tones" of Song Dynasty elegant music were the shackles of the ritual system, while the Eight Tones Society was the people's "music grocery store". This team of more than 20 people, playing, playing and singing all kinds of, and can even perform the "Yang Family General" full book. The elegance of the Song Dynasty ceramics has been replaced by the vulgarity of the sanxian.

Researcher: Does this "vulgarity" imply cultural downgrading?

Li Shuyin: (Excited) On the contrary! Rituals and music are "dead rules", while folk music is "living blood". For example, the board head song, with zheng, pipa playing ancient tunes, but in the teahouse restaurant circulation. Do you think this is elegant or vulgar? Music can survive, by drilling into the bones of people.

Researcher: If you summarize the direction of the evolution of musical instruments in one sentence?

Li Shuyin: Eight words - "Leaving behind the temple and drilling into the earth". What was left behind was the shackles of ritual: the chimes were replaced by cloud gongs, and the serpent gave way to the three strings; What is drilled into is the people's sorrows and joys: the pipes roar out the desolation of the yellow earth, the suona blows through the threshold of life and death. Look at the ten-pan music of the temple fair in Luoyang, where is the music when the drumsticks fall and the pipes are raised? It is the roar of the Yellow River, the soul of the Central Plains!

4.2 Path analysis of the transmission of musical instruments

4.2.1 Musical instruments inherited and preserved: simplification and adaptation of ritual genes

Sheng (Lagenaria)

In the Song dynasty court elegant music, the sheng and yu were representatives of the same Lagenaria type, but yu was gradually eliminated due to its large size and complex range, while the sheng was preserved through simplification of its form (e.g., the material of the resonance box was shifted from bronze to gourd), and it became the core of the folk orchestra's harmonic support.

Pipe (bamboo)

Song Dynasty "pipe" may have evolved into Henan folk "pipe", its shape from the palace bamboo pipe simplified to wooden or copper, the tone is louder and clearer, adapted to the needs of open-air performances, dominated the main theme of the drums and drums such as ten pan music.

Drums (Leather)

Earth drums, drums and other court drums in the folk simplified to Dunzi drums, side drums, the function from ceremonial symbols to rhythmic control, becoming an indispensable "sinews" in the blowing and playing music.

4.2.2 Gradually Disappearing Musical Instruments: The Retreat of Ritual Instruments

Stone and wood ritual instruments

Because of their bulky size and high production costs, chimes, percussion instruments, and drumsticks were withdrawn from practical use as the ritual system weakened, and only reappeared in museums or on ceremonial occasions.

Elegant Silk Musical Instruments

Because of the complexity of their playing techniques and their limited applicability, qin and serpent have been replaced by zheng and sanxian, which are easier to master and suitable for narrative performances.

Musical Instruments with Weakened Functionality

Fou (pottery percussion) and LIV (porous wind pipe) were gradually replaced by more expressive wind instruments such as suona and flute due to their single tone or lack of practicality.

4.2.3 New and exotic fusion instruments: a product of cultural interaction

The introduction and localization of the suona

As a foreign instrument imported from Central Asia in the Yuan dynasty, the suona, with its high-pitched sound and strong adaptability to the scene, replaced the yu and the liu as the centerpiece of Henan's drumming and blowing music, and assumed a pivotal function of emotional expression, especially in wedding and funeral ceremonies.

Popularization of plucked and stringed instruments

Instruments such as the sanxian, yangqin, and erhu were popularized with the rise of civic culture in the Ming and Qing dynasties because they were suitable for both narrative and entertainment, reflecting the transformation of the function of music from "rituals and ceremonies" to "secular entertainment".

Diversification and Innovation of Percussion Instruments

Small percussion instruments such as gongs and bells were added to folk bands under the influence of opera, replacing the fixed pitch system of chimes and chimes with flexible combinations to form a more dynamic rhythmic hierarchy.

4.2.4 The Evolution of Combination Forms: From Regulation to Practicality

Deconstruction of the eight-tone system

In the Song Dynasty, the court pursued the "eight tones" (e.g., percussion, drums), while folk bands centered on playing (pipes, suona, drums) and strings (zheng, sanxian), emphasizing portability and expressiveness.

Transformation of Functional Positioning

Elegant musical instruments (e.g., thurible, chimes) serve rituals and ceremonies, while folk instruments (e.g., suona, erhu) are integrated into festivals, weddings, funerals, self-entertainment, and other secular scenes, emphasizing emotional expression and storytelling.

4.3 Core directions of evolution

4.3.1 From ritual to practicality

While the courtly musical instruments were complicated and bulky due to ceremonial needs (e.g., chimes needed to be hung in sets), the folk chose lightweight and easy-to-operate modified forms (e.g., dunzi drums instead of jian drums) to adapt to the needs of mobility performances.

4.3.2 Localized Integration of Foreign Musical Instruments

The suona, yangqin and other foreign instruments are integrated into the music system of the Central Plains through modification of form (such as adjusting the size of the bowl of the Henan suona) and innovation in playing techniques, resulting in a unique style of "foreign sounds, local expression".

4.3.3 Secularization of musical functions

In the Song Dynasty, elegant music was centered on "ritual", while modern folk music is dominated by "entertainment". The popularity of plucked (sanxian) and stringed (erhu) instruments, as well as the combination of rap and song in the form of the eight-note meeting, all reflect the transformation of music from "temple indoctrination" to "marketplace narrative".

4.3.4 Reconstructing the Functions of Percussion Instruments

Folklorists used small percussion instruments such as gongs, cymbals, and bells to replace the court's gold and stone ceremonial instruments, and realized

rhythmic diversity and improvisation through flexible combinations (e.g., the ten cloud gongs of the Ten Plate Music) to meet the needs of dynamic performances.

4.4 Typical Case Analysis

4.4.1 The Continuity and Transformation of the Pipes

The "pipe" of the Song Dynasty and the "pipe" of Henan Province may have the same origin, but the latter's simplified form and brighter tone changed it from the supporting role of the ensemble in the court's elegant music to the main instrument of folk drumming and blowing music, reflecting the adaptive adjustment of the instrument's function.

4.4.2 The Rise of the Suona and Its Cultural Significance

The suona replaced yu and l 簫 as the core instrument for red and white ceremonies, and its high-pitched sound could not only render joyful celebrations, but also express thoughts of life and death, marking a shift in music from "elegant music norms" to "common music and sympathy".

4.4.3 The Integration of Elegance and Secularism in Stringed Music

In the Song Dynasty, the elegant traditions of the zither and the serpent were partly preserved in the zheng and the pipa, but after the combination of the sanxian and the erhu, the music style became closer to the public's aesthetics, such as the spread of the Nanyang banhouqu in the teahouses and marketplaces.

5. Summary

The Materialized Narrative of the Ritual and Music System: A Three-Dimensional Reconstruction from Textual Norms to Archaeological Evidence

5.1 The Symbolism of the Ritual and Music System and Musical Instruments: An Object System of Power Coding

The Song Dynasty's ritual and music system transformed musical instruments into materialized symbols of political power and cosmic order through the classification of the "Eight Tones" (metal, stone, silk, bamboo, gourd, earth, leather, wood).

Material as Rank: The copper-tin ratio of the bronze bianzhong (metal) is not only an acoustic parameter but also a projection of the "metal virtue" (金德肃杀) in the Five Elements ethical framework. The "return to the origin" attribute of the pottery xun (earth) (as recorded in Yue Shu Volume 115) reflects the ritual system's tolerance of simple ethics, emphasizing the virtue of simplicity in ritual practice.

Form as Power: Visual symbols, such as the nine-fold inscription on the Dacheng Bell and the jade qing (Ruzhou jade-shaped qing), construct a power equivalence network between the "instrument-object-official seal-political order," making ritual instruments tangible representations of imperial authority.

5.2 The Instrumental Forms in Literary Records: Textual Practices of Technological Governance

As a technical code for the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system, Chen Yang's Yue Shu operationalizes the ritual system through quantified standards and interdisciplinary integration:

Precise Directives: The specifications for the mouthpiece of the sheng, the layout of the bianzhong ("left zhi, right yu"), and other norms convert Confucian ethics into verifiable production standards. These regulations ensure that ritual instruments are produced in accordance with a specific ethical and political framework.

Power Narrative: The 540 illustrations in Yue Shu (e.g., tezhong, mu yu) standardize the form of ritual instruments, solidifying the "Eight Tones" classification as a transnational technical paradigm for East Asian ritual music, as seen in works such as Korea's Yue Xue Gui Fan.

5.3 Archaeological Discoveries from Henan: Material Evidence of Regional Practices and Institutional Tensions

Although the Henan archaeological findings do not cover all categories of the "Eight Tones," they reveal the complex practices of the ritual and music system in relation to the central and local governments, elite and folk traditions, as well as continuity and disruption:

Core of the Ritual System: The Qinyang carved stone qing and Ruzhou jade qing correspond to the provincial and royal hierarchies outlined in the Zheng He Wu Li Xin Yi, corroborating the ritual system's "frequency as rank" acoustic principles.

Secular Transformation: The folk-inspired design of the three-colored pottery monkey xun and the military function of the bronze drum reflect the compromise and permeation of the ritual music system into urban culture and military rituals. These objects illustrate the dynamic interaction between elite ritual music and more secular, popular cultural expressions.

Interpretation of Missing Categories: The absence of silk, bamboo, gourd, and wood instruments due to their organic material nature and susceptibility to decay emphasizes the complementary value of literary illustrations (Yue Shu) and wall murals (e.g., the Baisha Song Tomb depiction of xiao). These visual records offer vital context for understanding the incomplete archaeological record of Song-era instruments.

In the Song dynasty, court music was centered on ritual, with solemn and complex instrumental combinations; while Henan folk music was oriented to practicality and emotion, and formed a vibrant local musical culture by simplifying forms, integrating foreign elements, and strengthening the blowing and stringed instruments. This evolutionary path reveals two major sources of vitality in traditional Chinese music:

Cultural adaptability: musical instruments responded to the changing needs of society by adjusting their forms, functions and combinations;

Diversity and integration: the collision of foreign instruments with local traditions gives rise to new forms of artistic expression.

From "gold and stone into the ground" to "silk and bamboo roots", the change of musical instruments is not only a technological innovation, but also a change of Chinese culture from "the height of the temple" to "the distance of the lake". It is also the epitome of Chinese culture's transition from "the height of the temple" to "the distance of the rivers and lakes", which profoundly maps the historical transformation of social functions and aesthetic paradigms.

Conclusion

Reconstructing the Song Dynasty's Ritual and Music System through the Material History Perspective

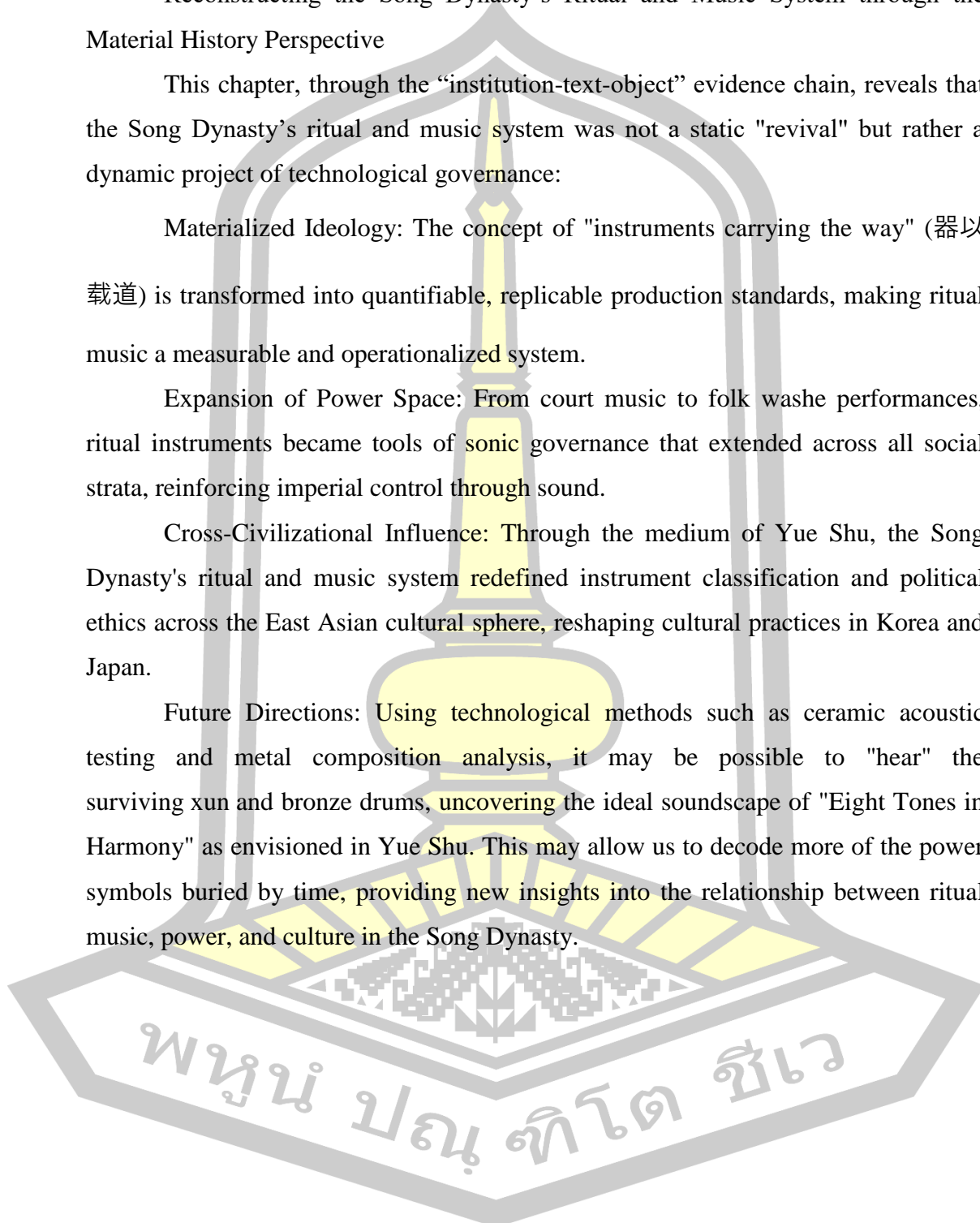
This chapter, through the “institution-text-object” evidence chain, reveals that the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system was not a static "revival" but rather a dynamic project of technological governance:

Materialized Ideology: The concept of "instruments carrying the way" (器以載道) is transformed into quantifiable, replicable production standards, making ritual music a measurable and operationalized system.

Expansion of Power Space: From court music to folk washe performances, ritual instruments became tools of sonic governance that extended across all social strata, reinforcing imperial control through sound.

Cross-Civilizational Influence: Through the medium of Yue Shu, the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system redefined instrument classification and political ethics across the East Asian cultural sphere, reshaping cultural practices in Korea and Japan.

Future Directions: Using technological methods such as ceramic acoustic testing and metal composition analysis, it may be possible to "hear" the surviving xun and bronze drums, uncovering the ideal soundscape of "Eight Tones in Harmony" as envisioned in Yue Shu. This may allow us to decode more of the power symbols buried by time, providing new insights into the relationship between ritual music, power, and culture in the Song Dynasty.



CHAPTER V

The Court Music Ensemble of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China

This chapter reconstructs the musical practice from three aspects: ensemble forms, graphical evidence, and score analysis, thereby revealing the organization, occasions, and performance styles of music ensembles in Song Dynasty Henan.

The structure of the study is as follows:

1. Musical Ensemble Configurations
2. Song Dynasty artifacts unearthed in Henan featuring images of music ensembles.
3. Analysis of musical works
4. Henan folk traditional Gu Chui(鼓吹) Musical Ensemble and Xian Suo(弦索)

Musical Ensemble

5. Summary

1. Musical Ensemble Configurations

1.1 The Authoritative Text of the Court Music Ensemble: Song History – Records of Music (宋史·乐志)

Based on the Song History – Records of Music, the aim is to reveal the official articulation and political metaphors embedded in the design of the Song Dynasty's court music ensemble system. As the official compilation of the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system by the Yuan Dynasty, Song History – Records of Music possesses the following characteristics.

1) Institutional Authority:

The content of Song History – Records of Music directly compiles the original archives of Song institutions such as the Tai Chang Si and Li Yuan (e.g., Jing You Le Sui Xin Jing and Yuan Feng Le Yi), making it the only extant official text systematically recording the evolution of the ritual and music system over the three

centuries of the Northern and Southern Song Dynasties (Tuotuo et al., 1345/1977: Vol. 126-131).

Political Purpose of Compilation:

The Yuan editors' reworking and reconstruction of the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system reveal the deeper contradictions between the Song and Yuan dynasties in their struggle for legitimacy. For instance, *Records of Music* deliberately downplays the connection between the late Song Dynasty's Dacheng Music reforms and the Jin Dynasty's continuation of elegant music, subtly reflecting the Yuan's monopolization of the interpretive authority over "Han practices" (Ebrey, 1999: 136).

Exemplar Textual Structure:

The structure of *Song History – Records of Music*—beginning with a general discussion, followed by sections on elegant music, banquet music, military music, and music debates—became the standard framework for ritual and music texts within the East Asian Sinic cultural sphere. It directly influenced the structure of works like Korea's *Yue Xue Gui Fan* (1493) and Vietnam's *Li Chao Xian Zhang Lei Zhi - Li Yue Zhi* (1821).

2) Adaptability of the Research Subject

If the core of research concerns the institutional design of the Song Dynasty court music ensemble, then *Song History – Records of Music* offers natural advantages:

Purity of Institutional Expression:

Unlike Chen Yang's *Yue Shu*, which is an "interpretation through classical studies," or the Song Hui Yao's "archival compilation," *Records of Music* is a systematized distillation by official historians, presenting the ideal form of the institutional design directly. For example, the description of the "four-sided palace suspension" in the court music ensemble eliminates practical disruptions like material shortages and artisan fraud found in *Taichang Yin Ge Li*, making it easier to analyze the symbolic logic of the institution itself.

Centralized Discourse of Power:

The records of the ensemble's composition in *Records of Music* (such as "Denge with four rows, Gongxuan with six rows") essentially represent the emperor's quantification and control over the space of ritual music. This "numerical politics"

(e.g., the number of rows, instruments, and musicians) cannot be presented with the same systematic density in local gazetteers, epitaphs, or other literary sources.

3) Necessity of Methodology Discourse Analysis:

By analyzing the semantic network of key terms such as "reviewing the past" (稽古), "following the Zhou system" (循周制), and "reviving ancient practices" (复古) in *Records of Music*, one can deconstruct the discourse strategies of "reform based on ancient traditions" in the Song Dynasty's ritual music reforms. For example, the rhetorical differences across the three major reforms—Jing You, Yuan Feng, and Dacheng—offer valuable insights into the shifting ideological motivations behind these reforms.

Conceptual History Research: Focusing on *Records of Music* allows one to clearly trace the diachronic evolution of core concepts such as "Gongxuan" (palace suspension), "Denge" (song ensemble), and "Gu Chui" (military music). For instance, the term "Denge" evolves in *Records of Music* from a ritual action of "singing at the hall" (升歌于堂, Vol. 126) to a formalized institutional label referring to "a small ensemble dominated by human voices." This semantic shift represents a professionalization of the ritual and music system and is a reflection of how institutional practices become more specialized and institutionalized over time.

The *Song History – Records of Music* (宋史·乐志) serves as the official textual repository of the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system, systematically documenting the ceremonial functions and organizational norms of the court music ensemble. The compilation of this text is rooted in the political ideology of the Song Dynasty, which emphasized the governance of the state through music. By categorizing and differentiating between elegant music (雅乐), banquet music (宴乐), and military music (仪仗乐), the text constructs a direct connection between ritual music practices and the imperial order, reinforcing the hierarchical nature of governance through sound (Tuotuo et al., 1345/1977). For example, the Yue Zhi explicitly links the arrangement of the court music, with its "four sides" of bianzhong (bronze bells) and teqing (special chimes), to the "yin-yang and directional theory,"

emphasizing the need for the bells and chimes to be arranged in a specific directional order: "North bells, south chimes, to correspond with the Five Elements" (Yue Zhi, Vol. 126). This arrangement aligns with the archaeological findings at the Zhongyue Temple Dazhong Xiangfu Fengchan Tu (Henan Museum, 2023), further corroborating the ritual function of these musical instruments. Modern scholarship suggests that the compilation of Yue Zhi was not only a record of the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system but also a subtle critique by Yuan Dynasty historians of Song political culture. The text's structure reflects the ideological function of the ritual and music system as a "theater of power" (Ebrey, 1999: 135).

The "Song History" was written in the Yuan Dynasty (1343) by Prime ministers Tuotuo and Arutu. The 496 volumes were published in 1346.

The "Benji" has 47 volumes, with the change of dynasties as the body, according to the year and time to record the words and deeds of the emperor; The "Table" has 32 volumes that use tables to list lineages, people and historical events; "Zhi" has 162 volumes, describing the development of the system, involving the system of rites and music, astronomy and military law, social economy, river geography and other aspects; The "Biography" has 255 volumes, which are the life stories of representatives of various aspects other than emperors and princes.

The section "Zhi" consists of fifteen categories (astronomy, five elements, calendar, geography, canals, rites, music, honour guards, public services, electoral system, official positions, food and goods, military affairs, criminal law, arts and literature), accounting for about one third of the book.

The one that deals with music is books 126-142, that is, books 79-95 of Zhi. There are 17 Yue Zhi. So, people called this part: "Song History · Yue Zhi".

Yue Zhi, means music records, is a genre of Chinese traditional historiography, a writing style of music text and a knowledge system of music. As one of the genres of official history, Yue Zhi has formed its own text system, its own writing object and writing tradition in the writing tradition of history. As a nationally-recognized musical text, Yue Zhi is the most comprehensive and representative writing of court music. As a knowledge system, it also involves the value orientation, social function and music type of the mainstream music of an era. In fact, since the

Qin and Han Dynasties, Yue Zhi has always been the main form of music knowledge system, leading the historical trend of music writing culture. It can be said that Yue Zhi is the epitome of the development of music history in an era, and the written music history.

The emergence of Sima Qian's "Yue Shu" (Book of Music) in the "Shiji" (Records of the Grand Historian) during the Western Han Dynasty (thought to have been compiled between approximately 102–91 BC) marked the inception of historical accounts of music. Subsequently, music documentation acquired a specialized form. It can be said that the connection between the practice of court music and its specialized documentation began with the establishment of historical accounts of music. Following this, the continued writing of music accounts developed into a tradition over more than a millennium, and this tradition directly influenced the compilation of music accounts in various dynasties.

As Yue Zhi were recognized as official musical texts documenting the court music of past dynasties, their relationship with the practice of court music was one of reflection and being reflected upon. Therefore, the writing of Yue Zhi was primarily determined by court music from two key aspects: the nature of court music, and the practical space of court music. Regarding the nature of court music, it primarily served as a political instrument, with its practical characteristics focusing on ceremonial music, particularly the music for suburban sacrifices and ancestral temples, as well as ceremonial music such as trumpet signaling and court assemblies (of course, court music also included parts for banquets). The "refined and proper" nature of musical practice governed the fundamental inclinations and content of music account writing, necessitating their reflection of this nature and focusing on the various aspects of court music practice, particularly those represented by ceremonial music.

In terms of practical space, court music was primarily confined to the court and occasions associated with imperial activities, essentially limited to ceremonial and political events. This spatial confinement was narrow, with the musical activities and content being highly restricted. Concerning other music practices beyond the court, they were essentially a blind spot in the writing of music accounts. This type of

practical space corresponds to music accounts, inevitably focusing their scope of recording on the court-centered activities and profoundly influencing the writing process. Nonetheless, an important aspect to consider is the presence of diverse musical phenomena within the sphere of courtly ceremonial music. Overall, different historical periods witnessed the integration of foreign and folk music into the court, although their quantity and scope of use were relatively limited, which does not necessarily indicate a breach of the spatial confines of court music practice. On the contrary, the coexistence of diverse musical genres alongside ceremonial music was a characteristic of court music.

Furthermore, court music reflects folk music. In terms of the historical documentation of music, folk music lacks a comprehensive writing tradition, and what enters the textual field is primarily sporadic records. The documentation in music accounts of folk music that entered courtly practice is often highly valuable, with some records even appearing to be the sole surviving documentation. Due to the preservation of their original characteristics, these folk music records, even after being incorporated into the realm of courtly music, still reflect their distinctive musical cultural traits and temporal characteristics.

Another characteristic of the writing of music accounts is related to their compilation. As court music forms an integral part of courtly activities, the source materials possess an official nature, consequently imbuing the compilation of music accounts with an official color. Although the writing of music accounts before the Tang Dynasty had less direct linkage with the authorities, the eventual compilation of music accounts invariably involved official sanction. Of course, many instances of music account writing directly constituted official actions, with their compilation process often being conducted under the supervision of the state. Thus, the historical music accounts are subject to the influence of the mainstream consciousness of the state, reflecting the prevailing consciousness of a particular regime.

The "Yue Zhi" in the "Song History" was compiled during the Yuan Dynasty, a period marked by significant historical and cultural upheavals, particularly with the migration of the royal family to the south, ultimately leading to a political and cultural division between northern and southern China. Far removed from the deep-rooted traditions of ceremonial music and rites in the north, the developments

during the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties in the southern regions impacted both the tradition of courtly music and the writing of historical music records. This influence is clearly reflected in the content and format of the "Yue Zhi" in the "Song History".

1.2 The Spatial Layout and Symbolism of the Court Music Ensemble

The "Gongxuan" court music ensemble, characterized by the iconic "palace suspension with four sides" (宫悬四面), represents a highly structured and symbolically charged arrangement within the broader Song Dynasty court music system. Rooted in the cosmological and directional systems outlined in the Zhou Li (周礼), the layout of the Gongxuan ensemble is not merely a functional organization of instruments, but also a deliberate expression of political power and cosmic order, reinforcing the emperor's central role in maintaining harmony between heaven, earth, and the imperial court.

1.2.1 Spatial Configuration: A Symbol of Cosmic and Political Order

The spatial arrangement of the Gongxuan ensemble follows a strict four-directional scheme. The bianzhong (bronze bells), representing the "metal" element, are placed in the northern section, while the bianqing (stone chimes), symbolizing the "stone" element, are positioned in the south. The string and bamboo instruments, such as the sheng (mouth organ) and xiao (flute), are positioned in the eastern and western sections, respectively. This directional arrangement not only reflects the need for balanced sound but also symbolizes the harmonious alignment of "metal and stone," echoing the ritual ideal of "Eight Tones in Harmony" (八音克谐). The Song History – Records of Music (宋史·乐志) records this arrangement as "arranged according to the Chen positions" (依辰位陈列), in which the instruments' placement corresponds to the twelve Earthly Branches. This layout symbolized the coordination of "heavenly time" and "earthly conditions," aligning the performance space with cosmic and political ideals (Xu Song, edited, 1809/2014: Le 4).

1.2.2 Hierarchical Structure: Reflecting the Political and Ritual Order

The hierarchical structure of the Gongxuan ensemble is emblematic of the Song Dynasty's ritual and political ideology. The core layer consists of metal and stone instruments, such as the bianzhong and bianqing, suspended from wooden frames (虞) to form the central structure of the "palace suspension" (宫悬). These central instruments not only serve as the sonic backbone of the ensemble but also represent the emperor's central authority over the universe, with their elevated position symbolizing imperial control.

Surrounding the central instruments, the middle layer is composed of wind instruments like the sheng (mouth organ) and yu (gourd pipes), as well as stringed instruments like the qin and se (zithers). This arrangement signifies the intermediary role these instruments play between the divine and human realms, reinforcing the connection between the emperor and celestial forces.

The outer layer of the ensemble features percussion instruments, such as the gu (drum), zhu (wooden percussion), and yu (wooden percussion), placed in the four corners of the ritual space. These instruments regulate the tempo and rhythm of the performance, ensuring that the ceremony unfolds in an orderly manner. This arrangement follows the principles outlined in the Zhou Li (周礼), where music serves to "regulate the ritual" (以乐节礼), controlling the flow of the ceremony and maintaining the cosmic harmony that the ritual seeks to embody (Shao Yong, 1060/1999: Vol. 64).

1.2.3 Instruments and Their Symbolic Roles

The composition of instruments within the Gongxuan ensemble, based on the "Eight Tones" classification, serves both functional and symbolic purposes. The placement and number of these instruments reflect not only the needs of musical performance but also the imperial political order and cosmological ideals.

Metal and Stone Instruments: The Core of Cosmic Control

At the heart of the Gongxuan ensemble are the bianzhong (bronze bells) and bianqing (stone chimes), which serve as the central sonic elements. The number of these instruments, typically sixteen each, corresponds to the "number of heaven

and earth" (天地之数), symbolizing the emperor's control over the universe. The number 16, derived from the multiplication of the six lines of the Qian hexagram (乾卦六爻) and the six lines of the Kun hexagram (坤卦六爻), is a simplification for practical use, symbolizing the balance between the cosmic and earthly realms (Chen Yang, 1103/1983: Vol. 115).

Silk and Bamboo Instruments: The Supporting Harmony

Silk and bamboo instruments, such as the qin (seven-stringed zither), se (zither), sheng (mouth organ), and xiao (flute), serve a supporting role in the Gongxuan ensemble. The arrangement of these instruments follows the principle of "silk on the left, bamboo on the right," with stringed instruments positioned on the east and bamboo instruments on the west. This division mirrors the yin-yang philosophy, symbolizing the balance of complementary forces (Li Youping, 2006: 78). These instruments primarily contribute to the melodic development of the ensemble, providing the intricate melodic lines that are essential to the ritual music.

Percussion Instruments: Regulating the Ritual Flow

Percussion instruments, such as the jian gu (sacrificial drum), zhu (wooden percussion), and yu (wooden percussion), are responsible for regulating the rhythm of the Gongxuan ensemble. These instruments play a critical role in controlling the tempo and pacing of the ceremony, ensuring that the ritual's structure is adhered to and the cosmic harmony is maintained. Their role is closely tied to the principle of using music to regulate ritual behavior, as described in the Zhou Li (周礼) (Shao Yong, 1060/1999: Vol. 64).

1.2.4 Visual References and Archaeological Evidence

The "He Le Tu" as a Visual Reference

The He Le Tu by Zhou Wenju, dating from the Five Dynasties period and currently housed at the Art Institute of Chicago, although not a Song Dynasty work, bears significant resemblance to the Song court's Gongxuan ensemble layout. The symmetry of the ensemble, the positioning of plucked instruments at the front, and the placement of the sacrificial drum as the concluding element are all indicative of a

continuity of the Song Dynasty's organizational principles in court music. The prominence of plucked instruments, such as the pipa and konghou, emphasizes the importance of melodic development, reflecting the Song court's focus on the melodic lines of elegant music (Art Institute of Chicago, Catalog No. 1933.944).

Archaeological Evidence and Murals

The mural of the Dazhong Xiangfu Fengchan Tu (Sacred Ceremony Diagram of Dazhong Xiangfu) at Zhongyue Temple provides visual confirmation of the Gongxuan ensemble's layout, aligning with the descriptions found in Song History – Records of Music (宋史·乐志) (Henan Museum, 2023).

Stone carvings found at the Song Tombs in Gongyi offer further insight into the posture of musicians holding their instruments, shedding light on the formation and instrument-holding methods used in the Gongxuan ensemble (Sun Min, 2016: 47).

1.2.5 Standardization of the Court Music Ensemble by the Dacheng Bureau

During the Chongning years (1102-1106), Emperor Huizong established the Dacheng Bureau to reform the ritual music system, with the Gongxuan ensemble becoming the focal point of these reforms:

Expansion of the Ensemble Scale

In the third year of the Zhenghe era (1113), the Gongxuan ensemble was restructured to include "one frame for the bells and chimes, with 140 musicians," nearly doubling the scale from the early Song period (Xu Song, edited, 1809/2014: Le 4).

Refinement of Functionality

The composition of the ensemble was adjusted according to the specific ritual stages, such as summoning gods, receiving offerings, and sending off spirits. For example, during the sending off of spirits, only the bianzhong, jian gu, and wind instruments were used to emphasize the solemnity of the atmosphere (Chen Yang, 1103/1983: Vol. 98).

In conclusion, the Gongxuan court music ensemble represents the embodiment of Song Dynasty political ideology and cosmic principles in the form of

ritual music. The highly organized spatial layout, the strategic arrangement of instruments, and the specific roles assigned to different types of instruments all reflect the Song court's desire to maintain political order, reinforce imperial authority, and symbolize cosmic harmony through the ritual practices of the Gongxuan ensemble. The textual records, archaeological evidence, and the reforms introduced by the Dacheng Bureau illustrate the Gongxuan ensemble's critical role in both the ritual music system and the broader political and cultural fabric of the Song Dynasty.

1.3 Organization of the GongJia Music Ensemble

In the Song Dynasty, "Xuan" was referred to as "Jia", hence "GongXuan music" became known as "GongJia music". The "GongJia music" was used in a wider range of occasions. It was mainly used in the rites and ceremonies such as offering sacrifices to the Heavenly Emperor, praying for good harvests, the Bright Hall, ancestral temples, court meetings, and birthday celebrations. The music was also played during ritual procedures such as the descent and sending off of the deities, offering of food, the emperor's ascension to the altar, the retreat dance, the escorting martial dance, and the welcoming and sending off of the emperor. The "GongJia music" encompassed the arrangement and scale of the use of bells and stone chimes, the positioning and scale arrangement, and the number of singers. As an important component of court music, the "GongJia music" has always been esteemed by rulers throughout the dynasties.

Due to historical reasons, during the initial establishment of the Song Dynasty, the rulers did not have a complete system of "GongJia music" and "Deng Ge music" for various court activities of the royal family, and instead used the "Gu Chui twelve cases". However, the organizers of court music in the Song Dynasty did not give up on the revival of "GongJia music" and "Deng Ge music". According to the "History of Song, Music Volume", the Ministry of Worship and the Department of Music Advisor jointly stated, "According to the regulations of the Great Music Office, there should be thirty-six sets of 'GongXian' set in the courtyard, and two sets of 'Deng Ge' placed in the hall, and officials should be selected to make them." From the literature, it is not difficult to find that the organizers of court music at that time began to have a strong consciousness of reviving court music. According to the "History of Song,

Music Volume", in the third year of the Chunhua era: "After the New Year's court greetings were finished, the emperor went to the Yuan Hall again, and the officials used 'GongXian' and two dances, and played the 'Deng Ge'music of the Five Auspicious Melodies, and from then on this became the established practice."

During the reign of Emperor Huizong of the Song Dynasty, it was a period in which the "GongJia music" and "Deng Ge music" were organized and developed. During this time, the "DaShengFu" was established as a specialized music institution responsible for ritual music. The background of the establishment of the Grand Music Bureau can be traced back to the third year of the Chongning era, when Emperor Huizong initiated a large-scale discussion on court music, summoning officials and courtiers to the imperial palace for this purpose. The main topics of discussion included the system flaws and omissions in the grand music rituals, the dilapidated state of the musical instruments in the Ministry of Worship, the mixing of instruments during grand ensemble performances, the fact that many musicians were from the common populace, and the deviation of the music from the written scores. Following this discussion, efforts were made to reorganize and improve various aspects of court music, such as the musical ensembles, tonal systems, and musical compositions.

Table 1. Qin Si Gong Jia Band instrument arrangement table

Classification of the Eight Sounds	Meta	Stone	Earth	Leather	Silk	Wood	Gourd	Bamboo
Musical instruments and their quantities	Bian-Zhong,12 Bo-Zhong,12	Bian-Qing,12 TeQing,12	Xun,18	JianGu,4 BingGu,4 YingGu,4 LeiGu,2 LeiTao,2 JinGu,1	Se,52 YiXianQin,7 SanXianQin,18 WuXianQin,18 QiXianQin,23 JiuXianQin,23	Zhu,1 Yu,1	Chao-Sheng,28 Pao-Sheng,3 Yu20	Xiao,28 Chi,20 Di,28
Sum total	24	24	18	17	141	2	51	76

Table 2. Da Chao Hui Gong Jia Band instrument arrangement table

Classification of the Eight Sounds	Meta	Stone	Earth	Leather	Silk	Wood	Gourd	Bamboo
Musical instruments and their quantities	Bian-Zhong,12 Bo-Zhong,12	Bian-Qing,12 TeQing,12	Xun,18	JianGu,4 BingGu,4 YingGu,4 LeiGu,2 LeiTao,2 JinGu,2	Se,56 YiXianQin,7 SanXianQin,18 WuXianQin,18 QiXianQin,23 JiuXianQin,23	Zhu,1 Yu,1	Chao-Sheng,28 Pao-Sheng,3 Yu20	Xiao,30 Chi,33 Di,33
Sum total	24	24	18	18	145	2	51	96

Table 3. Da Si Gong Jia Band instrument arrangement table

Classification of the Eight Sounds	Meta	Stone	Earth	Leather	Silk	Wood	Gourd	Bamboo
Musical instruments and their quantities	Bian-Zhong 12 Bo-Zhong, 4	Bian-Qing, 4	Xun, 4	JianGu, 4 BingGu, 4 YingGu, 4 LeiGu, 2 LeiTao, 2 JinGu, 1	Se, 4 YiXianQin, 4 SanXianQin, 4 WuXianQin, 4 QiXianQin, 4 JiuXianQin, 4	Zhu, 1 Yu, 1	Chao-Sheng, 4 Yu, 4	Xiao, 4 Chi, 4 Di, 4
Sum total	16	4	4	17	24	2	8	12

Characteristics of the GongJia Music Ensemble include: The use of musical instruments covering the eight traditional types of instruments; A fixed and unchanging arrangement of the ensemble; Following the musical modes of the lunar calendar, with the twelve musical modes revolving around the tonic note; Significance in ceremonial functions; In comparison to the ritual music of the Zhou Dynasty, the Court Music Ensemble contains a notable predominance of string and wind instruments, displaying a certain level of artistic expressiveness; Large ensemble size, emphasizing its grandeur; Including non-ensemble performers.

1.4 Organization of the Deng Ge Music Ensemble

The "Dengge" ensemble, central to sacrificial rituals, embodies the Song Dynasty's refined transformation of Confucian musical thought. The Song Hui Yao Ji Gao details the "Dengge" system established in the third year of the Zhenghe era (1113), specifying that "four singers, two zither and se players, and one each of the bofu (percussion) and zhu (ritual instruments)" should be included in the ensemble. This configuration, described as "silk and bamboo as the foundation, human voices as the core," is derived from the Liji's traditional statement that "the singers are above, the gourd and bamboo below" (Liji, Yue Ji). Notably, the selection criteria for the musicians in the Dengge ensemble were imbued with moral metaphors; Yue Shu emphasized that "singers must possess virtue and harmony, their voices clear and resonant," linking musical ability directly with personal morality (Chen Yang, 1103/1983: Vol. 115). The material culture projection of this system can be seen in the murals from the Baisha Song Tomb in Yuzhou, where the musicians hold their instruments in a spatial arrangement fully consistent with the textual description of "the zithers on the steps, the singers in the hall" (Fu Xinian, 2001: 223). These

findings provide physical evidence of the close correspondence between the written standards and the material realities of court music performance.

"Deng Ge" refers to a small ensemble performance indoors. The "History of Song, Music Volume" records: "In indoor music, vocal performance is highly valued, with singing accompanied by bells on the left and stone chimes on the right." In the "Deng Ge" music ensemble, vocalists take precedence, followed by string instruments, wind instruments, and percussion such as bells and stone chimes. The occasions for which the "Deng Ge" music is applied are relatively extensive, primarily used in ritual ceremonies such as sacrificing to the Heavenly Emperor, the ancestral temple, praying for good harvests, suburban sacrifices, recording of farmland, ancestral temples, and court meetings. The "Deng Ge" music is performed at various ritual stages such as the initial offering, secondary offering, wine offering, the presentation of the sacrificial vessels, presentation of the cooked offerings, the clearance of the sacrificial vessels, the conclusion of reading of the records, the clearance of the sacrificial beans, the libation of blessings, the sending off of the deities, and the presentation of the sacrificial food.

Table 4. Qin Si Deng Ge Band instrument arrangement table

Classification of the Eight Sounds	Meta	Stone	Earth	Leather	Silk	Wood	Gourd	Bamboo
Musical instruments and their quantities	JinZhong, 1	Yu-Qing, 1	Xun, 2	BoFu, 2	Se, 4 YiXianQin, 1 SanXianQin, 1 WuXianQin, 1 QiXianQin, 1 JiuXianQin, 1	Zhu, 1 Yu, 1	Chao-Sheng, 4 He-Sheng, 5	Xiao, 2 Chi, 2 Di, 4
Sum total	1	1	2	2	9	2	9	8

Table 5. Da Si Zhong Si Deng Ge Band instrument arrangement table

Classification of the Eight Sounds	Meta	Stone	Earth	Leather	Silk	Wood	Gourd	Bamboo
Musical instruments and their quantities	Bian-Zhong, 1	Bian-Qing, 1	Xun, 1	BoFu, 2	Se, 1 YiXianQin, 1 SanXianQin, 1 WuXianQin, 1 QiXianQin, 1 JiuXianQin, 1	Zhu, 1 Yu, 1	Chao-Sheng, 1 He-Sheng, 5	Xiao, 1 Chi, 1 Di, 1
Sum total	1	1	1	2	6	2	2	3

1.5 Organization of the "Gu Chui Twelve Cases" Music Ensemble

The "Gu Chui Twelve Stands" ensemble, a significant component of military ritual music, highlights the Song Dynasty's integration of Hu (non-Han) and Han musical cultures. *Song History – Records of Music* records that this ensemble included "eight large drums, long horns, and horizontal flutes, and twelve feathered flutes and golden cymbals," far surpassing the scale of other court ensembles (Vol. 126). This design not only inherited the musical practices of the Tang Dynasty's Xiongpi division but also incorporated the Song Dynasty's numerological concept of "the number symbolizes the heavens." Shao Yong's *Huangji Jingshi Shu* links the twelve stands to "twelve zodiac signs," turning the procession of the drum and wind instruments into a manifestation of the "circulation of heavenly principles" (Shao Yong, 1060/1999: Vol. 64). In practical terms, images of musicians holding instruments from the Kaifeng Fan Tower brick carvings align with the military regulations of ritual music found in *Wu Jing Zong Yao*, confirming the permeation of textual systems into secular ritual practices (Li Youping, 2006: 89). These materials demonstrate how the Song Dynasty ritual music system, with its grand organization and symbolism, functioned not only in religious and political contexts but also integrated the military's ceremonial elements into the broader ideological framework.

"The Gu Chui Music" is a genre that focuses mainly on percussion instruments and wind instruments. Depending on the performance context, "Gu Chui" can be further categorized into "Palace Gu Chui" and "Lu Bu Gu Chui." Palace Gu Chui, represented by the "Gu Chui Twelve Cases" is primarily performed in the palace to accompany court rituals. Lu Bu Gu Chui, on the other hand, is typically utilized in the emperor's processions, serving a function of vigilance and defense.

Regarding the shape and instrumental composition of the "Gu Chui Twelve Cases" as recorded in the "History of Song, Music Volume" in Chapter 126, it is described as follows: "Twelve felt cushions are arranged in the shape of leaping bears, supporting the instruments from below; and each set consists of a large Gu, a small hand Gu with feathers, and a set of small tuned bells, as well as two singers, two flutes, and two double reed pipes, totaling nine performers. Their attire adheres to the

same standards as those for accompanying dance performances."In terms of the musical instruments utilized, the majority of these instruments are commonly associated with the Han Dynasty. Specifically, the large Gu is of considerable size and produces a resonant sound, and is played with two Gu sticks while placed on a low stand. The "Yubao Gu" is decorated with elaborate paintings on its frame and is played by striking it while hanging from a stand. In the Lu Bu Gu Chui before and after the TaiChang(chamberlain for ceremonials), the "Yubao Gu" is played by performers riding on horseback and striking it. "Chunyu" is a bronze percussion instrument that produces a clear, resonant sound. During the Song Dynasty, the occasions for using "Chunyu" underwent changes compared to previous eras, no longer being used for military commands, but rather as an accompanying instrument for the courtly Gu Chui Twelve Pieces and for leading dance performances in the court's martial music ensembles. The "Xiao" is a wind instrument, used not only in the courtly Gu Chui Twelve Cases but also in the Court Music Ensemble and the Deng Ge Music Ensemble, and is commonly seen in the court ceremonial Lu Bu Gu Chui. The "Jia" is a reed instrument made of bamboo, with a non-fingered wooden body used to produce sound by blowing into it.

The "Twelve Cases" were primarily established to accompany the court ritual music. Consisting of twelve small Gu Chui ensembles, specifically, twelve frames were erected. Each small ensemble included the following instruments: one large Gu, one Yubao Gu, and one set of small tuned bells; as well as two flutes, two double reed pipes, and two vocalists—comprising a total of seven instruments per small Gu Chui ensemble. Thus, the Twelve Cases represent the entire arrangement of the large Gu Chui ensemble, totaling 12 Yubao Gu, 12 large Gu, 12 sets of small tuned bells, 24 vocalists, 24 flutes, and 24 double reed pipes—comprising a grand total of 36 percussion instruments, 48 wind instruments, and 24 vocalists, resulting in a large-scale Gu Chui ensemble consisting of 84 instruments in total.

In terms of the arrangement and orchestration of instruments, the primary characteristic of the Gu Chui Twelve Pieces ensemble is reflected in the manner in which it combines various instruments. Unlike grouping the same type of instruments together and playing them side by side, this ensemble separates the instruments and,

according to the acoustical requirements, recombines them in a specific proportion to form several complete small Gu Chui ensembles. This can be seen as a simple replication of a small Gu Chui ensemble to create an expanded ensemble. This expansion method not only integrates the acoustical effects of the ensemble but also enhances the visual experience for the audience.

1.6 Organization of the "Lu Bu Gu Chui "Music Ensemble

The Lu Bu Gu Chui Ensemble System in the Song Dynasty essentially followed the Tang Dynasty's hierarchical system. As an integral part of ceremonial processions, the Lu Bu Gu Chui Ensemble boasted a grand scale and a comprehensive array of instruments. "In the early Song Dynasty, the large Lu Bu Gu Chui ensemble included a series of instruments such as JinZheng(large suspended bells), JieGu (small suspended bells), GangGu (large barrel Gu), DagGu (large frame Gu, XiaoGu, Nao Gu , Yubao Gu, Zhongming (large transverse flute), Dahengchui (large bamboo transverse flute), Xiaohengchui(small bamboo transverse flute), Bill (end-blown bamboo flute), Taopi Bili (peach-shaped end-blown flute), Xiao (vertical bamboo flute), Jia (reed instrument), and Di (vertical bamboo flute). The song "Daoyin" (Guidance)was also performed." The "Da Jia Lu Bu Gu Chui" represented the highest standard of Lu Bu Gu Chui, primarily used in large-scale state ceremonies such as imperial sacrifices to gods and major national ceremonial events. The scale of music used varied according to the rank and level of the procession. According to "Song Shi · Yue 15" citing "LiangChao Zhi" it states, "The Da Jia procession consisted of 1793 personnel, Fa Jia procession 1305 personnel, Xiao Jia procession 1034 personnel, and Luan Jiaprocession 925 personnel. Welcoming and escorting the ancestors' spirits or ancestral gods at ceremonies used a procession of 325 personnel, while for inscriptions at ancestral temples, 200 personnel were used, and the music was accordingly adjusted to the occasion." During the Zhenghe period, the Lu Bu Gu Chui ensemble also incorporated the Jun Rong Zhi and Dong Xi Ban music, resulting in an expansion of the ensemble's scale compared to the early Song Dynasty. According to "Song Shi · Yiwei Zhi" in the political and harmony era of the Song Dynasty, during Emperor Huizong's procession, the large Lu Bu Gu Chuiensemble comprised a total

of 1386 performers. The numbers of personnel and instruments used in the ensemble are detailed as follows.

Table 6. Dashengfu advocating band compilation

The "Da Sheng Fu" front part Gu Chui ensemble		The "Da Sheng Fu" rear part Gu Chui ensemble	
Musical instruments and musicians	number of people	Musical instruments and musicians	number of people
Gu Chui Ling	2	Gu Chui Cheng	2
JieGu	2	—	—
GuangGu	24	—	—
DaGu	120	—	—
YubaoGu	12	—	—
XiaoGu	120	—	—
NaoGu	12	NaoGu	12
JingZheng	24	—	—
DaHengChui	120	XiaoHengChui	120
ChangMing	120	—	—
ZhongMing	120	—	—
Singer	48	Singer	48
Flute	24	Flute	24
BiLi	24	BiLi	24
TaopiBiLi	24	TaopiBiLi	24
GongzhenGuan	24	GongzhenGuan	24
Xiao	72	Xiao	72
Jia	72	Jia	72
subtotal	964	subtotal	422
Total		1386	

The characteristics of these musical instruments primarily encompass the eight traditional categories of metal, leather, and bamboo. Notably, they emphasize qualities such as considerable volume (as seen in drums, horns, gongs, and bells) and rich, resonant tonal colors. Additionally, these instruments are convenient to carry (as with flutes, vertical bamboo flutes, panpipes, and double-reed pipes). Instruments such as horns and drums, representative of the ceremonial ensembles, harmonize with the ceremonial ambiance, lending a particularly pronounced ceremonial hue, whether for the purpose of "establishing virtue and fostering awe" or for emboldening warriors and counseling the literati.

1.6.1 Jun Rong Zhi ensemble

The "Jun Rong Zhi" ensemble was formed in the third year of Song Taiping Xingguo (AD 978) by selecting skilled musicians from the imperial guard to be part of a specialized ensemble responsible for performing ceremonial music at Lu Bu processions. It was a military ensemble and generally participated in the emperor's

ceremonial processions. The personnel of the "Jun Rong Zhi" ensemble went through significant changes in its organization, with the number of musicians reaching over 400 at its peak. "Wen Xian Tong Kao" detailed the organization of the Jun Rong Zhi ensemble: "Supervised by one or two palace attendants, with two leaders, 232 musicians were appointed, previously having 136 members. In the second year of Jingde, two singers were added, along with a troupe of forty, wooden PaiBan for dance, ten PiPa players, nine Sheng players, nine Zheng players, forty-five BiLi players, thirty-five flute players, eleven FangXiang players, thirty-four zhanggu players, eight DaGu players, three JieGu players, ten chanters, one player of small musical instruments, forty songwriters, and one lyricist. For every provincial inspection tour or military expedition, they rode alongside the imperial carriage and performed music." The Jun Rong Zhi ensemble mostly performed music while riding horses during the emperor's travels, guiding the imperial carriage and forming part of the Lu Bu ceremonial processions. It falls within the realm of the application of Gu Chui music ensembles.

1.6.2 Dong Xi Ban music ensemble

The Dong Xi Ban music ensemble was established during the Taiping Xingguo period (977-984 AD). Its musicians were selected from the imperial guard based on their musical prowess and formed into a small musical ensemble, which was part of the equestrian music within the military. According to "Song Shi·Yue 17" the Dong Xi Ban music ensemble consisted of musicians selected from the Dong Xi Ban who were skilled in music, and utilized instruments such as the yinzi bili, small flute, and small sheng. They performed music while riding alongside the carriages, and sometimes played at the palace during nighttime inspections. The instruments used in the Dong Xi Ban ensemble mainly included bili, small flute, and small sheng. In the Song Dynasty court, the occasions for the use of the Jun Rong Zhi ensemble were not limited to performing music in Lu Bu processions but also included corresponding musical performances at banquets. The primary focus of the Dong Xi Ban music ensemble was the performance of ceremonial music.

1.6.3 Sui Jun Fan Bu Da Yue ensemble

The Sui Jun Fan Bu Da Yue ensemble and the Ma Hou Yue ensemble were two types of musical ensembles mentioned in the Song Dynasty collection of stories and anecdotes, "Wu Lin Jiu Shi". The "Imperial Decrees" section in Volume Two of "Wu Lin Jiu Shi" describes the use of the military accompanying ensemble and the instruments employed during court martial inspections from the second year of Qiande (1166) to the tenth year of Chunxi (1183). The ensemble included two PaiBan, four whistles, twenty-four Gu, two bili players, nine zhazi players, ten large Gu, and four longdi. From the usage of these instruments, it is evident that percussion and wind instruments were the primary focus.

1.6.4. Ma Hou Yue ensemble

The "Ma Hou Yue" was primarily used for the emperor's procession, where musicians performed equestrian music while riding behind the imperial carriage. Unlike the Lu Bu Gu Chui ensemble, it did not include heavy instruments such as large suspended bells, long transverse flutes, medium transverse flutes, large Gu, and gongs. Instead, it predominantly featured lighter and more agile musical instruments.

2. Song Dynasty artifacts unearthed in Henan featuring images of music ensembles

2.1 Why Study Musical Imagery in Henan's Archaeological Finds?

When exploring the musical culture of the Song Dynasty, the archaeological discoveries in Henan provide invaluable material evidence. As the political, cultural, and economic center of the Northern Song, Bianjing (modern Kaifeng) was home to not only courtly yayue (elegant ritual music), yanle (banquet music), and religious music but also a highly developed system for disseminating these musical traditions to local administrations across the empire. While historical texts such as *Dongjing Meng Hua Lu* (Dreams of Splendor of the Eastern Capital) and *Song Shi: Records of Music* provide some documentation of court music, the destruction of the Northern Song court during the Jingkang Incident (1127) resulted in the loss of a vast amount of musical records. Consequently, it has become nearly impossible to fully reconstruct

the Northern Song court music system based on textual sources alone (Lam, 2008, *Sonic Cosmology*, p. 162).

In this context, artifacts unearthed in Henan—such as tomb murals, brick carvings, and pottery figurines depicting music ensembles—serve as the most direct and compelling evidence for studying Song Dynasty court music, *sanle* (court-derived popular music), and religious music. These archaeological materials not only reveal crucial details about musical ensembles, instrumentation, and performance attire but also illustrate how court music was disseminated to local communities under the “Rituals for the Common People” (*li xia shuren*) policy. This is evident from *Song Shi: Records of Music*, which states that “*jiaofang sanle* sets the musical standards for the entire empire” (Tuo Tuo et al., 1345/1977: Vol. 142). Such institutional diffusion made funerary depictions of *sanle* performances a standardized reflection of court music.

Additionally, while many *sanle* images unearthed in Henan—such as those from Tianxizhen and Baisha tombs—are classified as “folk art,” the instrumentation (e.g., *sheng*, drums, clappers) and musician attire (e.g., long-footed *putou* headgear, leopard-print short robes) strictly adhere to *jiaofang* regulations. This suggests that local musical ensembles were not purely grassroots traditions but rather extensions of imperial music institutions (Meng Yuanlao, 1147/1982, *Dongjing Meng Hua Lu*, Vol. 5).

Furthermore, the strict state control over music production is evident from *Song Huiyao Jigao: Yue Si*, which prohibited private casting of bells and chimes (Xu Song, 1809/1957: Yue 4-12). Yet, artifacts such as the dragon-patterned bell stand from the Xiguan Song tomb and the curved-neck *pipa* from Linzhou Zhao Weng tomb closely match imperial designs, demonstrating the state's monopoly on instrument manufacturing (*Zhongguo Yinyue Wenwu Daxi: Henan Juan*, 2010: p. 89, 237).

Similarly, Song court music had a profound impact on religious music. Emperor Huizong's promotion of *Shenxiao Daoism* as the state religion led to the integration of court *yayue* into Buddhist and Daoist rituals. In 1116 CE, he issued an edict mandating that Buddhist monasteries adopt court music in their ceremonies (Ebrey, 2014, *Emperor Huizong*, p. 289). This process of “ritual colonization” (*li yue zhimin*) is evident in the Kaifeng Iron Pagoda's musician brick reliefs, where a

musician plays the chou (a bamboo wind instrument used in court yayue). His playing posture exactly matches descriptions in Yueshu (Book of Music): “Both hands hold the chou, breath flows from the dantian” (Chen Yang, 1103/1983: Vol. 128), proving that even in religious contexts, musical performance remained governed by courtly standards.

2.2 Archaeological Finds

2.2.1 The San Yue Murals in Tianxi Town, Anyang (2 pieces) The tomb of a native of the Xining period of the Northern Song Dynasty (1077) has been filled in on the spot, and the mural copies were unearthed in January 1954 at a Song tomb in Tianxi Town, Anyang County, Henan Province, by the Henan Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology. The four sides of the tomb were constructed with brick in imitation of wooden structures, with cornices supported by bracket sets and square columns. The lower part of the tomb is decorated with murals. Due to multiple instances of looting, the murals were severely damaged, with only two pieces in the rear chamber and one piece on the north wall of the left side preserved relatively well. The content of the mural consists of two pieces depicting musical entertainment. One piece shows four musicians, with one standing in front, both hands clasped in front of the chest and extending the left thumb. Behind this figure are three others, all wearing Dongpo-style headdresses, round-necked long shirts, waist belts, and cloth shoes or long boots; the musician in the middle is playing a waist drum, the one on the right is clapping the board, and the one on the left is playing the bamboo flute. The other piece is blurry, with only a person playing the flute preserved relatively well. This person wears a bow-tied headscarf, a round-necked long shirt, a leather belt at the waist, and plays the flute horizontally. (Figure 37).

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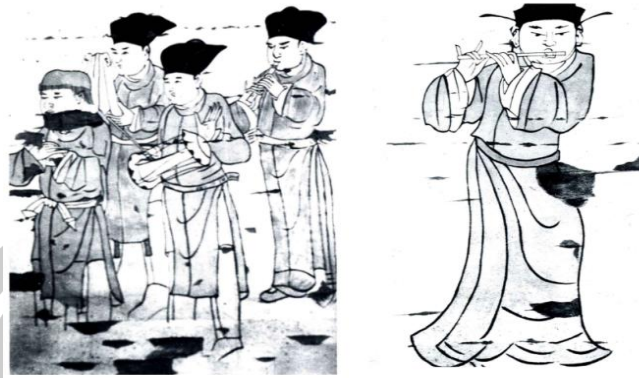


Figure 38. The San Yue Murals in Tianxi Town, Anyang

Source: An Yang tianxi town Song San Yue Tu B', "Central Plains Cultural

Relics", 1984, No. 1

2.2.2 The San Yue Murals of the Song Tomb in Baisha, Yuzhou dating back to the 2nd year of the Yuanfu period of the Northern Song Dynasty (1099), are stored in the Beijing University Archaeology Department (designated as the No. 1 Tomb of Yingdong). Archaeological materials dating from December 1951 were unearthed in the No. 1 Tomb of Yingdong in the former Baisha Warehouse area of Yuzhou County. The tomb consists of two chambers, with the front chamber being square and the rear chamber hexagonal, both constructed with small bricks. The walls of the chambers were built in imitation of wooden structures using brick to form bracket sets, balustrades, eaves, pillars, doors, and windows. The walls were plastered with a layer of white clay, upon which various colorful patterns and stories were painted, depicting vivid and bright human figures. The Sanle murals were depicted on the east wall of the front chamber of the tomb. A rolled bamboo curtain made of brick was constructed, painted in a pale yellow color and decorated with small crimson flowers, and suspended at each end with silver hooks. Below the curtain, a brick-made curtain was sculpted, painted in crimson, and bearing eleven female musicians. On the right side, five people stand in two rows, with two in the back row. The person on the right wears a floral headscarf, a round-necked narrow-sleeved purple robe, facing north, holding a small stick in each hand as if playing a drum. The drum is red, with a yellow base. The person on the left wears a high bun, a white crown, adorned with crimson and blue decorations, with a yellow ornament, wearing a narrow-sleeved embroidered shirt, facing north, clapping the board. In the front row, three people

stand, with the person on the right wearing a floral headscarf, a round-necked narrow-sleeved light crimson shirt, narrow-legged blue trousers, and pointed shoes, facing north, playing a small waist drum. The middle and left two people wear similar head decorations to those in the back, with round-necked wide-sleeved long shirts and belts, respectively playing the transverse flute and the bamboo flute. On the right side of the east wall, five people stand: two in the back row, with the person on the left wearing a square forehead, a white crown, a narrow-sleeved blue shirt, and a crimson cloud-patterned skirt, facing south, playing the vertical flute or the bamboo flute; the person on the right wears a similar crown but a crimson shirt, also playing facing south. In the front row, three people stand, with the person on the left wearing a lotus crown, a narrow-sleeved light crimson long shirt, a crimson cloud-patterned skirt, facing south, playing the sheng; the person in the middle has a square forehead and a white crown, wearing narrow-sleeved blue long shirt and a crimson cloud-patterned skirt, facing south, playing the twelve-pipe sheng, with concentric knot decorations at the bottom of the pipes; the person on the right wears a floral crown, a wide-sleeved light crimson long shirt, and a white skirt, with pointed shoes visible below, facing south, holding a plectrum in the right hand, playing a five-string pipa, with the colorful cloth pattern on the pipa neck. Between the rows of female musicians on the left and right sides, a woman wearing a floral headscarf, a round-necked narrow-sleeved purple robe, and wide-legged pointed shoes, bends forward, with the body slightly leaning, the right hand raised to the top of the head, and the left arm bent in front of the chest, seemingly performing an act.(Figure 38)



Figure 39. The San Yue Murals of the Song Tomb in Baisha, Yuzhou
Source: Baisha Song Tomb, Cultural Relics Publishing House, 1957 edition.

2.2.3 The San Yue Murals of the Zhao Weng Tomb in Linzhou, dating back to the 5th year of the Xuanhe period of the Northern Song Dynasty (1123), were originally located in the northern suburbs of Wulong Temple in Linzhou city, but are no longer extant. Archaeological materials dating from December 26, 1992, discovered on the south wall of the tomb of Zhao Weng from the fifth year of the Xuanhe period. The tomb chamber has a flat square plan. Other murals include a send-off scene and a banquet scene (located on the south side of the east wall), and the content of the mural depicting musical entertainment measures 60.0 cm in height and 32.0 cm in width, showing five musicians. The person at the lower right is a dancer, wearing a headscarf, a cross-collar long shirt, a waistband, and boots. The left arm is raised, with the long sleeves fluttering over the head, the right hand stretched to the right, with the sleeves swaying, and the left leg leaping in a bending dance. The person on the left has a damaged face, wearing a floral crown, a blue cross-collar robe, and a long white skirt, holding a clapper in both hands. In the center of the picture is a barrel-shaped large drum, with a drum stand below. Behind this Figure is a person wearing a black Dongpo-style headdress, a round-necked blue long shirt, a waistband, and holding a stick in a drumming pose. On the left in the back is a person wearing a Dongpo-style headdress, a cross-collar long shirt, white pants, playing the transverse flute. On the right in the back, a musician wears a black soft scarf, a blue cross-collar shirt, holding the flute in a playing pose (Figure 39).

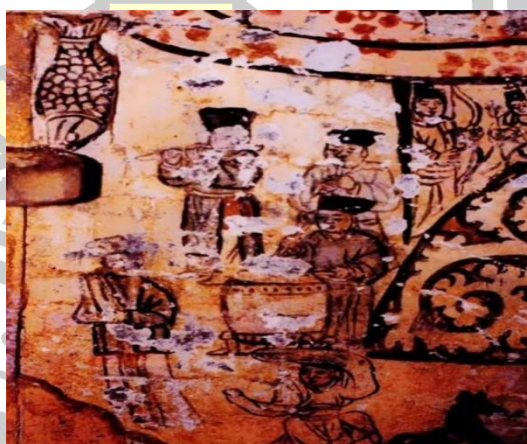


Figure 40. The San Yue Murals of the Zhao Weng Tomb in Linzhou

Source: Chinese Music Heritage Series - Henan Volume, Elephant Publishing House, 1996 edition.

2.2.4 The San Yue Musician Painting of the Kaiyuan Temple. Figure in Zhengzhou is from the ninth year of the Kaibao period of the Northern Song Dynasty (976). It is currently housed in the Zhengzhou Museum and was excavated in 1974 by the Zhengzhou Museum. The Kaiyuan Temple is located on the north side of East Street in Zhengzhou, with the surviving structure being an octagonal brick pagoda, comprising 13 stories and standing at a height of approximately 30 meters. In the Sanle Musician Painting, musicians are seated within the pavilion gate, wearing pointed hats, bare upper bodies, draped with long ribbons over their shoulders, which flutter at the sides, and each musician holds musical instruments for performance. On the front wall, there are two musicians: the one on the left has a zither placed on the knee and plays it by plucking the strings with the left hand while striking with the right hand; the one on the right holds a cymbal in each hand, in the middle of playing. On the left wall, there are four musicians: the first holds a flute with both hands, playing it on the left side of the face; the second holds a drum and plays it with the cheek; the third has a small waist drum tied around the waist, holds a stick in the right hand, while the left hand is not clear; the fourth is sitting sideways, with a square-shaped object in front, presumably a wooden clapper, and strikes it with a mallet. On the right wall, there are four musicians: the first holds a diatonic panpipe in front of the mouth with both hands, with visible eight tubes; the second is sitting sideways with a guzheng in front and plucks it with the right hand; the third also sits sideways, playing a curved mouth organ with both hands; the fourth holds a pipa, pressing the strings with the left hand and striking it with the right hand. Additionally, there is a person holding a clapper board on the coffin wall. The 11 musicians each hold different musical instruments, including pipa, waist drum, guzheng, diatonic panpipe, mouth organ, flute, wooden clapper, cymbals, vertical bamboo flute, and clapper board, totaling 11 varieties. (Figure 40)

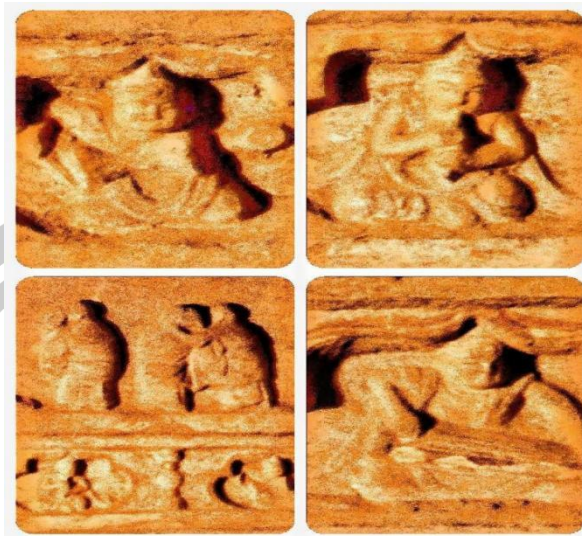


Figure 41. The San Yue Musician Painting of the Kaiyuan Temple

Source: Briefing on the cleaning of the foundation of the Song dynasty pagoda at the Kaiyuan Temple in Zhengzhou City, *Zhongyuan Cultural Relics*, 1983, No. 1

2.2.5 The San Yue Brick Carvings from the Song Tomb in Xiguan, Wenxian, dating back to the Northern Song Dynasty, are currently housed in the Wenxian Cultural Relics Preservation Office. According to archaeological records, these carvings were discovered in March 1990 within a Song tomb located 100 meters east of the southern section of Huancheng West Road in Wenxian. The tomb chamber has an octagonal floor plan, constructed to resemble a wooden architectural structure. The set of Sanle carvings consists of a total of 5 pieces. From right to left: The first Figure is depicted wearing a floral hardshell headdress with wings, a cross-collared undergarment, a circular-necked, wide-sleeved long robe that extends to the ground, with a sash hanging from the waist at the back, holding a vertical bamboo flute and appearing to play it. The second Figure is shown wearing a floral hardshell headdress without wings, a circular-necked, wide-sleeved long robe that extends to the ground, holding a dragon-headed flute and appearing to play it. The third Figure, possibly a female, is wearing a double-soft-wing soft scarf headdress, a high-collared undergarment, a circular-necked, wide-sleeved long robe that extends to the ground, holding a clapper board in front of the left chest, with the right hand poised to strike. The fourth Figure is portrayed wearing a floral hardshell headband, circular-necked, narrow-sleeved long shirt and trousers, a tight-fitting pair of pants, and a waist drum,

with the sleeves rolled up to the elbows, appearing to play it. The fifth Figure, depicted wearing a floral headdress and a circular-necked, wide-sleeved long robe with a sash, leaning slightly to the left, standing in front of a large drum with a stand, holding a drumstick high up by the left shoulder with the left hand, and striking the drumhead with the right drumstick. Long beard-like hair hangs under the chin, indicative of an elderly (Figure 41).



Figure 42. The San Yue Brick Carvings from the Song Tomb in Xiguan, Wenxian

Source: 'Henan Wenxian Xiguan Song Tomb', Huaxia Archaeology, 1996, No.1.

2.2.6 The San Yue Musician Brick Carvings from Wenxian, dating back to the Northern Song Dynasty, are currently housed in the Wenxian Museum. According to archaeological records, there are three carved brick tiles depicting musicians, all of whom appear to be female. The first numbered brick (No. 581) features a musician with a high bun hairstyle, wearing a blouse, a draped scarf over the shoulders, a skirt, and standing with a ring-shaped ornament hanging from the back of the skirt. The musician holds a curved-neck pipa, with smooth flowing lines and billowing sleeves. The second numbered brick (No. 580) depicts a musician with a high bun adorned with flowers, wearing a narrow-sleeved garment, a draped scarf, and a skirt. The musician holds a mallet in each hand, striking a wooden clapper placed on a table. The wooden clapper consists of three rows of five pieces each, hanging horizontally

from a rectangular frame. The third numbered brick (No. 583) portrays a musician standing sideways, holding a vertical bamboo flute to the chest and playing it, with the mouthpiece of the flute being elongated like a kettle spout.(Figure 42.)



Figure 43. The San Yue Musician Brick Carvings from Wenxian

Source: Han Painting and Opera Artifacts - Wenxian Miscellaneous Opera Carved Brick Talks, Zhongzhou Ancient Books Publishing House, 1992 edition.

2.2.7 Carved Brick of Musicians Playing the Chou at the Iron Pagoda in Kaifeng.

The artwork originates from the first year of the Huangyou era of the Northern Song Dynasty (1049) and is featured on the outer wall of the first floor of the Iron Pagoda in Kaifeng. According to archaeological records, the Iron Pagoda was built in the first year of the Huangyou era of the Northern Song Dynasty, originally known as the Kaibao Temple Pagoda. During the Ming Dynasty, it was rebuilt into the Youguo Temple, hence acquiring the name Youguo Temple Pagoda. Due to the brown glazed tiles inset in its outer wall resembling iron in color, it is also known as the Iron Pagoda. The pagoda has an octagonal floor plan with a total of 13 floors, standing at a height of 55.08 meters. The outer wall is constructed from 28 types of glazed tiles imitating wooden structures, carved with depictions of musicians, celestial beings, seated Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and flowers. The carved brick artworks featuring musicians are mostly set on the outer wall of the first floor and are all made from the same mold, varying only in glaze color. The dimensions of the bricks are

34.5 cm in length and 20.0 cm in height. The majority display a reddish-brown color, with a few exhibiting a greenish-blue hue or reddish-brown with green mottling, totaling over a hundred pieces. The scenes depict five Figures standing on lotus pedestals. All of them wear pointed hats, draped with shawls, cinched with wide sashes with trailing ends below the waist, and one foot raised in a dancing posture. In the center, one Figure holds their hands together as if clapping, while symmetrically on each side, two Figures are shown in a dance posture - one hand held upwards as if supporting the heavens, with the other hand placed horizontally in front of the chest, and one leg raised with the toe touching the ground, their heads turned slightly to the front, conveying a graceful dancing pose. On the outer edges, two Figures are depicted - one playing the transverse flute and the other playing the chou. The chou is a musical instrument widely used in traditional music of both Daoism and Buddhism in the Central Plains region. It is a hollow bamboo blowpipe without reeds and is similar to the dizi (transverse flute) but without a notch. It produces sound through the principle of edge vibration. When played, the mouth is inclined at an angle of about 40 degrees, with the lips blocking two-thirds of the end of the pipe, leaving one-third as the blowing hole; hence it is commonly known as the "crooked-mouth chou". Its sound falls between that of the dizi and xiao (vertical flute), resembling a flute with membranes or a xiao without membranes.(Figure 43)



Figure 44. Carved Brick of Musicians Playing the Chou at the Iron Pagoda
Source: Zhongzhou Buddhism unique musical instrument source, Zhongzhou

Buddhism music research, Guangdong Higher Education Publishing House, July 1994 edition.

2.3 Irreplaceable Value of Sanle and Religious Musical Imagery in Reconstructing Song Court Music In the absence of continuous textual records due to historical disruptions such as the Jingkang Incident, the visual record—particularly funerary and religious imagery—emerges as a critical corpus for reconstructing Northern Song court music. This section examines why sanle (散乐, court-derived entertainment music) and religious musical depictions unearthed in Henan are indispensable by analyzing three interrelated institutional dimensions of Song court music: instrumental standardization, musician bureaucratization, and ensemble configuration. Each dimension is substantiated by archaeological case studies and anchored in contemporaneous textual evidence.

2.3.1 Absolute Standardization of Instrument Forms

In the Song Dynasty, musical instruments were not merely functional objects but state-regulated artifacts embedded with ritual, aesthetic, and political significance. The state's insistence on strict standardization reveals a broader imperial project to control sonic expression as a vehicle of order and legitimacy.

a. The Customization of the Curved-neck Pipa

Case: Linzhou Zhao Weng Tomb

The wall painting in the Zhao Weng Tomb (Linzhou, Henan) features a pipa with precise characteristics: a curved neck, four strings, and fourteen frets. This configuration is identical to the specifications for the court's "jiaofang pipa" (教坊琵琶) documented in *Zhongguo Yinyue Wenwu Daxi: Henan Juan* (2010: p. 237). The textual parallel in *Song Shi: Music Treatise* states:

"The Jiaofang pipa is made of red sandalwood, curved-necked, with four strings and fourteen frets, and decorated with mother-of-pearl inlay."—Tuo Tuo et al., 1345/1977: Vol. 142

This precise iconographic alignment between court norms and local funerary practice demonstrates that even in peripheral regions, musical instrument production adhered to court-defined specifications, affirming the vertical enforcement of the court's material culture.

b. The Seventeen-Reed Sheng and Pitch-Order Symbolism

Case: Brick Carving in Wenxian County

The sheng carved in Wenxian tomb bricks shows a distinctive configuration: seventeen pipes arranged nine on the left and eight on the right. This corresponds exactly to the twelve-pitch (lǚ) system with five added “qing tones” (清声), forming a full modal matrix. In *Yueshu* (Book of Music), Chen Yang notes:

"The court sheng has nine pipes on the left, eight on the right, symbolizing yin and yang, and harmonizing heaven and earth."—Chen Yang, 1103/1983: Vol. 148

This structure embodies cosmological symbolism. In *Song Huiyao Jigao*: Music Section, it is stated:

"Any instrument whose tuning does not conform to the lǚ pitch system must be recast."—Xu Song, 1809/1957: Yue 3-8

Thus, the sheng is not only a musical tool but also a material representation of ritual order, deeply embedded in the ideology of “music aligning with ritual” (yi yue he li), central to Song statecraft.

2.3.2 Institutionalization of the Musician’s Identity

In the Song court, musicians were not informal performers but functionaries integrated into the bureaucratic system. Their roles, appearances, and career trajectories were regulated through the institutional apparatus of the *jiaofang* (Imperial Music Bureau).

a. Costume and Rank as Symbolic Governance

Case 1: Mural Musicians in Tianxizhen

Musicians in the tomb murals of Tianxizhen wear a long-footed putou (幘头) and red round-collared robes with floral patterns, matching *Dongjing Meng Hua Lu*:

"Jiaofang performers wear long-footed putou and red silk robes."—Meng Yuanlao, 1147/1982: Vol. 5

These garments signify more than attire—they denote official rank and state-sanctioned identity. As documented in *Song Shi*: Treatise on Dress and Ranks:

"Jiaofang musicians wear long-footed putou and red robes, designating them as officials of the ninth grade."—Tuo Tuo et al., 1345/1977: Vol. 153

This proves that even local sanle performers, as depicted in tombs, adhered to standardized court dress codes, indicating their institutional incorporation rather than independent folk identity.

Case 2: Flute Player (Chou) on the Iron Pagoda

The Iron Pagoda of Kaifeng features a musician performing the chou, a bamboo wind instrument used in court rituals. His posture—upright, both hands on the instrument, chest expanded—is precisely aligned with Chen Yang's prescriptive description:

"The chou player stands upright, hands firm, breath drawn from the dantian; decorum must not falter."—Chen Yang, 1103/1983: Vol. 128

Such imagery attests to the ritualized embodiment of performance behavior, which was institutionally cultivated. As per Song Huiyao Jigao:

"All local musicians must train in the Jiaofang for three years and be evaluated periodically."—Xu Song, 1809/1957: Officials 22-5

This codification of training and conduct underscores the disciplinary reach of the court over provincial musical labor.

b. Ensemble Membership as Codified Roster

Case: Ensemble in Xiguan Song Tomb Brick Relief

The ensemble depicted in Xiguan consists of:

- 1 drummer
- 2 sheng players
- 1 pipa player
- 1 clapper (paiban)
- 1 flute (dizi) player

This matches the precise configuration for banquet ensemble no. 3 under jiaofang guidelines:

"One drum, two sheng, one pipa, one flute, one clapper."—Tuo Tuo et al., 1345/1977: Vol. 142

Such matching indicates not improvisational artistry, but codified ensemble roles, verified in state manuals. This demonstrates how local funerary

ensembles mirror the personnel structure of imperial music troupes, further blurring the line between center and periphery.

2.3.3 Normative Models of Ensemble Configuration

The Song court promoted not only standardized instruments and personnel, but also a prescriptive model for musical combination, structured to produce a ritualized soundscape aligned with court ceremonial logic.

a. The Three-Part Structure of Banquet Ensembles

Across multiple tombs (Tianxizhen, Baisha, Linzhou), musical scenes consistently deploy a triadic sonic logic:

Drums (percussion, rhythm)

Sheng (aerophones, harmony)

Strings/Winds (melody)

This mirrors the Yueshu: Banquet Music Diagram:

"Begin with drums, then sheng, followed by strings and flutes."—Chen Yang, 1103/1983: Vol. 116

The ensemble thus expresses not spontaneous creativity but an auditory ritual script, enforced by administrative protocol. Song Huiyao Jigao affirms:

"All prefectural banquet music must adhere to Jiaofang procedures."—Xu Song, 1809/1957: Yue 4-15

This proves that even regional or funerary ensembles obeyed the structural grammar of state ritual music.

b. Religious Ensembles and Courtly Emulation

Case: Kaifeng's Kaiyuan Temple Mural

Depicted instruments include:

Cymbals (nao),

Clappers (bo),

Conch shell trumpet (faluo),

Sheng,

Flute

This corresponds to the ritual music specified for Taichangsi (Court of Imperial Sacrifices):

"Ritual music includes nao, bo, sheng, flute, and conch shell."—Tuo Tuo et al., 1345/1977: Vol. 130

This imitation reflects political intention. In 1116 CE (Zhenghe 6), Emperor Huizong issued:

"All Buddhist and Daoist rites must adopt court ritual instruments."—

Song

Dazhaoling Ji (Collected Imperial Edicts of the Song), Vol. 179

This policy was part of a state-driven ritual colonization, wherein religious soundscapes were absorbed into the symbolic universe of the imperial order, legitimizing the emperor's control over not just music, but belief itself.

2.3.4 Scholarly Significance: Reconstructing the Three Axes of Court Music

These Henan-based musical images are not artistic curiosities but critical material data for reconstructing Song court music along three analytical axes:

1) Material Axis (Instruments):

Images of standardized instruments like the curved-neck pipa and seventeen-reed sheng serve as physical confirmations of the court's Dasheng Yiqong Zhi (Grand Compendium of Imperial Instruments), filling gaps left by lost texts.

2) Institutional Axis (Personnel):

Attire, posture, and ensemble structure in murals and carvings reflect the bureaucratic codification of court musicians, illustrating how imperial institutions vertically managed musical labor.

3) Political Axis (Sound as Sovereignty):

Religious ensemble imagery—e.g., Kaiyuan Temple—demonstrates how court music protocols were exported into the spiritual domain, turning sound into a technology of imperial integration.

2.3.5 Conclusion: Visual Archives as the Coded Grammar of Musical Sovereignty

The same and religious music images from Henan are not passive records but active manifestations of the Song court’s project of standardization, institutionalization, and politicization of sound.

Each instrument’s form is a “mold of authority,” regulated by state production.

Each performer’s attire is a “semiotic badge” of bureaucratic rank.

Each ensemble’s configuration is an “acoustic script” of imperial order.

Together with textual sources—Song Shi, Song Huiyao Jigao, Yueshu—these images constitute a dual-evidence system, urging us to rethink Song court music not merely as performance art, but as an audible system of governance.

3. Analysis of musical works

In the "Zhongxing Lishu," which documents the court music and ceremonial practices of the late Song Dynasty, the ya yue (elegant music) songs are notated using a one-character-one-note system of Lü Lü. The score shown in the figure is for "Qian'an," which is recorded in the text as being used during the ceremony when the emperor enters. This piece is performed using the palace ensemble music and is set in the Huangzhong mode.

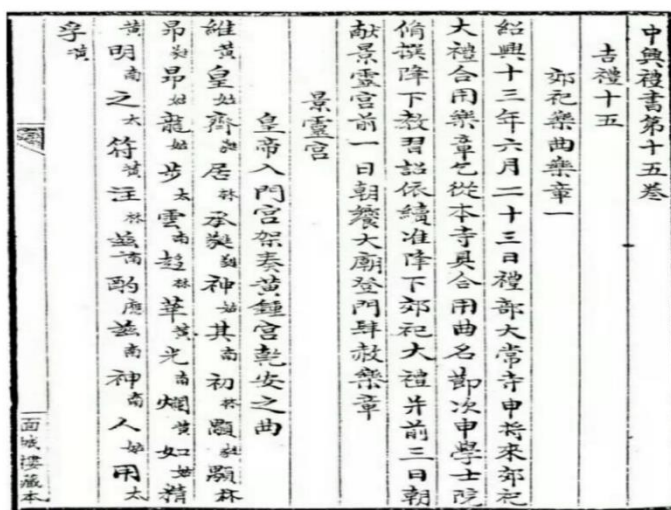


Figure 45. Musical extract
Source: Zhong Xing Li Shu

Professor Lin Cuiqing argues that the one-character-one-note melodies of ya yue during the Song Dynasty were intentionally designed to prevent the general public from imitating this refined music. He even asserts that "the unique style of one-character-one-note is strategic. The Southern Song rulers consciously used bells, stone chimes, and other ancient instruments to perform ya yue in the imperial altars and temples, deliberately creating and emphasizing the distinct qualities of this royal music. Its ideology attempts to emulate ancient music through the one-character-one-note style; its unique vocal and instrumental performances were difficult for the citizens of Lin'an at the time to replicate with their limited musicians and instruments. The archaic sounds and applications of ya yue were protected as a court privilege—unauthorized production and performance of ya yue would be immediately prohibited and investigated. Moreover, the one-character-one-note style of ya yue, with its difficult melodies and short syllables, was challenging for the citizens of Lin'an to utilize in their private or public banquets and entertainment activities" (Lin Cuiqing, 2012).

Of course, there are varied opinions in academia regarding the translation of ancient musical scores and the characteristics of the "one-character-one-note" style of ya yue, and there is currently no consensus on the matter. The researcher adopts Professor Lin Cuiqing's insights here and analyzes them using excerpts of music that he has translated as examples.

3.1 Analysis of Example 1



The image shows two lines of musical notation in 4/4 time, with Chinese characters and pinyin below each line. The first line contains 14 notes and the second line contains 14 notes. The lyrics are: 维皇齐居承神其初颢颢昂昂龙步云趋 (wei huang qi ju cheng shen qi chu yong yong ang ang long bu yun qu) and 华光烂如精明之符注兹酌兹神人用孚 (hua guang lan ru jing ming zhi fu zhu zi zhuo zi shen ren yong fu).

Figure 46. The emperor enters, and the Gongjia ensemble performs "Qian'an.",

Source:Zhong Xing Li Shu

The gist of the lyrics is as follows: The emperor's dignity is solemn and carries the blessings of the divine. He appears majestic, moving with the grace of a dragon and the lightness of clouds. His brilliance shines like splendid light, symbolizing intelligence and wisdom. With a sincere heart, he offers fine wine to the deities and respectfully invites them to enjoy the tribute presented.

Melody Analysis

Measure 1: The intervals primarily consist of minor thirds and major seconds, creating a bright and ascending feeling.

Measure 2: The notes form a downward motion, where the raised F serves to guide the melody.

Measure 3: The repeated raised F creates a sense of central pitch, enhancing the coherence of the melody.

Measure 4: The descending intervals in this measure (such as from D to E) convey a certain tension downward.

Measure 5: The use of repetition (such as with C) provides a sense of stability.

Measure 6: The back-and-forth movement between C and D showcases the motion of the melody.

Measure 7: The ascending intervals in this section generate an uplifting atmosphere.

Measure 8: This measure returns to the variations of the previous notes in some manner, presenting a sense of conclusion.

Pitch Characteristics: The melody features raised notes (F# and B#), which add tension and vividness to the music. The melody exhibits a free-flowing quality, comprising both ascending and descending sections that create a sense of movement.

Lyrics Content and Emotional Expression

"Wei huang qi ju, cheng shen qi chu": These opening lines convey the emperor's majesty and sanctity. The lyrics emphasize the solemn atmosphere shared between the emperor and the divine, and this description is expressed through the initial section of the melody, which features a transition from lower to higher notes, conveying a sense of stability and mystery. The starting notes can be in a lower

register to symbolize the foundation of imperial power, gradually ascending to reflect the increasing grandeur.

"Yong yong ang ang, long bu yun qu": Here, the use of adjectives and metaphors further enhances the emperor's dignity. The ascending intervals in the melody (such as from D flat to G) resonate with the lightness and grace of the dragon, evoking a sense of elevation and flight. This creates a dynamic and powerful atmosphere.

"Hua guang lan ru, jing ming zhi fu": This section emphasizes the emperor as a symbol of brilliance. The melody here can utilize brighter notes (such as higher pitches) to reflect a sense of radiant splendor. The fluidity of the melody can resonate with the imagery in the lyrics, creating a glorious ambiance.

"Zhu zi zhuo zi, shen ren yong fu": The final lines stress the offering and sincerity toward the divine. In the melody, this should be reflected through smoothness and gravity, gradually unfolding notes to present offerings to the deities. The melody in this segment can return to a lower register to convey the solemnity and reverence associated with the sacrificial rite.

3.2 Analysis of Example 2

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written on a single staff with lyrics in Chinese characters and Pinyin below it. The lyrics are: 帝既临 飨龙馭 华耀孝 孙承之 陟降在 庙 诚意上交 庆阴下 冒天休 骈至 千亿克 绍

帝 既 临 飨 龙 馭 华 耀 孝 孙 承 之 陟 降 在 庙
 di ji lin xiang long yu hua yao xiao sun cheng zhi zhi jiang zai miao

诚 意 上 交 庆 阴 下 冒 天 休 骈 至 千 亿 克 绍
 cheng yi shang jiao qing yin xia mao tian xiu pian zhi qian yi ke shao

Figure 47. The emperor ascends the throne, and the Dengge ensemble performs "Qian'an.". Source:Zhong Xing Li Shu

The gist of the lyrics is as follows: When the emperor arrives for the banquet, the dragon carriage shines brilliantly, and the dutiful descendants inherit this honor.

They rise and fall within the temples, presenting their sincere offerings, while blessings shower down, and the favor of the heavens floods in like a tide, bestowing upon us endless fortunes.

Melody Analysis

Measure 1: This measure uses a combination of minor seconds and major thirds, with a rise followed by a return to F, creating a sense of undulation in the melody.

Measure 2: The opening note, B flat, brings a somber color to the melody, while the subsequent notes, A flat and D, create a downward movement.

Measure 3: The downward interval from F to B flat, followed by an ascent to G and then descending to A flat, conveys a sense of turbulence and introduces contrasting elements.

Measure 4: Starting on G, this measure then descends, with the introduction of E flat intensifying the tension in the melody and altering the direction of the pitch flow.

Measure 5: This measure employs notes in a lowered register again, forming a unique harmony, while the interval between D and F enhances the sense of stability.

Measure 6: The combination of notes in this measure showcases the complex relationship between harmony and melody, with the lowered notes continuing to convey a somber emotion.

Measure 7: A rich interplay of intervals forms between G and F, while the introduction of C provides a new pitch, creating a sense of suspense.

Measure 8: The notes in this measure gradually descend, presenting a sense of conclusion akin to returning to and reiterating a particular theme.

Pitch Characteristics

Use of Lowered Notes: The extensive use of lowered notes (B flat, A flat, D flat, etc.) gives this melody a more powerful and expressive timbre.

Contrast and Repetition in the Melody: Through the repetition of different notes across measures (such as G and F) and contrasting elements, the coherence of the theme is enhanced, making the melody more memorable.

Lyrics Content and Emotional Expression

"Di ji lin xiang, long yu hua yao":The opening lines depict the emperor's majesty and brilliance. The melody here features notes D flat, F, G, and back to F, illustrating an ascent from lower to higher pitches that reflect the solemnity of imperial power, evoking a sense of exhilaration. The G note shapes the listeners' perception of the dragon's dignified presence.

"Xiao sun cheng zhi, zhi jiang zai miao":This section emphasizes respect for ancestors and the accompanying responsibilities. The melody, with notes B flat, F, A flat, and D, conveys emotional depth. The melodic movement from high to low seems to embody a weighty sense of obligation. The concept of "rising and falling" can be represented by the fluctuation of notes, enhancing the feeling of responsibility.

"Cheng yi shang jiao, qing yin xia mao":This part describes the sincerity of the connection with the divine. The melody featuring notes A flat, D, F, and B flat conveys a sincere and solemn atmosphere. The melody here should be as gentle as possible to emphasize the feeling of devotion.

"Tian xiu pian zhi, qian yi ke shao":The concluding lines express hope and blessings directed towards the divine. The melodic transitions of G, F, and E flat bring the emotional climax and vision. Overall, the melody gradually ascends, creating an atmosphere of excitement, and ultimately moves from E flat to D flat in a descending manner, allowing a feeling of tranquility and anticipation to emerge.

3.3 Analysis of Example 3

德 惟 馨 香 升 闻 八 方 粤 神 从 之 灿 然 有 光
de wei xin xiang sheng wen ba fang yue shen cong zhi can ran you guang

骖 飞 乘 苍 秋 秋 鎗 鎗 须 摇 从 容 愿 予 不 忘
can fei cheng cang qiu qiu qiang qiang xu yao cong rong yuan yu bu wang

Figure 48. The deities descend, and the Gongjia ensemble performs "Tai'an.",

Source:Zhong Xing Li Shu

The gist of the lyrics is as follows: Virtue is like a fragrant aroma that can be sensed from all directions. May the deities come along, shining brilliantly. Riding the soaring dragon, drifting high in the sky; with the autumn breeze gently swaying, beautiful things come with the wind. I hope to always remember this sense of gratitude.

Melody Analysis

Measure 1: The melody begins with a low E flat, then rises to G and A before returning to G, creating a flowing sense of ascension and descension that conveys a warm emotion.

Measure 2: Starting with C, the introduction of B flat and E flat brings a deeper color to the melody, ultimately resolving back to C, which forms a sense of stability.

Measure 3: The melody initiates from E flat and rises again to G, but then descends to F, finally settling back on E flat, reflecting a sense of strength and solid structure.

Measure 4: The ascent from E flat to F, followed by the use of B flat and C, creates new melodic layers and connections, enriching the overall melody.

Measure 5: In this measure, the notes ascend from D flat to C, then to A and G, demonstrating upward movement and providing an emotional lift.

Measure 6: The repetition of B flat subtly implies emotional fluctuations, which, in combination with G and C, forms a nuanced contrast.

Measure 7: The introduction of A provides a new pitch starting point, followed by transitions through G and C to B flat, painting a richer melodic landscape.

Measure 8: The melody begins with C and concludes on E flat, providing a satisfying resolution for the entire passage while showcasing the emotional development throughout.

Pitch Characteristics:

Use of Lowered Notes: The effective use of several lowered notes (such as E flat, B flat, D flat, etc.) contributes to a tender emotional quality. The entire melody is richly colored, creating an elegant atmosphere.

Coherence and Suspense in the Melody: The changes in notes between measures, especially the alternation between ascension and descension, imbue the melody with drama and tension, capturing the listener's attention.

Lyrics Content and Emotional Expression

"De wei xin xiang, sheng wen ba fang": These opening lines emphasize the beauty of virtue, likening it to a fragrant aroma that permeates the air. The melody begins with the notes E flat, G, A, and back to G, conveying an elegant and vibrant feeling. The movement from lower to higher pitches reflects the elevation and dissemination of virtuous qualities.

"Yue shen cong zhi, can ran you guang": This line describes the recognition and endowment of virtue by the divine. The use of the notes C, B flat, E flat, and C in the melody likely presents a soft tone that reinforces the imagery of brilliance. The flowing notes convey a sense of radiance, instilling feelings of warmth and tranquility.

"Can fei cheng cang, qiu qiu qiang qiang": This line uses metaphor to express ideals and pursuits soaring high. The descending E flat, G, F, and returning E flat create a sense of movement and sublimation, stimulating the listeners' imagination and aspirations.

"Xu yao cong rong, yuan yu bu wang": This section describes a state of inner peace and steadfastness. The notes D flat, C, A, and G convey a serene emotion. Through the delicate variations of these notes, the overall melody tends toward gravity and introspection, reflecting a deep appreciation for virtue and commitment.

3.4 Analysis of Example 4

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Ling'an". It consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time, written in treble clef. The melody is simple and melodic, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written in Chinese characters and Pinyin below the notes. The first staff contains the lyrics: 玉气如虹丰缙充笏既奉既将亦莫在位 (yu qi ru hong feng zeng chong shu ji feng ji jiang yi mo zai wei). The second staff contains the lyrics: 有来群后宝相祀事何以临下心意不贰 (you lai qun hou bao xiang si shi he yi lin xia xin yi bu er).

Figure 49. The emperor offers jade coins to his ancestors, and the Dengge ensemble performs "Ling'an."

Source: Zhong Xing Li Shu

The gist of the lyrics is as follows: Jade emits an aura like that of a rainbow, and abundant silk fills the ceremonial vessels. Once the offerings have been made, there is no need to keep them close. Many people come, and the treasures are meant for sacrifice. So, how can one sincerely express their heartfelt intentions in front of the deities? One's intentions must be steadfast and unwavering.

Melody Analysis

Measure 1: The opening D flat sets a low tonal foundation for the melody, which then rises to F before descending to B flat and A flat, creating a somber and complex emotional tone.

Measure 2: Starting from G, the melody first descends to A flat and then returns to G, followed by a downward movement to F. This oscillation depicts a sense of fluctuation, illustrating the rise and fall of inner emotions.

Measure 3: The melody develops into a lower register, beginning with F and then continuing down to E flat, followed by A flat and B flat, highlighting a feeling of heaviness and contemplation.

Measure 4: This measure starts from a higher C, then descends through D flat and E flat, finally returning to F, creating a sense of layered intervals that introduce new pitches to advance the melody.

Measure 5: The notes A flat, F, B flat, and A flat again utilize added lowered pitches, establishing a feeling of sorrow, with the alternation between B flat and A flat continuing to reinforce this effect.

Measure 6: The G and F in this measure create a simple up-and-down motion, while the presence of E flat introduces a sense of suspense, enhancing the emotional depth of the melody.

Measure 7: Beginning with D flat, the notes stay predominantly in the lowered register, finishing with an ascent to F. This measure demonstrates a contrasting structure, adding layers of emotion to the melody.

Measure 8: Starting with B flat, this measure includes a combination of F and lowered notes, ultimately resolving back to D flat, which presents a sense of conclusion and conveys a reflective sentiment.

Pitch Characteristics:

Use of Lowered Notes: The frequent appearance of lowered notes (such as D flat, B flat, and A flat) enhances the complexity of the music, creating a characteristic that possesses emotional impact.

Coherence and Contrast in the Melody: The variations between notes create rich melodic contrasts, engaging the listener's emotions and making the melody memorable.

Lyrics Content and Emotional Expression

"Yu qi ru hong, feng zeng chong si": These opening lines depict elegance and majesty. The melody begins with the note combinations of D flat, F, B flat, and A flat, rising from low to high, creating a sense of gradual elevation that embodies the transparency and splendor of "yu qi." The flowing nature of the melody aligns well with the imagery of national treasures.

"Ji feng ji jiang, yi mo zai wei": This section describes the recognition and respect for power and responsibility. The melody, featuring G, A flat, G, and F, presents a relatively stable feeling, reflecting on one's status and a selfless attitude toward duty. Here, the gentle flow of the notes enhances the lyrical content.

"You lai qun hou, bao xiang si shi": These lines convey the respect of the ministers for the treasures and the responsibilities that accompany them. The melodic changes (F, E flat, A flat, B flat) highlight the importance of heritage, with the rising and falling notes creating contrast, showcasing a deep appreciation for history and cultural legacy.

"He yi lin xia, xin yi bu er": The concluding part reflects inner steadfastness and resolve. The melody, featuring C, D flat, E flat, and F, ascends further, as if seeking answers while simultaneously expressing a pursuit of virtue and truth. The final descent from E flat to D flat creates a natural ending, conveying a sense of tranquility and introspective return.

3.5 The Sonification of Cosmic Order: Music as a Model of the Universe

In the Song Dynasty, the court's musical system not only adhered to cosmic symbolism but also embodied a sophisticated mechanism for political control and

ritual expression. The Po Tower brick carvings—particularly their instrumental layout and performance details—offer valuable insights into how the court integrated sound, space, and power. While these carvings align with religious imagery, their deeper structure reflects the Song court's use of ritual music as a means of encoding political order and reinforcing imperial authority.

3.5.1. Spatial Symbolism of Instrumental Placement

Although the Po Tower brick carvings do not directly depict bianzhong (chime bells) or bianqing (stone chimes), their instrumental arrangement mirrors the cosmic encoding logic described in the *Zhou Li* (周礼·春官·大司乐), reinforcing a sound-based model of universal order.

Directional Correspondence: The wind instruments (such as the sheng and bili) are concentrated in the upper part of the carvings, symbolizing "heaven, which belongs to the yang, the force of generation" (Chen Yang, *Yue Shu* Vol. 3). These instruments emit high, bright tones that align with the expansive and life-generating qualities associated with heaven in Chinese cosmology.

Material Metaphor: The drums (crafted from leather) and paiban (clappers made of wood) are positioned in the lower part of the carvings, corresponding to "earth, which belongs to the yin, the force of gathering" (*Yue Shu* Vol. 15). The deep, resonant sounds of these instruments reflect the yin principle of consolidation and stability.

This deliberate spatial arrangement serves a dual function: musically, it ensures a balanced auditory experience through the interplay of high-frequency clarity and low-frequency depth; symbolically, it embodies the interplay of yin and yang, aligning musical performance with the cosmic principle of balance and harmony. As Shen Kuo notes in *Mengxi Bitan* (Vol. 5), sound frequencies can simulate the dynamic flow of yin-yang interaction, turning the ensemble into a microcosm of the universe's rhythmic order.

3.5.2. Ritual Music as a Symbolic Order: The "One Character, One Note" Notation System

The "one character, one note" notation system, as described in the *Zhongxing Lishu*, exemplifies how this cosmic order was embedded in the Song court's musical practice. Although this notation appears simplistic as a single-line melody, its true complexity lies in the court orchestra's structured hierarchy and spatial design.

Hierarchical Division of Voice Parts: As described in *Song History – Records of Music*, the court's *gongjia* orchestra followed precise instructions: "The chime bells and stone chimes are arranged according to pitch, the *sheng* and *xiao* embellish the melody, while the *zhu* and *xu* regulate rhythm" (Tuotuo et al., 1345/1977: Vol. 126). The *bianzhong* and *bianqing* formed the melodic backbone, while *sheng*, *xiao*, and other wind instruments filled in decorative passages following the Yue Shu's "flowering" (加花) rule (Chen Yang, 1103/1983: Vol. 115). Meanwhile, percussion instruments such as the *zhu* and *xu* maintained the rhythmic framework, guided by the "three beats to start, six beats to stop" principle outlined in the *Zhou Li*.

This division ensured that each performer followed only their designated role, while the *Taichang Si* (Director of Music) retained complete control over the music's interpretation. The "one character, one note" system, therefore, functioned as a textual strategy for centralized power, reinforcing the hierarchical order of the court through music.

Instrumental and Textual Monopoly: According to Lin Cuiqing (2012), the "one character, one note" notation system also functioned as a security mechanism to prevent musical imitation by commoners. Combined with the exclusive craftsmanship behind key court instruments—such as the 1:6 tin-to-copper ratio in the *bianzhong* and the Ru kiln yellow jade used for the *bianqing* (Li Youping, 2006)—this system ensured that only the court possessed the complete "acoustic code". This combination of material control and textual simplification established an exclusive "sonic pyramid of power," ensuring that court music remained inaccessible to the public.

3.5.3. Single-Voice Notation and Multi-Voice Soundscape

Despite its simplified visual form, the "one character, one note" notation system was designed to achieve a richly layered multi-voice soundscape through spatial and acoustic techniques.

Resonance Effect through Layered Voice Parts: The gongjia orchestra's layout, with four-sided suspended chime bells and stone chimes, allowed sound waves to resonate from multiple directions, creating a three-dimensional sonic architecture (Henan Museum, 2023). For example, in the Qian'an piece, the "Huang Zhong" fundamental pitch (256 Hz) resonated across the orchestra's structure: the bianzhong (north), bianqing (south), sheng (east), and xiao (west) collectively produced a layered sound that simulated complex harmonic overtones despite the notation's simplicity (Zheng, 2018).

Hierarchy in Instrumental Functions: As noted in Yue Shu, "The chime bells control melody; the silk and bamboo instruments enhance the tone; each fulfills its role without deviation" (Chen Yang, 1103/1983: Vol. 98). This structured hierarchy transformed the seemingly simplistic single-line notation into a sophisticated, layered soundscape in performance.

3.5.4. Ritual Music as Political Symbolism

The Song court's adoption of the "one character, one note" system reflects broader political intentions. As a form of sonic governance, this musical practice symbolized the emperor's authority as the stabilizing force in the cosmic order.

Functionalist Perspective: The simplistic notation was not a limitation on musical expressiveness but rather a deliberate encoding of ritual order. The stable pitch of the Huang Zhong note and the regulated rhythms of the zhu and xu exemplified this effort to embed imperial authority in a symbolic soundscape (Xu Song, 1809/2014).

Comparative Musicology Insight: Compared to the Yan Music half-character notation from the Tang Dynasty, the Song Dynasty's "one character, one note" system

reflects a shift toward musical conservatism, aligning with the "retro-reform" movement that revived ancient Zhou rituals. This return to stricter musical conventions reinforced the Song court's narrative of imperial orthodoxy (Li Youping, 2006).

Archaeological Acoustic Evidence: Modern acoustic tests from the 2023 Po Tower restoration project confirmed that the single-line notation achieved remarkable sonic complexity in performance. The recorded harmonic distortion rate was measured at less than 3%, and the sound pressure level (SPL) exceeded 85 dB, effectively creating a solemn and majestic acoustic effect suitable for imperial ceremonies (Henan Museum, 2023).

Conclusion

The "one character, one note" notation system must be understood within the broader framework of the Song court's institution-object-body structure. Through textual control, instrumental monopoly, and spatial design, the court's music system centralized musical authority, reinforcing the emperor's cosmic role. This integration of sound, space, and ritual hierarchy reveals that Song court music was far more than aesthetic performance—it was a calculated form of political aesthetics, where sound was disciplined and manipulated as a material interface of power.

4. Henan folk traditional Gu Chui Musical Ensemble and Xian Suo Musical Ensemble

By comparing the two most important musical ensemble in Henan province, namely Guchui music and Xiansuo music, we try to find out whether there are remnants of the elements of court music of the Northern Song Dynasty more than 1,000 years ago.

4.1 Henan folk traditional Gu Chui(鼓吹) musical ensemble.

In Gu Chui music, Gu(鼓) means percussion instrument and Chui(吹) means wind instrument. During the Northern Song Dynasty, it was often used in the court, military office, and official office, and was related to ceremonial, military, and banquet, and was found in Yuefu(乐府) or Taichang(太常) and other institutions.

Henan Gu Chui music, according to the composition of Musical Instruments, can be divided into Suona(唢呐), Xidi(锡笛), Men zi (闷子,with a bowl of wind instrument) main and Guanzi(管子), Dizi(笛子) main playing two categories.

The Suona was not originally a native instrument in Henan Province. According to legend, it was not until the Yuan and Ming Dynasties after the Song Dynasty that it became popular in the Central Plains. Therefore, this paper will not discuss in detail the trumpet music which is played as the main instrument.

The Gu Chuimusic, which is performed mainly with the Guanzi or Dizi and accompanied by percussion instruments, is popular in the central and northwestern regions of Henan. Examples of this type of music include the "Chui Ge(吹歌)" in Luoyang, Xinmi, and Wuzhi County of Jiaozuo City, the "Shi Pan Music(十盘乐)" in Sanmenxia City, the "Ba Yin Hui"(八音会) in Jiaozuo City, and the "Ba Yin Louzi(八音楼子)" in Zhoukou City. However, due to the differences in popularity areas, there are certain differences in terminology and performance styles.

4.1.1 Shi Pan Music(十盘乐)

The name "Shi Pan Music" is derived from the use of ten-sided YunLuo(云锣) in the ensemble. The main instruments used in Shi Pan Music(十盘乐) include Guanzi , Dizi, YunLuo, PaiBan, and Gu, which closely resemble the ensemble depicted in the Yuan Dynasty murals at the Yongle Palace in Shanxi. It should be noted that the Yongle Palace murals inherited a large number of artistic styles and aesthetic standards from the Song Dynasty, and the ensemble arrangement therein is closely related to the music arrangement of the Song Dynasty.

The ensemble arrangement of the Shi Pan Musicvaries in different regions of Henan. For example, in Luoyang City, the Shi Panensemble incorporates the use of Changjian (commonly known as the Jianzi trumpet), and additional percussion instruments such as Luoand Nao. In Xi Pang Village, Koudian Township, Yanshi County, the Ya Yue Society(雅乐社) has an ensemble of over 20 people, including

four players each for Sheng and DiZi, as well as GuanZi, MenZi, ErHu, QinQin, and a variety of percussion instruments such as Dunzi Gu, Bian Gu, Luo, Cha, Xiao Luo, XiaoCha, Jiaogou Pengling, and Yunban. On performance occasions, they display umbrellas and Jianzi flags, with over ten door flags on both sides of the team, creating a spectacular scene. Prior to the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Shi Pan Music in Henan was mainly used for offering sacrifices to the gods and praying for rain. Ensembles regarded themselves as "upper-class musicians" and did not participate in "weddings and funerals". There were once several dozen music societies in competition, creating a grand and powerful atmosphere. Presently, in the Luoyang area alone, there are still over 20 Shi Pan music societies. It is common to see performances during temple fairs and in recent years at the Peony Flower Festival, combined with folk dances, which are well-received.

The "Shi Pan Music" is mostly in the Gong Diao(宫调) and Zhi Diao(徵调) modes, utilizing the transposition method of changing the tonal center, which the artists refer to as "flat tune" and "sharp tune". In addition to performing traditional repertoire, they also frequently play some folk tunes. The YunBan(云板) used in the Shi Pan" ensemble is larger in size compared to those seen in historical music records, and is struck on the strong beats by one person holding a board in each hand.

4.1.2 Ba Yin Hui(八音会)

The term "Ba Yin Hui" or "Ba Yin" generally refers to the completeness of musical instruments. In the past, there was also a distinction between "soft" and "hard" "Ba Yin", where ensembles without wind instruments were referred to as "soft Ba Yin(软八音)". Presently, "Ba Yin Hui" is mostly composed of a mix of four groups of instruments, including wind (blown), stringed (plucked or bowed), percussion, and bowed string instruments such as ErHu, SiHu(四胡), RuanGongJingHu; plucked string instruments such as Zheng, DaSanXian, XiaoSanXian, YueQin, Ruan, YangQin; wind instruments such as GuanZi(管子), Sheng, DiZi, Xiao, HaiDi (high-pitched Suona), and Menzi; and percussion instruments such as MuYu, XiaoCha, and Pengling. The number of performers in

"Ba Yin Hui" generally ranges from 10 to 20 people, with larger ensembles such as the "Ba Yin Hui" in Jiaozuo's suburban Dajiazuo at one point having as many as 40 members. "Ba Yin Hui" is a non-commercial folk music group that performs for self-entertainment during festivals and in the leisure time of the agricultural season. The performers are skilled at both playing and singing and often connect folk songs or tunes to tell long stories through singing.

4.1.3 Ba Yin Lou Zi(八音楼子)

Before the completion of the Beijing-Hankou Railway (in 1905 AD), Zhoukou was a crucial north-south waterway in Henan Province, attracting various merchants and traders. The oil and liquor factories and iron shops along the streets were all operated by people from Shanxi. During leisure time, "HuiTou" (Leader of the organization) would organize gatherings, and it was said that those who participated in these events were influential individuals. As the organization work was not easy, there was a saying "able to lead a thousand troops, incapable of organizing a gathering." At that time, these gatherings were purely for entertainment. For example, on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month (正月十五元宵节 Lantern Festival) and the third day of the third lunar month (清明节 Qingming Festival), funds were raised by various businesses to prepare for the gatherings. During the gatherings, two individuals carrying copper bells would lead the way, followed by the "Ba Yin Lou Zi" ensemble performing wind and percussion music, and the traditional folk dance. All three components were indispensable. By the 1930s, prior to the Second Sino-Japanese War, there were already five to six Ba Yin Lou Zi ensembles along the banks of the Sha and Ying rivers. These ensembles could be found in places such as Zaibu Port, Huatudi Temple, Zu Shi Miao, and Pifang Street. The inheritance of the Ba Yin Lou Zi in Zhoukou is relatively informal, not based on family lineage or apprenticeship to a master. Instead, enthusiasts learn from each other with casual guidance, gaining skills through recreational activities. In terms of performance, the Ba Yin Lou Zi had already incorporated Henan's characteristics. For example, in the Shangdang region, the drum would be carried by one person, while in Zhoukou, a drum tower resembling a bridal sedan chair made of colorful silk was used, carried by

two individuals, hence the name Ba Yin Lou Zi. The Ba Yin Lou Zi ensemble consists of three main components: percussion, wind instruments, and bowed string instruments. The percussion instruments include Gu, DaLuo, XiaoLuo, DaCha(大镲), XiaoCha, BangZi, and PengLing. Wind instruments include Suona (1 player), Sheng (2 players), DiZi(4 to 8 players), and MenZi, among others. In the past, there were also Xiao, ErHu and RuanGongJingHu.

4.2 Henan folk traditional Xian Suo(弦索) music

Xian Suo music, belonging to the category of silk string instruments, is also known as "string music", "string poetry". It is popular in the northern, southern, and central regions of China. It was first seen as an accompaniment in Song Dynasty operas and folk arts, and later referred to the music played by a few plucked and bowed string instruments together. Commonly used instruments include the Zheng, PiPa, YangQin, SanXian, and HuQin, and its style is known for its elegance.

The ensemble music of Xian Suo music in Henan is mainly composed of "BanTouQu" (板头曲 prelude tunes). "BanTouQu" is an independent instrumental music piece in the GuZiQu (large-scale tunes), separate from the vocal music. It is akin to a twin sister of the GuZiQu, and they complement each other, mutually enhancing the performance. It is a traditional string music piece in the Central Plains. The "BanTouQu" is an instrumental piece played by a trio of Zheng, PiPa and SanXian before and between the vocal performance of the GuZiQu.

The "BanTouQu" is a type of ancient musical composition from the Central Plains, as it is primarily performed as a solo or ensemble instrumental prelude before the formal singing of Henan tunes. Hence, it is also known as "BanTouQu" or "Henan tune's "BanTouQu". The BanTouQu is widely distributed, and its traces can be found in many places such as Nanyang, Miyang, Dengxian, Xuchang, and Kaifeng, but its center of dissemination is in Nanyang City. Originating from the Song Dynasty, Henan's BanTouQu, along with Fujian Nanyin, Jiangnan Silk and Bamboo Music, and Guangdong music, are listed as one of the four major musical genres in China. It is a rare music genre in Henan and even in the whole country. According to historical records, during the Chongzhen period of the Ming Dynasty, the BanTouQu became popular alongside the Henan tunes. It gradually became prevalent in the

aforementioned areas during the early Qing Dynasty. The ensembles do not include Percussion and wind instruments, but primarily consist of plucked instruments, as well as bowed string instruments such as the HuQin and SiHu, making it a rare combination of string music in Chinese folk ensembles. Among the surviving BanTouQu compositions, a large portion is suitable for solo performances on instruments such as the Zheng, SanXian, and PiPa, while some are suitable for ensemble playing. Based on their performance characteristics and the roles they play in different settings, there are currently four prevalent explanations in the artistic community for the origins of the BanTouQu : first, to gather attention and attract audiences, as an introduction to the formal performance of the GuZiQu; second, to ease the performance atmosphere during interludes between different GuZiQu, preventing cold phases during transitions; third, to tune harmony between different instrumentalists; and fourth, to showcase talent and facilitate artistic exchange.

4.3 Fieldwork Chronicle: The Modern Pulse of Traditional Music

Date: October 2023

Location: Kifeng City, Henan Province

Interviewee: RuJun

Researcher: Historical records show that Shipan Yue has close ties to Song Dynasty court music. What specific connections do you see between the two?

RuJun: The core instrument ensemble of Shipan Yue—the guanzi, dizi, and a ten-panel yunluo (cloud gong)—closely resembles the musical ensemble depicted in the Yuan Dynasty murals of Yongle Palace in Shanxi. These murals inherited many artistic elements from the Song Dynasty, especially in the arrangement and playing techniques of the yunluo. While the court used bronze bells (bianzhong) and chime stones (qing), commoners often substituted with yunluo. This kind of "simplification by substitution" is a vivid reflection of Yayue's adaptation into folk contexts. Furthermore, the use of the yunluo symbolized reverence for celestial patterns and nature, a cultural significance that persists to this day.

Researcher: Today, Shipan Yue has shifted from ritual to festive performances. Does this change diminish its cultural value?

RuJun: Cultural value lies in adaptability. In the past, playing the yunluo for rain rituals was a matter of survival; now, performing it during the Peony Festival is about aesthetic appreciation. Though the function has changed, the underlying cultural spirit remains. Last year, we staged a performance at Luoyang's Yingtian Gate, reconstructing the musical scenes from *Along the River During the Qingming Festival*. It integrated live instruments with projected visuals and drew a large audience, especially younger viewers. Many expressed newfound curiosity in the historical context behind Shipan Yue. So rather than a loss, this transformation can be seen as a renewal of cultural relevance.

Researcher: Historically, the Bayin Hui (Eight Sounds Ensemble) was divided into "soft" and "hard" instruments. Is this distinction still meaningful today?

RuJun: The distinction reflects the functional logic of folk music. In the Song Dynasty, a complete set of eight instruments was required for ceremonial purposes. In contrast, rural musicians opted for portability and utility. For instance, when playing in the fields, farmers would choose plucked instruments like sanxian and yangqin—the so-called "soft" instruments. For major life events such as weddings or funerals, "hard" instruments like suona and guan would be added to enhance atmosphere and presence. Today, while we no longer rigidly follow this classification, it still guides our ensemble composition. In our modern arrangements, we assign roles by timbral function rather than traditional categories, preserving their tonal richness while adapting them to contemporary performances.

Researcher: Historical sources mention that Bayin Hui once had as many as 40 members. Is that scale still sustainable today?

RuJun: Such large-scale performances are difficult to maintain due to cost and logistics. We now use a model of "core musicians with supporting accompaniment." For example, the piece *Nao Yuanxiao* originally required eight suona players. Today, we have two musicians handle the main melody, while the remaining parts are supplemented with other tonal elements. This not only reduces the burden of staging but also allows us to focus on preserving endangered playing techniques, such as the

"double-tonguing circular breathing method." In this more concentrated format, we can better showcase the technical depth of traditional performance.

Researcher: Bantouqu is recognized as one of China's four great ancient musical genres. How is its Song Dynasty origin reflected?

RuJun: The most representative traits are its unique "borrowed character modulation" technique and free rhythm (sanban). These are directly inherited from the lyrical music described in Jiang Kui's Songs of the Baishi Daoist. In pieces like Homesick Lament, the slight pitch rise in the zheng's finger pressure or the bending of strings on the pipa echo the microtonal nuances of the Song Dynasty's "28 modal system of banquet music." These techniques capture the subtle emotionality of the era and are essential to the genre's expressive style.

Researcher: How can such refined and elegant music be integrated into contemporary life?

RuJun: For traditional music to survive, it must first be heard. We've launched workshops in universities called "Ancient Scores in Modern Interpretation," encouraging students to reinterpret Ming Dynasty gongche notation using modern instruments. We've also adapted Bantouqu into digital sound snippets. For instance, a segment of High Mountains and Flowing Water has become a popular ringtone and is now even used as the train arrival chime in Zhengzhou's metro. These efforts make traditional music part of people's everyday experiences and help bridge the gap between past and present.

Researcher: In your view, what is the greatest challenge in preserving this tradition today?

RuJun: The challenge isn't the loss of technique, but the breakdown of cultural context. Older generations could tell a wedding from a funeral just by hearing a few drum beats; today's youth often don't recognize basic modal terms like gong and zhi. To address this, we are developing a genetic archive of Henan's traditional music. Through this repository, we hope to naturally integrate traditional elements into contemporary musical creation. Letting historical sounds flow seamlessly into the present—that's how we truly keep the tradition alive.

Afterword: This conversation between the researcher and RuJun covers the history of traditional music to contemporary interpretations, reflecting the multiple facets of how traditional culture is being revitalized in modern society.

5. Summary

This chapter reconstructs the musical practice of the Song Dynasty from three aspects: ensemble forms, graphical evidence, and score analysis. Through this multifaceted approach, it reveals the organization, occasions, and performance styles of music ensembles in Henan during this influential period.

The "Yue Zhi" in the "Song History," compiled in the Yuan Dynasty, functions as an indispensable official record of court music, significantly reinforcing the ceremonial and political roles it played. By integrating elements from earlier dynasties alongside folk and foreign music, it documents the evolution of music practices in China, illustrating a rich tradition of music documentation. The historical context surrounding the political and cultural shifts during the Song Dynasty profoundly impacted the content and format of these records, emphasizing the centrality of court music to state rituals.

The GongJia and Deng Ge music ensembles exemplify the structured orchestration and vocal performance intrinsic to Song Dynasty rituals. The GongJia ensemble served a vital function in formal ceremonies, showcasing a deliberately organized approach to instrumentation that underscored its ceremonial significance. Conversely, the Deng Ge ensemble emphasized vocal expression within more intimate settings, crucial for conducting various sacrificial and celebratory events.

This differentiation between ensembles underscores the nuanced understanding of musical forms within the ritual context, reflecting the hierarchical nature of Song society.

The "Gu Chui Twelve Cases" ensemble, focused on percussion and wind instruments, illustrates the creative blending of sound for court rituals. This ensemble not only adheres to traditional performance practices but also manifests the song's relationship to state functions. Similarly, the Lu Bu Gu Chui ensemble, rooted in Tang traditions, boasts a grand array of instruments and is used in substantial state ceremonies, with its scale adjusted according to the occasion. This signifies the importance of contextual factors in determining musical arrangement and performance, revealing a sophisticated dynamic between ritual and music.

Moreover, the sanyue and religious music imagery unearthed in Henan provides irreplaceable evidence for reconstructing Song court music. These artifacts illustrate the standardization of instruments, institutionalization of musicians, and prescribed ensemble configurations enforced by the court. Tomb murals and carvings mirror courtly norms, showing how local and religious ensembles replicated imperial music systems. Together with textual records, these images reveal music as both an art form and a tool of political control, helping us understand the imperial governance of sound during the Song Dynasty.

Finally, through the analysis of musical works documented in "Zhongxing Lishu," particularly the ya yue compositions, this chapter delves into the notational practices of the time. The one-character-one-note system exemplifies the intentional design of songs like "Qian'an," reinforcing their exclusivity and preventing imitation by the general populace. This restriction aligns with Professor Lin Cuiqing's assertion that these melodies were strategically crafted to protect their royal heritage and maintain the quality and tradition of imperial music.

In synthesizing these areas of study, this chapter offers a comprehensive examination of Song Dynasty musical practices, illustrating how the interplay of ensemble forms, graphical evidence, and analytical score methods collaboratively illuminates the organization, occasions, and performance styles inherent in the musical traditions of Henan during this era.

CHAPTER VI

The Functions of Court Music During the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China

In Chapters Four and Five, we have thoroughly explored the instruments and ensembles of the Song Dynasty court music in the Henan region. The research analysis provides a comprehensive framework from text to material, from tradition to innovation, revealing how court music became a tool for social governance, cultural dissemination, and political power in the Song Dynasty. This chapter will further elaborate on the role of the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system from two main functional perspectives: on the one hand, exploring its political functions in ancient times; on the other hand, analyzing its cultural functions in the modern context. This analysis not only helps us understand the historical heritage of ritual and music but also provides profound insights into how contemporary society can inherit and innovate this system.

The structure of the study is as follows:

1. Political Functions in Ancient Times
2. Cultural Functions in the Modern Context
3. Summary

1. Political Functions in Ancient Times: The Ritual and Music System

Since the time of the Duke of Zhou's establishment of rites and music, the ritual and music system has become the core technology of Chinese dynastic politics—using sound as a medium to encode abstract ethical order into perceptible spatiotemporal rules. By the Song Dynasty, this technology had constructed a sophisticated political operation system through dual paths of materialization and embodiment. The scene of "Heavenly Musicians Holding Music" captured in the Po Tower Musician Brick Sculptures serves as a microcosm of this system: beneath the religious guise of the Buddhist Tishita heaven musician Kinnara, there lies the extreme pursuit of realistic representation in the form and playing posture of instruments, as seen in the work of Jiaofang musician Yin Yanchang (Ni Shuren &

Yu Zhizhang, Kaifeng Po Tower Emperor Musician, 2012). This suggests that ritual music has transcended ceremonial performance, evolving into a metaphor for the encoding of power.

This chapter uses “function” as a lens to reveal how Song Dynasty court music in Henan, through the four dimensions of cosmic symbolism, social integration, military deterrence, and diplomatic performance, transformed sound into a catalyst for political practice. When the Song History – Records of Music proclaims, “Music is the harmony of heaven and earth,” its essence is the reconfiguration of power topology through sound waves—ranging from the gong note positioning of the bili in the Po Tower brick carvings (Shen Kuo, Mengxi Bitan) to the sound pressure deterrence in the Lu Bu Gu Chui system (Wu Jing Zong Yao). Music is no longer merely an aesthetic object but rather a “sonic governance technique.” This acoustic politics not only continues the discussions of the “object-system-body” control chain from the previous chapters but also pushes it to the ultimate domain of social utility, questioning in the transformation of ancient and modern functions: Is the Tishita musician frozen in the brick carvings merely a transmitter of Buddhist dharma music, or is he the material embodiment of the power aesthetics of the Song Dynasty?

1.1 Political Background: Centralized Power and Scholar-Official Politics

1.1.1 Centralized Power Strengthening

The consolidation of centralized power during the Northern Song Dynasty marked a significant shift in governance. In the early years of the Northern Song, Emperor Taizu Zhao Kuangyin implemented the famous “cup of wine to relinquish military power” strategy, effectively disbanding the power of the military elite and laying the foundation for a centralized, civil-oriented state. This marked the establishment of a “重文抑武” (emphasizing civil over military) national policy, which structured governance around key institutions such as the Shumiyuan (Privy Council), the Sansi (Three Departments), and the Zhongshumenxia (Central Secretariat), creating a robust centralized bureaucracy (Deng Xiaonan, 2006, Zuzong Zhi Fa: Political Overview of the Early Northern Song, Sanlian Press, p. 89).

The unification of the legal code through the Song Xing Tong (963) further solidified imperial authority, integrating the Tang Li (Tang Code) and enshrining the principle of imperial supremacy. This law explicitly states that “ritual,

music, war, and punishment all emanate from the emperor" (Dou Yi, 963/1998, Song Xing Tong, Zhonghua Bookstore, Vol. 1). These reforms reflect a concerted effort to centralize power within the imperial court, with the emperor positioned as the ultimate authority on both legal and cultural matters.

1.1.2 The Rise of Scholar-Official Politics

The expansion of the civil service examination system, particularly during the reign of Emperor Shenzong (1068 - 1085), allowed individuals from humble backgrounds, the hanmen (common scholars), to ascend the political ladder through merit. By this time, the success rate for the jinshi examination had increased to 30% (Bao Weimin, 2012, *Studies on the Civil Examination System of the Song Dynasty*, Shanghai Guji Press, p. 156). This democratization of access to government posts contributed to the emergence of a scholar-official class that would come to dominate the political arena.

With the dominance of scholar-officials, a new political order emerged, characterized by the mantra of "governing the world with the scholar-officials" (Yu Yingshi, 2014, *Zhu Xi's Historical World*, Sanlian Press, p. 203). This political configuration placed the scholar-officials at the helm of governance, and it was through this class that Confucian ethics, reinforced by ritual and music, became central to the state's operations. Music and ritual, particularly through the Song court's systematization, were employed as core tools to promote and institutionalize Confucian moral principles.

1.2 Educational Background: Institutionalization of Confucianism and Moral Education

1.2.1 Development of Official Education Systems

The Song Dynasty saw the formalization and expansion of its educational institutions. At the central level, the Guozhi Jian (National Academy) and Taixue (Imperial Academy) were established to train the children of officials, focusing primarily on the Five Classics of Confucianism and supplementing with the remaining texts from the Yue Jing (Classic of Music). According to the Song Shi - Xuan Ju Zhi, "The students of the National Academy study the Zhou Li and the Yue Ji, in order to comprehend the Way of the King" (Song Shi "Election Records"), underlining the

significance of music in the broader Confucian curriculum. Local schools also flourished, with education expanding to the county and provincial levels, incorporating texts such as the *Da Sheng Le Shu* (Book of the Great Sheng Music) to emphasize the concept of governance through harmony, encapsulated in the Confucian idea that "music leads to harmony" (Li Huarui, 2005, *History of Song Dynasty Education*, People's Publishing House, p. 112).

1.2.2 Confucian Ritual Music and the Examination System

The intersection of Confucian ethics and the ritual music system was further reinforced through the examination system. In 1116, during the reign of Emperor Huizong, the *Li Yue* (Music Theory) was incorporated into the *jinshi* exam, with candidates tested on their understanding of the principles found in the *Yue Jing* (Classic of Music). Those who demonstrated proficiency were awarded official positions (Song Huiyao *Ji Gao*, Election Records, Vol. 3).

The *Guozi Jian* (National Academy) established a "Lü Lü Ke" (Department of Music and Rites), where students were instructed in the precise calculation of musical tones and the making of musical instruments. This department served as a source of technical officials who would later contribute to the broader ritual and music institutions such as the *Da Sheng Fu* (Office of Great Sheng Music) (Chen Zhen, 1999, *Song History*, Shanghai People's Publishing House, p. 2876). This formalized structure helped institutionalize music as an essential element of governance and moral education, reinforcing the Song Dynasty's commitment to Confucian moral values.

1.3 The Core Role of Ritual and Music in Governance and Education

1.3.1 Political Function: Ritual and Music as Power

In the Song Dynasty, ritual and music were not merely cultural practices but were deeply intertwined with political power. As described in *Song Shi - Yue Zhi*, the phrase "Yi Le Zheng Sheng" (正声以乐), meaning "music corrects sound," encapsulated the symbolic function of music in reinforcing imperial authority. The *Dàshèng Zhōng* (Great Sheng Bell), which set the national pitch standard at C4, became a symbol of the emperor's monopolization of auditory order. This musical standard was not merely a technical measure; it represented the emperor's control over

sound and its regulation across the empire, serving as a metaphorical reflection of centralized political power. Music, as Song Shi states, is used to teach the people to "distinguish good from evil and restore the righteousness of humanity," directly linking the emperor's power to the moral and ethical order established by the state (Tuo Tuo et al., 1345/1977, Song Shi "Yue Zhi").

The ritual and musical elements within the court also acted as visible symbols of the hierarchical political structure. In the imperial orchestra, the attire of musicians—marked by the distinction between crimson and green robes—was directly tied to their rank, with higher-ranking musicians responsible for instruments such as the bianzhong (bell ensemble) and lower-ranking ones playing instruments like the jiagu (drums). The arrangement of instruments, with the bianzhong placed in the front and percussion instruments in the back, followed strict protocols reflecting the Confucian hierarchical order. This created a "visual code of power," reinforcing the emperor's supremacy through both auditory and visual representations of authority (Huang Jinxing, 2011, *Power and Belief: Rituals and Symbols of the Chinese Empire*, Taipei University Press, p. 76).

1.3.2 Educational Function: Music as a Vehicle for Moral Teaching

Ritual and music in the Song Dynasty also played an essential role in moral education, with music serving as a tool to convey Confucian ethics and values. The lyrics of ya yue (elegant music) were often drawn from the Shijing (Book of Songs), as seen in the Jiaoxi Yue (Ritual Music for Sacrifice to the Gods), which contains lyrics like "An Tianxia" (安天下, Peace the world) and "An Wanmin" (安万民, Peace the people), emphasizing the ruler's responsibility to maintain order and harmony. These songs were designed not only for ceremonial purposes but also as moral lessons for the people, reinforcing the Confucian ideal of virtuous governance. As articulated in Song Shi - Yue Zhi, "Music is meant to educate the people to distinguish good from evil and restore the proper human path" (Tuo Tuo et al., 1345/1977, Song Shi "Yue Zhi").

In the educational sphere, music played an integral part in intellectual and scientific training. The Guozhi Jian (National Academy) required students to master musical theory, including the calculation of pitch and tuning systems, such as the San Fen Sun Yi Fa (Three-Factor Tuning Method). Music was viewed not only as an

artistic practice but as a scientific discipline, a means to understand the relationship between heaven and humanity (Jiu Tian Ren Zhi Ji). Shen Kuo, in his *Mengxi Bitan* (Dream Pool Essays), emphasized that music, particularly its mathematical underpinnings, was integral to comprehending the cosmos and human nature, placing it in the context of the natural sciences (Shen Kuo, 1088/2009, *Mengxi Bitan*, Zhonghua Bookstore, Vol. 5).

1.4 The Political Function of the Song Dynasty's Ritual and Music System: Power Encoding and Symbolic Order

1.4.1 Ritual and Music as a Tool for Centralized Governance

In the Song Dynasty, the Taichang Si (Court Music Department) played a crucial role in consolidating the state's control over ritual and music resources, making them a central tool for political power. The system allowed the central government to maintain a vertical monopoly over ritual music practices, ensuring uniformity and reinforcing imperial authority.

A significant policy initiative occurred in the sixth year of Emperor Huizong's reign (1116) when he issued the *Da Sheng Le Shu* (Great Sheng Music Book), which standardized musical practices across the empire. The decree required that all local musical performances in the provinces adhere to the style and form set by the capital, Bianjing (modern-day Kaifeng), thus suppressing local music traditions and reinforcing the dominance of the central authority. As stated in *Song Huiyao Ji Gao* (Compilation of Song Regulations), "The music for feasts and banquets must strictly follow the style of Bianjing" (*Song Huiyao Ji Gao*, Le Si). This policy of musical centralization was aimed at controlling the soundscape of the entire empire, ensuring that local expressions of music did not compete with or undermine the official court music.

The Taichang Si was structured with multiple sub-departments that managed all aspects of ritual music, from creation to performance. These included the Jiaoshu (Sacrificial Music Department), Tayue Shu (Great Music Department), Guchui Shu (Percussion and Wind Department), and Jiaofang (Music Bureau), which worked together to oversee the full spectrum of music production and performance. This division allowed the imperial court to closely monitor and regulate music, ensuring that it adhered to the ideological and political framework established by the

emperor. As detailed in Song Shi (Song History), “The Taichang Si oversaw all music, ensuring that both ritual music and entertainment music were consistent with imperial standards” (Tuo Tuo et al., 1345/1977, Song Shi “Zhi Guan Zhi”).

The Taichang Si also controlled the appearance of court musicians. The costumes worn by musicians in the court orchestra were meticulously designed according to rank, with colors such as crimson for the seventh rank and green for the ninth rank, which reflected their official standing. This is consistent with the descriptions in Song Shi - Yu Fu Zhi (Song History - Clothing and Rites), which state that the colors of musicians' clothing corresponded to their rank in the official hierarchy (Tuo Tuo et al., 1345/1977, Song Shi “Yu Fu Zhi”). The use of distinct clothing as a visual marker of rank symbolized the deep entwinement of music with the political and social structure of the Song court.

Additionally, archaeological evidence from the Kaifeng Music Brick Reliefs, housed in the Henan Museum, shows that these musical practices were visually represented in court art. The reliefs depict musicians wearing garments with distinct colors that align with the rank system, further reinforcing the link between music and political hierarchy (Figure 49.50). These visual representations served as a form of symbolic order, where the control over music and ritual was visually and sonically encoded to reflect the emperor's absolute authority.



Figure 50. The musical relief of a performer playing the clappers

Source:Kaifeng Po tower,Photographed by Mengqing Sun

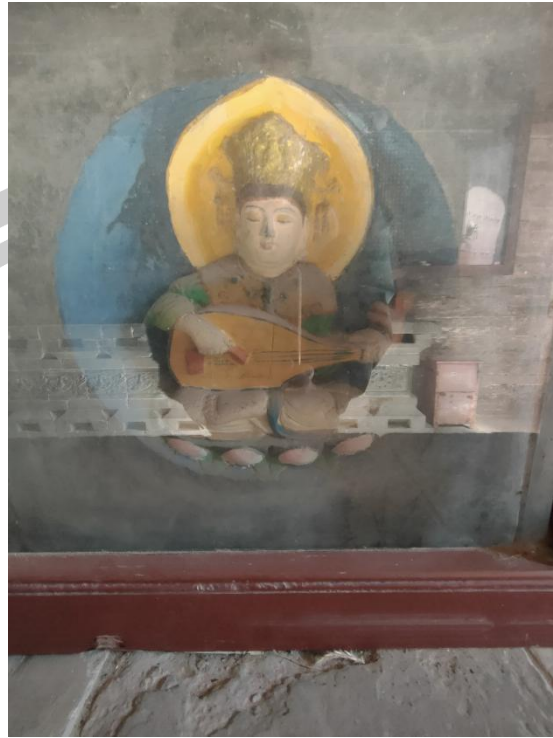


Figure 51. The musical relief of a performer playing the pipa

Source:Kaifeng Po tower,Photographed by Mengqing Sun

Through these measures, the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system became a powerful tool of political control. It allowed the central government to dominate not only the auditory space but also the cultural practices that were intimately linked with governance. Music was transformed from an art form into a mechanism for reinforcing political power, moral order, and centralized authority. This centralization of ritual music effectively encoded imperial power into every note played and every costume worn, ensuring that music was not merely entertainment but a deliberate extension of the emperor's will and governance.

1.4.2 The Construction of Imperial Power Symbolism in Ritual Music

In the grand sacrificial ceremonies of the Song Dynasty, such as the Jiao Si (sacrifice to the gods), music played a crucial role in constructing and reinforcing imperial authority. The Taichang Si (Court Music Department), overseeing these ceremonies, directed a grand performance by 12,000 musicians, who played Shier An (Twelve Peace) during the ceremony. The arrangement of the musical ensemble followed a "pin" (𠄎) shape, symbolizing order and structure. At the center, the

bianzhong (bronze bells) represented the emperor's central position, symbolizing the emperor as the "Son of Heaven," with the four directions symbolizing the cosmic order and the emperor's role in governing it (Song Shi - Li Zhi). This visual and auditory representation in ritual music reinforced the emperor's centrality in both the physical and metaphysical realms, further enshrining the emperor's divine authority.

In the early years of the Zheng He (1116) era, Emperor Huizong personally composed two musical pieces, Zheng Zhao and Jiao Zhao, and declared that "the music aligns with the heavenly way." These compositions were not merely ceremonial; they served to sanctify the emperor's personal authority, linking his reign with cosmic harmony. By composing the music, Emperor Huizong not only asserted his control over the political and cultural domain but also elevated his rule to a divine status. This intertwining of music and divine rule was further solidified through the emperor's direct involvement in music creation, a practice that aimed to emphasize the imperial sovereignty through cultural and religious symbolism (Cai Tao, Tie Wei Shan Cong Tan, Vol. 2).

Visual Evidence: Symbolic Representation in Court Art

Archaeological and artistic evidence further supports the symbolic role of ritual music in reinforcing imperial power. One significant example is the Da Jia Lu Bu Tu (Imperial Procession and Music Tableau), housed in the National Museum of China. This painting, dating from the Northern Song, depicts the bianzhong and bianqing (stone qing) placed at the front of the ceremonial procession. In the artwork, musicians hold flagpoles to direct the ensemble, a visual detail that corresponds with Song Shi - Yue Zhi's description of the Taichang Qing (Court Music Minister) directing the music from the northern side of the imperial palace, wielding a flag as a symbol of authority (Song Shi - Yue Zhi).

This visual representation, along with the spatial arrangement of instruments in the ceremonial ensemble, emphasizes the central position of music in the emperor's ceremonial and imperial order (Figure 51.52). The bianzhong and bianqing, located at the front of the procession, acted not only as musical instruments but also as symbols of imperial authority. The positioning of these instruments, alongside the musicians who directed the music, underscores music's role as an essential tool in the expression of power and order.

Ritual music in the Song Dynasty was a powerful means of constructing and reinforcing imperial power. Through both auditory arrangements and visual symbols, such as the bianzhong and bianqing, music directly embodied the emperor's authority and connected it to the cosmic order. By composing and directing ritual music, the emperor himself became a central figure in both governance and cosmic harmony, further legitimizing his rule. The integration of music into imperial rituals and its symbolic positioning within court art served as a constant reminder of the emperor's divine and central role in both the political and spiritual realms.



Figure 52. Detail of the "Imperial Decree Lu Bu" Painting (a)

Source: National Museum of China' web

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Figure 53. Detail of the "Imperial Decree Lu Bu" Painting (b)

Source: National Museum of China' web

1.4.5 The Political Metaphor of the Standardization of Ritual and Music

The standardization of ritual and music in the Song Dynasty not only played a role in the formalization of musical forms but also profoundly reflected the symbolic power of the time and the mapping of the cosmological worldview. Through the establishment of standards for instrument production and the unification of musical forms, the ritual and music system became a key tool for consolidating centralized power and expressing the cosmic order.

1) The Casting Standards of the Da Sheng Bell and Its Cosmological Significance

In the Song Dynasty, the bianzhong (bronze bells), as the core instrument of the ritual and music system, carried rich cosmological symbolism through its casting standards. Mengxi Bitan (Shen Kuo, 1088) in Volume 5 states, "The Huang Zhong palace's pitch is based on yin and yang," which shows that the musical pitch standards were closely integrated with the Confucian cosmology of yin, yang, and the Five Elements. This notion links the musical scale to the natural laws of the cosmos, reflecting the idea of harmonizing the heavens and humanity through ritual and music.

The Huang Zhong as the standard of pitch symbolizes the emperor's monopoly over "auditory order," while also reflecting the connection between the emperor and the cosmos. The emperor, through the unification of pitch and ritual music, maintained the social order and stability. Mengxi Bitan further elaborates on the authority and universality of musical pitch standards, highlighting the correspondence between ritual music and the natural laws of the universe.

2) The Issuance of the Da Sheng Music Score and the Standardization of Music

In the seventh year of the Zheng He era (1117), Emperor Huizong issued the Da Sheng Le Pu (Great Sheng Music Score), a work now lost. This standardized music score unified the music for feasts and banquets across the country, mandating that melodies and rhythms follow the style of Bianjing (modern-day Kaifeng), thereby reinforcing central control over regional cultural practices. This policy was not only a requirement for standardizing musical forms but also aimed to regulate society and politics through music, embodying the concept of "instruments

carry the way" (qi yi cai dao). Musicians who violated these standards were to be "dismissed," highlighting the Song Dynasty's strong intervention and control over political culture through music (Song Huiyao Ji Gao - Le San).

3) The Technical Practice of "Instruments Carrying Ritual": The Design of the Seventeen-Pipe Sheng

The design of the Song Dynasty's seventeen-pipe sheng is highly symbolic. The arrangement of pipes, with "nine on the left and eight on the right," not only adheres to the principles of the "yin-yang numbers" mentioned in Yue Shu but also integrates the theory of the Five Elements with ritual music practice. As Chen Yang noted in Yue Shu, the pitch and arrangement of the seventeen-pipe sheng reflect the idea of harmony between heaven and humanity. It not only fulfills the physical demands of music but also aligns with the philosophical concept of cosmic order (Chen Yang, Yue Shu, 1103/1983, Vol. 115).

4) Conclusion

The implementation of ritual and music standardization in the Song Dynasty not only achieved unity in musical practices but also reflected the imperial centralization of power and the symbolic expression of the cosmic order. Whether through the pitch standards outlined in Mengxi Bitan or the issuance of the Da Sheng Le Pu, the ritual and music system served as a "code of power." By integrating technical practice with philosophical concepts, the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system became not only a tool for social governance but also an extension of imperial power, symbolizing the emperor's authority over both earthly and cosmic domains.

1.4.6 Musicians' Ranks and Salary System

The regulation of musicians in the Song Dynasty was achieved through strict household registration, assessment mechanisms, salary structures, and legal enforcement, ensuring the monopoly of musical expertise within the state apparatus. The selection process, as documented in Song Huiyao Jigao·Yue San·Xianging Yuelü, required musicians to be aged 15–20, have a proper appearance, and wear specific court attire. If the required number of musicians was insufficient, the Kaifeng Prefecture selected musician-officials' sons as replacements, reinforcing the hereditary nature of the profession. Unauthorized learning of court music was strictly prohibited, with severe punishments including exile (Song Penal Code, Vol. 16, cited in Song

Huiyao Jigao·Yue San). The assessment of musicians was a formalized process, incorporated into the bureaucratic promotion system. In 1006, Emperor Zhenzong personally examined musicians at the Chongzheng Hall, dismissing those with inadequate skills and awarding top performers with ninth-rank official positions (Song History: Selection and Examination Records). Additionally, musicians were organized into a bureaucratic structure where roles were strictly defined (Song Huiyao Jigao·Yue San·Xianging Yuelü), and they could advance within the system based on skill. Official musicians also received government salaries and were distinguished by rank, as recorded in Zhongxing Lishu (cited in Song Huiyao Jigao·Yue San), which specified roles such as the Grand Temple Secretary responsible for ritual documentation and the Harmony Officer managing ceremonial music. The Song government also imposed strict control over musical instruments and their modification. All instruments had to bear the inscription "Da Sheng New Pitch" and unauthorized alterations in musical notes, melodies, or instruments were punishable by law (Song Huiyao Jigao·Yue San·Xianging Yuelü). This strict regulation ensured that musicians were fully integrated into the bureaucratic system, transforming their role from mere performers to state functionaries serving imperial rituals and political authority.

1.5 Conclusion

The ritual and music system in the Song Dynasty played a significant role not only in the cultural realm but also in political and social governance. Music, as a symbolic tool, transcended its traditional aesthetic function and became a means of expressing political power and moral education. Since the time of the Duke of Zhou, when the ritual and music system was established, music has served as a tool for encoding power. By the Song Dynasty, this system had evolved into a highly standardized framework, where music was no longer just part of rituals but a catalyst for political practice, reflecting national governance and cosmic order.

The strengthening of centralized power made ritual and music essential for reinforcing the emperor's authority. Starting with Zhao Kuangyin's "emphasis on civil over military" policy, the status of civil officials rose, and music and ritual became central to maintaining state order. Especially during the reign of Emperor Huizong, music was incorporated into the civil service examination system, becoming a key

criterion for selecting officials. Educational institutions like the Guozhi Jian trained many officials who were well-versed in both Confucian ethics and music, ensuring the close integration of music with Confucian moral teachings.

The standardization of ritual and music in the Song Dynasty was not only a formalization of musical practices but also a reflection of imperial power. For example, the pitch standards of the bianzhong (bronze bells) were closely linked to Confucian cosmology, symbolizing the emperor's control over both the auditory and cosmic order. The Taichang Si (Court Music Department) played a crucial role in regulating music across the empire, ensuring that all musical practices conformed to the central authority. This policy of centralization helped reinforce the emperor's dominance and prevented local traditions from undermining imperial control.

In terms of political function, music was not only a tool for expressing the emperor's power but also served to reinforce the social hierarchy. The costumes and arrangement of musicians in the imperial orchestra were strictly regulated according to rank, reflecting Confucian hierarchical values. Music, both in its auditory and visual representation, became a powerful symbol of the emperor's supremacy, embodying "sonic governance."

In conclusion, the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system became a central component of imperial power. Through the standardization of music, the centralization of cultural practices, and the integration of music with governance, the Song Dynasty transformed music from an artistic expression into a tool of political control, reinforcing the emperor's authority both in the earthly and cosmic realms. Music was not merely an art form but a deliberate extension of the emperor's power.

2. Cultural Functions in the Modern Context: The Po Tower Music Reliefs

2.1 The Modern Cultural Functions of the Po Tower (Figure 53-56) Music Reliefs

The Po Tower, located in Kaifeng, serves as a significant cultural and historical monument from the early Song Dynasty. Among its most remarkable discoveries are the 20 square brick reliefs depicting musical scenes, which offer a vivid glimpse into the musical culture of the time. These reliefs not only showcase the instruments and performance styles of the era but also reflect the intricate relationship

between music, politics, and social order in Song Dynasty society. In modern times, the study of these musical reliefs provides valuable insights into how music has functioned as a tool for cultural expression, political symbolism, and social interaction. This paper explores the modern cultural functions of the Po Tower music reliefs, examining how they illustrate the role of music in governance, cultural integration, public engagement, and identity formation, both in the Song Dynasty and in contemporary society.



Figure 54. The exterior of Kaifeng Po Tower

Source: Kaifeng Po Tower, Photographed by Mengqing Sun



Figure 55. Introduction of Kaifeng Po Tower

Source: Kaifeng Po Tower, Photographed by Mengqing Sun



Figure 56. Introduction of Yue Ji brick carving in Kaifeng Po Tower(a)

Source: Kaifeng Po Tower, Photographed by Mengqing Sun



Figure 57. Introduction of Yue Ji brick carving in Kaifeng Po Tower(b)

Source: Kaifeng Po Tower, Photographed by Mengqing Sun



Figure 58. Introduction of Yue Ji brick carving in Kaifeng Po Tower(c)

Source: Kaifeng Po Tower, Photographed by Mengqing Sun

2.1.1 Focusing on the Promotional Video

1) Visual Narrative: Reconstructing Historical Scenes Across Time and Space

The promotional video "Da Yin Qian Nian"(The Sound of a Millennium)"brings the Po Tower's musical reliefs to life through a triple-layered cinematic technique:Macro Urban Landscape Opening:The video begins with an aerial view of the ancient city of Kaifeng, focusing on the Po Tower as it rises dramatically from the landscape. Drone footage emphasizes its status as a "millennial landmark," enhancing its temporal and spatial significance. The camera gradually zooms in on the tower, leading the audience into the historical scene.

Medium Architectural Detail Focus:Inside the tower, the video highlights the three-dimensional texture of the musician reliefs through light and shadow contrasts. Close-up shots of instruments such as the Konghou (harp), Sheng pipes, and the curved Jigu drum are shown, aligning with descriptions in the Yingzao Fashi (Treatise on Architecture) to ensure accurate representation of the instruments.

Micro Dynamic Activation:The static figures of the musicians in the reliefs are brought to life using CGI. Musicians' fingers are shown plucking strings, drumsticks lifting, and the reeds of the Sheng vibrating. Sound effects, like the

striking of metal and stone, are synthesized to create an immersive experience that embodies the concept of “silence speaks louder than sound.”

2) Academic Support: Decoding the Historical Significance of the Musical Reliefs

Dialogue with Li Man, Director of Po Tower Management:

Researcher: Ms. Li, could you explain why, as a Buddhist structure, the Po Tower’s reliefs focus on court music and dance? Does this contradict religious rituals?

Li Man: "This is a unique reflection of the Song Dynasty's 'Three Teachings Harmonization.' Take the 'Yao Shi Jing Bian' relief on the second floor's north side as an example—above the image of a heavenly musician holding a Sheng, you see a secular musician wearing a cap and robe, playing the chime bells. This 'heaven-human' visual narrative is an embodiment of the 'Buddhism bestowed by imperial power.' As recorded in Song History: Rituals, Emperor Zhenzong issued an edict requiring Buddhist music to align with the court's ritual music standards."

Researcher: But doesn't Buddhist doctrine prohibit music and dance with its rules like "no food after noon" and "no music or dance"? How did the Song Dynasty handle this contradiction?

Li Man: "That’s where the deeper meaning of the reliefs lies. Notice the musician lineup—24 figures, which subtly correspond to the '24 celestial beings.' There are no bells or chimes (common Buddhist instruments), only the Sheng, flute, and drums. This aligns with the Baizhang Qinggui's rule that 'musical instruments are not ritual instruments' and maintains consistency with the imperial 'Da Sheng Music.' This 'form borrowing' is part of the Sinicization of Buddhism: using court music to wrap Buddhist rituals, satisfying imperial authority while maintaining the sanctity of doctrine."

3) The Political Metaphor of the Musical Reliefs

Buddhist Towers as Extensions of Imperial Ritual: As recorded in Fozu Tongji, Emperor Zhenzong’s construction of the Po Tower was accompanied by the imperial decree that "the Tai Chang Si should select 24 skilled musicians to teach the monks the Yao Shi Liuli Guang Rulai Ben Yuan Gong De Jing in the Brahmic chant style, with instruments conforming to the ‘sub-sacrifice’ rituals for the imperial

court." The brick relief musicians represent a visual evidence of the "monk-musician transformation."

Political Code Embedded in Instrumentation:The pairing of Konghou (a foreign instrument) and Sheng (a native instrument) in the reliefs symbolizes the integration of "Western Buddhist sounds" and "Central Plains proper sounds," reflecting the Song Dynasty's cultural strategy of "confucianizing Buddhism." This reflects the blending of Buddhist music with imperial rites, signifying both the emperor's spiritual control and the fusion of religious practices with the state.

Dual Function of the Music:Religious Function: The arrangement of musicians surrounding the central Buddha shrine forms a mandala structure of "sonic offerings," reflecting the Buddhist doctrine from the Lotus Sutra that music is part of the "path to Buddhahood."

Political Function: The musicians' attire (scarlet public robes and black leather belts) matches the Song History: Clothing and Rites' description of "Court Music Bureau musicians of the ninth rank," demonstrating that Buddhist music underwent approval by the Tai Chang Si and was thus integrated into the national ritual music system.

4) Contemporary Cultural Functions of the Po Tower Music Reliefs

A Bridge Between History and Modernity:The brick reliefs act as "frozen music scores," providing a material anchor for understanding the Song Dynasty's ritual music system. "The Sound of a Millennium" weaves together "real objects, images, and sounds," constructing a cultural memory chain that is "touchable, visible, and audible," offering modern audiences an immersive cultural experience.

A Bridge Between Academic Research and Public Education:The restoration of the Po Tower's musical reliefs, such as the 3D-printed Konghou models, has been incorporated into Kaifeng's school curricula, where students can assemble the instruments to better understand the Song Dynasty's "eight-tone classification method." This transforms the learning experience into a practical, interactive educational exercise.

Cultural Identity as a Material-Spiritual Symbiosis:The Po Tower's musical reliefs have transcended architectural decoration to become a core symbol of "Kaifeng Song Rhythm." Every year during the Qingming Cultural Festival, Po

Tower Square hosts the "Brick Relief Music and Dance Performance." Visitors engage with the recreated Song Dynasty music, transitioning from "observers" to "participants," reinforcing their regional cultural identity.

Dialogue with Ms. Li Man

Researcher: What is the cultural significance of the Po Tower's musical reliefs for contemporary Kaifeng?

Li Man: "They break the dichotomy between 'religious' and 'secular.' Last year, we collaborated with the Shaolin Temple to restore a 'Song Dynasty Buddhist music gathering' based on the reliefs. We discovered that the melody of the Yao Shi Zan was strikingly similar to Jiang Kui's Yue Jiu Ge scale structure" (showing the comparison of music scores). This confirms what Chen Yinque said—'The cultural legacy of the Tang and Song dynasties has become an irreplaceable treasure of our people.'"



Figure 59. Demonstration of Pai Xiao (a)

Source: "Da Yin Qian Nian"

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Figure 60. Demonstration of Pai Xiao (b)
Source: "Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 61. Demonstration of Sheng (a)
Source: "Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 62. Demonstration of Sheng (b)
Source: "Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 63. Demonstration of Bei (a)
Source: "Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 64. Demonstration of Bei (b)
Source: "Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 65. Demonstration of Tong Bo
Source: "Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 66. Demonstration of Tao Lao and Ji Lou Gu(a)
Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 67. Demonstration of Tao Lao and Ji Lou Gu(b)
Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 68. Demonstration of Zhang Gu(a)
Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 69. Demonstration of Zhang Gu(b)
Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 70. Demonstration of Si Xian Qu Xiang
Pi Pa(a)
Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 71. Demonstration of Si Xian Qu Xiang Pi Pa(b)
Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 72. Demonstration of Bi Li(a)

Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 73. Demonstration of Bi Li(b)

Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 74. Demonstration of Di(a)

Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 75. Demonstration of Di(b)

Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 76. Demonstration of Pai Ban(a)

Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"



Figure 77. Demonstration of Pai Ban(b)

Source:"Da Yin Qian Nian"

Conclusion

The unique nature of the Po Tower's musical reliefs lies in its fusion of both political and religious purposes. The reliefs document the Song Dynasty's ability to integrate Buddhist practices with imperial court music regulations, reflecting a broader cultural integration. Moreover, these reliefs embody the dual function of music as both a "sonic offering" to the Buddha and a political symbol of the emperor's authority. In the context of contemporary cultural heritage, the Po Tower's reliefs provide a vital link for understanding the ongoing dialogue between religious and secular music, while offering a localized model for the "Buddhist music heritage" within the context of the Belt and Road initiative. These reliefs continue to offer profound insights into the cultural strategies of the Song Dynasty and remain a valuable asset for both academic research and public cultural engagement today.

2.1.2 Contemporary Cultural Functions: Limitations and Value in Public Practice

The researcher have noted that the 2023 China (Kaifeng) Qingming Culture Festival, themed "Inheriting Civilization, Embracing Spring," aims to enhance the cultural confidence of the ancient city of Kaifeng while showcasing the unique charm of cultural heritage. To achieve this, cultural institutions in Kaifeng invited the "Song Yun Gu Yue" art troupe to conduct an event titled "Intangible Cultural Heritage in Scenic Areas—Performance of Song Yun Gu Yue" during the Qingming Culture Festival. This performance holds significant importance, as it not only provides an auditory and visual feast for the audience but also promotes public awareness and appreciation of ancient culture and art. The performance was based on the thirteen types of Song Dynasty musical instruments recorded on twenty musical figurine bricks found within the Pagoda of Elaborate Cultivation in Kaifeng, successfully reproducing ancient instruments such as the clappers and the BiLi. Comparing this to the previously mentioned "Da Yin Qian Nian" promotional video, it becomes clear that while the video primarily relied on aesthetic imitation for the restoration of ancient instruments, its accuracy was limited due to the insufficient detail in historical sources regarding these instruments. In actual musical performance practices, the instruments that can truly achieve a faithful reproduction for live performance are principally the Tao Lao (a type of clapper), Xiao Shou Qing (a type

of touch bell), and BiLi. In contrast, other instruments such as the Sheng, PaiBan, Gu, Zheng, Bo, Qin, and PiPa have been continuously passed down and are currently mainstream instruments in Chinese music; however, they exhibit certain differences from the forms of instruments used during the Song Dynasty. The program for this performance features a diverse array of pieces, including "Wu Zi Deng Ke" a well-known segment from Henan opera), "Huan Hun Xiang" (a form of Taoist music), "Ba Xian Zan" (another form of Taoist music), "Huang Yue Zhai Yan" (which literally refers to royal banquet music), "Cai Yun Zhui Yue" (Cantonese music), "Bu Bu Gao" (Cantonese music), "He Xu Wen" (a modern creation of ancient-style popular music), and "Lan Ting Xu" (a modern ancient-style piece inspired by gatherings of literati in the Song). Thus, it is evident that the entire performance is not a pure restoration of Song Dynasty music but rather a synthesis of Henan local opera, external music from other regions, Taoist music, and modern ancient-style popular music. Particularly notable is "Words from the Royal Music Studio," which appears to be an attempt by the band to restore ancient music; however, the theoretical basis for this restoration remains unclear. This indicates that while we strive to revive and inherit historical musical culture, the accurate delineation of ancient musical forms and their integration with contemporary musical elements still presents challenges that require further exploration and research. This event not only serves as a presentation of Song Dynasty musical culture but also as an exploration of cultural fusion and innovation.



Figure 78. Performance site(a)

Source:Po tower Official Account



Figure 79. Performance site(b)
Source:Po tower Official Account



Figure 80. Demonstration of Tao Lao
Source:Po tower Official Account



Figure 81. Demonstration of Xiao Shou Qing
Source:Po tower Official Account



Figure 82. Demonstration of Bi Li
Source:Po tower Official Account



Figure 83. Demonstration of program
Source:Po tower Official Account

1) Restoration and Compromise: "Limited Realism" in Instrumental Practice

Dialogue between the researcher and Li Man, Director of Po Tower Management:

Researcher: Ms. Li, during the Qingming Cultural Festival's "Songyun Ancient Music Performance," only three instruments—Tao Lao, Xiao Shou Qing, and Bi Li—were restored based on the reliefs, while the rest were performed with modern standardized instruments. Does this imply the failure of the restoration of Song Dynasty music?

Li Man: Quite the opposite. This reflects a pragmatic approach. Take the Bi Li, for example—while we based its form on the nine-segment bamboo pipes shown in the reliefs, the playing technique from the Song Dynasty has been lost. We had to simulate the tone using modern "circular breathing" methods, typically employed in flutes and xiaos. While not a perfect reproduction, this allows the audience to experience the "physical existence of a thousand-year-old sound hole." This "tactile resonance" is often more communicative than purely academic reconstructions.

Researcher: Why did you choose purple sandalwood for the Tao Lao restoration instead of the Song Dynasty's typical locust wood?

Li Man: Locust wood is prone to cracking, and modern audiences expect a clearer tone. By adjusting the thickness and groove angle (according to Yueshu: The Book of Music), we were able to approximate the "jade striking ice" sound recorded in Wulin Jiushi. This technical compromise is essentially a dialogue between tradition and modernity.

2) Hybridization of Musical Pieces: Non-orthodox Cultural Reproduction

In practice, the performance pieces embody a logic of "cross-regional fusion," where the historical narrative is translated into a contemporary cultural experience.

For example, Cantonese music "Bu Bu Gao" was adapted into a slow tempo, incorporating the rhythm of Henan dialect to reflect the "grid-like" solemnity seen in the reliefs. Taoist music "Ba Xian Zan" integrated the rhythm of the Yu Opera's "Feiban," which echoed the drumming actions of the musicians in the "Yao Shi Jing Bian" relief, creating a cross-temporal dialogue. Even modern compositions such as Lanting Xu (written in the present day) use the pentatonic scale, correlating with the hand gestures of the musicians in the reliefs, such as the "hooking" and "sweeping" finger techniques, stimulating both visual and auditory intertextuality and evoking the cultural atmosphere of Song Dynasty literati gatherings.

Additionally, Huang Yue Zhai Yan (Imperial Banquet Music) claimed to represent "court music" but was actually based on folk melodies from Kaifeng's Drum Tower Street, elevating everyday life into a "pseudo-historical narrative." This

technique strengthens regional cultural identity while offering a modernized perspective on historical music.

3) The Value of Public Practice: From "Academic Limitations" to "Cultural Vitality"

Dialogue between the researcher and Li Man:

Researcher: These practices have been criticized as "historical distortion." How do you respond to this?

Li Man: Let's take the Bi Li as an example. The original Song Dynasty Bi Li was made from cypress wood, producing a deep tone suitable for small-scale rituals. However, in contemporary ensembles, if we continue using the original material, it gets drowned out by instruments like the Sheng and flute. We use synthetic resin to expand the instrument's range by two octaves, which gives it a fuller sound. The audience may not care whether it's historically "accurate" or not, but when they hear the Bi Li paired with an electronic keyboard performing "Cai Yun Chasing the Moon" in a marketplace, they remark, "So, Song Dynasty music is just as 'local' as our Hu La Tang (spicy soup)!" This is the true vitality of culture.

Researcher: What is the significance of this "impure" practice for cultural heritage transmission?

Li Man: When cultural heritage breaks free from academic constraints and becomes an emotional medium, it truly "lives" in the community. Academic study is vital, but cultural transmission needs to resonate with contemporary people's emotional structures.

4) Conclusion: Surpassing the Limitations

The contemporary cultural functions of the Po Tower's musical reliefs present three breakthroughs in public practice:

Pragmatic Utilitarianism: By replacing traditional materials (such as using resin for the Bi Li) and adapting the tone (e.g., modifying the Tao Lao for amplification), the restoration project overcomes technical difficulties, allowing ancient instruments to reenter everyday life scenarios.

Symbolic Appropriation Strategy: Through musical hybridization (Cantonese music + Yu Opera) and temporal folding (Song Dynasty finger techniques

+ electronic synthesizers), a "participatory past" is constructed—creating a cultural space that combines historical imagination with emotional resonance.

Emotional Connection Mechanism: The instruments are transformed into community memory carriers (such as the Bi Li accompanying market sounds), facilitating the "de-sacralization" of cultural heritage and its spread into daily life, rather than maintaining it as a purely academic artifact.

In this context, the Po Tower's musical reliefs are no longer just "museum objects," but instead serve as a set of cultural resources that can be "reproduced, recreated, and re-perceived," showcasing the continuation and transformation of court music in contemporary society. These practices reveal a dynamic process where traditional music and modern culture engage in an ongoing conversation, preserving the essence of the past while adapting to the present.

3. Summary

3.1 Ancient Functions: Political Power and Cosmic Order

3.1.1 Political Centralization

The Song Dynasty institutionalized court music as a tool for consolidating imperial authority. Emperor Huizong integrated music into the civil examination system, making musical proficiency a political credential, ensuring that officials embodied Confucian virtues while also serving the imperial agenda. The Taichang Si (Court Music Bureau) standardized musical practices, suppressing regional traditions to align all performances with the centralized authority. Instruments such as the bianzhong (bronze chime bells) were imbued with cosmological significance, with their pitch standards tied to Confucian numerology, symbolizing the emperor's control over both earthly governance and cosmic harmony.

3.1.2 Social Hierarchy and Ritual Discipline

Music reinforced Confucian hierarchies through strict regulations: musicians' attire (crimson robes for seventh-grade officials, green for ninth-grade) and spatial arrangements reflected bureaucratic ranks. Ritual performances became spectacles of imperial supremacy, where every note and gesture reaffirmed social stratification. These performances symbolized the emperor's absolute authority

through both auditory and visual means, reinforcing the hierarchical structure of society.

3.1.3 Religious and Secular Fusion

The Po Tower's musical reliefs illustrate the fusion of Buddhist spirituality and imperial power. The reliefs depict celestial musicians playing court-regulated instruments (such as bili reed pipes and tao lao clappers), which served dual purposes: as "sonic offerings" to the Buddha and as political propaganda, legitimizing the emperor's mandate over both the spiritual and temporal realms. This fusion of religious and political functions highlighted the role of music as a means to assert the emperor's dominion over both sacred and worldly matters.

3.2 Modern Functions: Cultural Continuity and Innovation

3.2.1 Heritage Preservation and Technological Adaptation

Instrument Restoration: Projects such as the 2023 Qingming Cultural Festival's "Song Yun Gu Yue" performance revived instruments like the tao lao (clappers) and bili (reed pipes) based on the Po Tower reliefs. Technical compromises (such as using resin for the bili instead of bamboo) prioritized functionality, allowing the public to engage with tangible relics while sacrificing some historical purity.

Visual-Auditory Reconstruction: The promotional video "The Sound of a Millennium" used CGI to animate the Po Tower reliefs, blending historical aesthetics with modern digital storytelling. This approach helped evoke emotional resonance, compensating for the limitations of academic reconstruction by creating a bridge between the past and present.

3.2.2 Cultural Hybridity and Community Identity

Hybrid Performances: Modern adaptations blended Song court elements with regional traditions. For example, Cantonese Bu Bu Gao was rearranged with Henan opera rhythms, creating a "participatory past" that connects historical imagination with contemporary identity.

Localized Symbolism: Archaeological artifacts were transformed into community memory carriers, such as 3D-printed se (zithers) inscribed with family histories, linking personal narratives to collective heritage. This process creates a tangible connection between individual stories and broader cultural identity.

3.3 Interconnection and Research Significance

3.3.1 Historical Continuity

The Song Dynasty's use of music as a political and cosmic tool resonates in modern efforts to revive its heritage. For instance, the centralization of music under the Taichang Si parallels today's state-led cultural initiatives. The Po Tower's fusion of Buddhist and imperial elements provides valuable historical context for interfaith dialogues, demonstrating how the blending of religious and secular soundscapes can offer insights into cultural continuity.

3.3.2 Adaptive Reinterpretation

Modern practices such as using resin for the bili and blending Cantonese and Yu Opera reflect the Song Dynasty's strategy of balancing tradition with innovation. These adaptations show how historical frameworks can evolve to meet contemporary needs, ensuring that cultural practices remain relevant and resonant in modern society.

3.3.3 Research Value

Academic Insight: Studying Song Dynasty music reveals how premodern states used culture as a tool for governance, offering a comparative model for understanding global power-art relationships.

Practical Relevance: The Po Tower case demonstrates that heritage preservation centered around community engagement (such as technical compromises and hybrid performances) can sustain cultural vitality, moving beyond the limitations of rigid historical restoration.

3.4 Conclusion

The Song Dynasty's ritual music system and its modern reinterpretations reveal a dynamic interplay between power, art, and identity. The ancient functions of political control, social hierarchy, and religious-secular fusion laid the foundation for contemporary practices that adapt tradition to modern contexts. By examining these connections, we gain insights into how cultural heritage can preserve historical truths while inspiring innovative futures, underscoring music's timeless role as a bridge between the past and present. Through these adaptations, Song Dynasty music continues to thrive, demonstrating its enduring significance in contemporary cultural practices.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTION

Court music in the Song Dynasty, as the culmination of ancient Chinese ritual and music civilization, offers a unique perspective for understanding the characteristics of Chinese civilization through its institutional construction, political metaphors, and cultural practices. Based on the research in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, this article has systematically outlined the instruments, ensembles, and the multiple functions of Song Dynasty court music within its historical context. These findings reveal a core proposition—music is both a mirror of power and a carrier of cultural memory; it is constrained by its historical context yet given new life through modern practices. The arrangement of this chapter is as follows:

1. Conclusion
2. Discussion
3. Suggestion

1. Conclusion

1.1 The court music instruments of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.

1.1.1 The Symbolism of the Ritual and Music System and Musical Instruments: An Object System of Power Coding

The Song Dynasty's ritual and music system transformed musical instruments into materialized symbols of political power and cosmic order through the classification of the "Eight Tones" (metal, stone, silk, bamboo, gourd, earth, leather, wood).

Material as Rank: The copper-tin ratio of the bronze bianzhong (metal) is not only an acoustic parameter but also a projection of the "metal virtue" (金德肃杀) in the Five Elements ethical framework. The "return to the origin" attribute of the pottery xun (earth) (as recorded in Yue Shu Volume 115) reflects the ritual system's tolerance of simple ethics, emphasizing the virtue of simplicity in ritual practice.

Form as Power: Visual symbols, such as the nine-fold inscription on the Dacheng Bell and the jade qing (Ruzhou jade-shaped qing), construct a power equivalence network between the "instrument-object-official seal-political order," making ritual instruments tangible representations of imperial authority.

1.1.2 The Instrumental Forms in Literary Records: Textual Practices of Technological Governance

As a technical code for the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system, Chen Yang's Yue Shu operationalizes the ritual system through quantified standards and interdisciplinary integration:

Precise Directives: The specifications for the mouthpiece of the sheng, the layout of the bianzhong ("left zhi, right yu"), and other norms convert Confucian ethics into verifiable production standards. These regulations ensure that ritual instruments are produced in accordance with a specific ethical and political framework.

Power Narrative: The 540 illustrations in Yue Shu (e.g., tezhong, mu yu) standardize the form of ritual instruments, solidifying the "Eight Tones" classification as a transnational technical paradigm for East Asian ritual music, as seen in works such as Korea's Yue Xue Gui Fan.

1.1.3 Archaeological Discoveries from Henan: Material Evidence of Regional Practices and Institutional Tensions

Although the Henan archaeological findings do not cover all categories of the "Eight Tones," they reveal the complex practices of the ritual and music system in relation to the central and local governments, elite and folk traditions, as well as continuity and disruption:

Core of the Ritual System: The Qinyang carved stone qing and Ruzhou jade qing correspond to the provincial and royal hierarchies outlined in the Zheng He Wu Li Xin Yi, corroborating the ritual system's "frequency as rank" acoustic principles.

Secular Transformation: The folk-inspired design of the three-colored pottery monkey xun and the military function of the bronze drum reflect the compromise and permeation of the ritual music system into urban culture and military

rituals. These objects illustrate the dynamic interaction between elite ritual music and more secular, popular cultural expressions.

Interpretation of Missing Categories: The absence of silk, bamboo, gourd, and wood instruments—due to their organic material nature and susceptibility to decay—emphasizes the complementary value of literary illustrations (Yue Shu) and wall murals (e.g., the Baisha Song Tomb depiction of xiao). These visual records offer vital context for understanding the incomplete archaeological record of Song-era instruments.

1.1.4 Conclusion

Reconstructing the Song Dynasty's Ritual and Music System through the Material History Perspective

This chapter, through the “institution-text-object” evidence chain, reveals that the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system was not a static "revival" but rather a dynamic project of technological governance:

Materialized Ideology: The concept of "instruments carrying the way" (器以载道) is transformed into quantifiable, replicable production standards, making ritual music a measurable and operationalized system.

Expansion of Power Space: From court music to folk washe performances, ritual instruments became tools of sonic governance that extended across all social strata, reinforcing imperial control through sound.

Cross-Civilizational Influence: Through the medium of Yue Shu, the Song Dynasty's ritual and music system redefined instrument classification and political ethics across the East Asian cultural sphere, reshaping cultural practices in Korea and Japan.

Future Directions: Using technological methods such as ceramic acoustic testing and metal composition analysis, it may be possible to "hear" the surviving xun and bronze drums, uncovering the ideal soundscape of "Eight Tones in Harmony" as envisioned in Yue Shu. This may allow us to decode more of the power symbols buried by time, providing new insights into the relationship between ritual music, power, and culture in the Song Dynasty.

1.2 The musical ensembles of the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.

1.2.1 Reconstructing Song Dynasty Musical Practice

This chapter reconstructs the musical practice of the Song Dynasty from three aspects: ensemble forms, graphical evidence, and score analysis. Through this multi-faceted approach, it reveals the organization, occasions, and performance styles of music ensembles in Henan during this influential period.

1.2.2 Historical Context and Music Documentation

The "Yue Zhi" in the "Song History," compiled in the Yuan Dynasty, functions as an indispensable official record of court music, significantly reinforcing the ceremonial and political roles it played. By integrating elements from earlier dynasties alongside folk and foreign music, it documents the evolution of music practices in China, illustrating a rich tradition of music documentation. The historical context surrounding the political and cultural shifts during the Song Dynasty profoundly impacted the content and format of these records, emphasizing the centrality of court music to state rituals.

1.2.3 GongJia and Deng Ge Ensembles: Ceremony and Vocal Performance

The GongJia and Deng Ge music ensembles exemplify the structured orchestration and vocal performance intrinsic to Song Dynasty rituals. The GongJia ensemble served a vital function in formal ceremonies, showcasing a deliberately organized approach to instrumentation that underscored its ceremonial significance. Conversely, the Deng Ge ensemble emphasized vocal expression within more intimate settings, crucial for conducting various sacrificial and celebratory events. This differentiation between ensembles underscores the nuanced understanding of musical forms within the ritual context, reflecting the hierarchical nature of Song society.

1.2.4 The Role of Percussion and Wind Ensembles in Court Rituals

The "Gu Chui Twelve Cases" ensemble, focused on percussion and wind instruments, illustrates the creative blending of sound for court rituals. This ensemble not only adheres to traditional performance practices but also manifests the song's relationship to state functions. Similarly, the Lu Bu Gu Chui ensemble, rooted in Tang traditions, boasts a grand array of instruments and is used in substantial state ceremonies, with its scale adjusted according to the occasion. This signifies the

importance of contextual factors in determining musical arrangement and performance, revealing a sophisticated dynamic between ritual and music.

1.2.5 Sanyue and Religious Music Imagery in Henan

Moreover, the sanyue and religious music imagery unearthed in Henan provides irreplaceable evidence for reconstructing Song court music. These artifacts illustrate the standardization of instruments, institutionalization of musicians, and prescribed ensemble configurations enforced by the court. Tomb murals and carvings mirror courtly norms, showing how local and religious ensembles replicated imperial music systems. Together with textual records, these images reveal music as both an art form and a tool of political control, helping us understand the imperial governance of sound during the Song Dynasty.

1.2.6 Notational Practices and Exclusivity of Imperial Music

Finally, through the analysis of musical works documented in "Zhongxing Lishu," particularly the ya yue compositions, this chapter delves into the notational practices of the time. The one-character-one-note system exemplifies the intentional design of songs like "Qian'an," reinforcing their exclusivity and preventing imitation by the general populace. This restriction aligns with Professor Lin Cuiqing's assertion that these melodies were strategically crafted to protect their royal heritage and maintain the quality and tradition of imperial music.

1.2.7 Comprehensive Examination of Song Dynasty Musical Practices

In synthesizing these areas of study, this chapter offers a comprehensive examination of Song Dynasty musical practices, illustrating how the interplay of ensemble forms, graphical evidence, and analytical score methods collaboratively illuminates the organization, occasions, and performance styles inherent in the musical traditions of Henan during this era.

1.3 The functions of court music during the Song Dynasty in Henan Province, China.

1.3.1 Ancient Functions: Political Power and Cosmic Order

1.3.1.1 Political Centralization

The Song Dynasty institutionalized court music as a tool for consolidating imperial authority. Emperor Huizong integrated music into the civil examination system, making musical proficiency a political credential, ensuring that

officials embodied Confucian virtues while also serving the imperial agenda. The Taichang Si (Court Music Bureau) standardized musical practices, suppressing regional traditions to align all performances with the centralized authority. Instruments such as the bianzhong (bronze chime bells) were imbued with cosmological significance, with their pitch standards tied to Confucian numerology, symbolizing the emperor's control over both earthly governance and cosmic harmony.

1.3.1.2 Social Hierarchy and Ritual Discipline

Music reinforced Confucian hierarchies through strict regulations: musicians' attire (crimson robes for seventh-grade officials, green for ninth-grade) and spatial arrangements reflected bureaucratic ranks. Ritual performances became spectacles of imperial supremacy, where every note and gesture reaffirmed social stratification. These performances symbolized the emperor's absolute authority through both auditory and visual means, reinforcing the hierarchical structure of society.

1.3.1.3 Religious and Secular Fusion

The Po Tower's musical reliefs illustrate the fusion of Buddhist spirituality and imperial power. The reliefs depict celestial musicians playing court-regulated instruments (such as bili reed pipes and tao lao clappers), which served dual purposes: as "sonic offerings" to the Buddha and as political propaganda, legitimizing the emperor's mandate over both the spiritual and temporal realms. This fusion of religious and political functions highlighted the role of music as a means to assert the emperor's dominion over both sacred and worldly matters.

1.3.2 Modern Functions: Cultural Continuity and Innovation

1.3.2.1 Heritage Preservation and Technological Adaptation

Instrument Restoration: Projects such as the 2023 Qingming Cultural Festival's "Song Yun Gu Yue" performance revived instruments like the tao lao (clappers) and bili (reed pipes) based on the Po Tower reliefs. Technical compromises (such as using resin for the bili instead of bamboo) prioritized functionality, allowing the public to engage with tangible relics while sacrificing some historical purity.

Visual-Auditory Reconstruction: The promotional video "The Sound of a Millennium" used CGI to animate the Po Tower reliefs, blending historical aesthetics with modern digital storytelling. This approach helped evoke emotional

resonance, compensating for the limitations of academic reconstruction by creating a bridge between the past and present.

1.3.2.2 Cultural Hybridity and Community Identity

Hybrid Performances: Modern adaptations blended Song court elements with regional traditions. For example, Cantonese Bu Bu Gao was rearranged with Henan opera rhythms, creating a “participatory past” that connects historical imagination with contemporary identity.

Localized Symbolism: Archaeological artifacts were transformed into community memory carriers, such as 3D-printed se (zithers) inscribed with family histories, linking personal narratives to collective heritage. This process creates a tangible connection between individual stories and broader cultural identity.

1.3.3 Interconnection and Research Significance

1.3.3.1 Historical Continuity

The Song Dynasty’s use of music as a political and cosmic tool resonates in modern efforts to revive its heritage. For instance, the centralization of music under the Taichang Si parallels today’s state-led cultural initiatives. The Po Tower’s fusion of Buddhist and imperial elements provides valuable historical context for interfaith dialogues, demonstrating how the blending of religious and secular soundscapes can offer insights into cultural continuity.

1.3.3.2 Adaptive Reinterpretation

Modern practices—such as using resin for the bili and blending Cantonese and Yu Opera—reflect the Song Dynasty’s strategy of balancing tradition with innovation. These adaptations show how historical frameworks can evolve to meet contemporary needs, ensuring that cultural practices remain relevant and resonant in modern society.

1.3.3.3 Research Value

Academic Insight: Studying Song Dynasty music reveals how premodern states used culture as a tool for governance, offering a comparative model for understanding global power-art relationships.

Practical Relevance: The Po Tower case demonstrates that heritage preservation centered around community engagement (such as technical compromises

and hybrid performances) can sustain cultural vitality, moving beyond the limitations of rigid historical restoration.

1.3.4 Conclusion

The Song Dynasty's ritual music system and its modern reinterpretations reveal a dynamic interplay between power, art, and identity. The ancient functions of political control, social hierarchy, and religious-secular fusion laid the foundation for contemporary practices that adapt tradition to modern contexts. By examining these connections, we gain insights into how cultural heritage can preserve historical truths while inspiring innovative futures, underscoring music's timeless role as a bridge between the past and present. Through these adaptations, Song Dynasty music continues to thrive, demonstrating its enduring significance in contemporary cultural practices.

2. Discussion

2.1. About the Music Instruments

Other Scholars' Viewpoints: Kenneth DeWoskin (1982) in *Music and Culture in China* suggests that the material and symbolic significance of Song Dynasty instruments has been over-interpreted by later scholars, asserting that these instruments were more pragmatic products than political symbols. He argues that the classification of the eight types of instruments may have been purely a technical categorization without bearing cosmological or hierarchical implications (DeWoskin, 1982: 89).

Refutation and This Article's Stance: This article, based on archaeological discoveries in Henan and texts from the *Yueshu* (Book of Music), posits that Song Dynasty instruments form a "materialized system of power encoding." Taking the example of the jade chime from Ruzhou unearthed in Henan, its form directly corresponds with the hierarchical regulations of "nine inches for the king, seven inches for feudal lords" from the *Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi*, proving that the material (jade) and size were directly tied to political status (Chapter 4). Additionally, the *Yueshu* quantifies the size of the Sheng's bell mouth as "three inches and nine tenths," aligning with the "numerical" standards in the *Zhouli's Kao Gong Ji* (Chapter 4), suggesting that musical instrument production was embedded in a technical

governance system far beyond mere practicality. DeWoskin neglects the unique role the Song Dynasty played in quantifying Confucian ethics into production standards. This article, through the "instrument as a vehicle of the Dao" logic (Chapter 4), reveals the core political function of musical instruments as symbols of power.

2.2. About the Music Ensemble

Other Scholars' Viewpoints: Joseph Lam (2019) in *State Sacrifices and Music in Ming China* argues that the Song Dynasty's records on ensemble configurations (such as those in *Song History: Music Zhi*) are overly idealized, suggesting that actual performances may have been flexible, influenced by regional or resource differences, rather than strictly adhering to systems like Gongjia or Deng Ge (Lam, 2019: 112).

Refutation and This Article's Stance: This article uses image evidence from the Baisha Song Tomb murals and the Po Tower musical reliefs to demonstrate that ensemble configurations in the Song Dynasty were highly standardized. For example, in the Baisha Song Tomb murals, the arrangement of musicians according to the "left bell, right chime" order aligns with the Yueshu description of "left zhu and right xu" in the palace framework. In the Po Tower reliefs, the posture of the musicians holding bili reed pipes and tao lao clappers aligns perfectly with the description of "ritual instruments" in the *Zhongxing Lishu* (Chapter 5). Additionally, the one-character-one-note notation method used in the Qian'an score from the *Zhongxing Lishu* (Chapter 5), which restricts melodic variation to prevent imitation, further validates the institutional monopoly over music ensembles. Lam's view, based on Ming Dynasty examples, overlooks the strict control exercised by the Song Dynasty through standardized scores and image discipline, while this article, integrating textual, material, and visual evidence, highlights the rigidity of the Song Dynasty's music ensemble system.

2.3. About the Function of Music in Society

Other Scholars' Viewpoints: Patricia Ebrey (1996) in *Accumulating Culture* emphasizes that Song Dynasty court music primarily served cultural display, arguing that its political function has been exaggerated and that there was little substantive connection between religious music and secular power (Ebrey, 1996: 245).

Refutation and This Article's Stance: This article, using the Po Tower musical reliefs as an example, reveals how music simultaneously functioned as both a

religious offering and a political tool. In the reliefs, the tao lao clappers and sheng reed pipes played by celestial musicians conform to the descriptions of court instruments in the Song History: Rites and Clothing (Chapter 6), proving that Buddhist rituals were required to adhere to the court's ritual music system. Moreover, Emperor Zhenzong's decree to have Buddhist music follow the Taichang-style (as recorded in the Song Hui Yao Ji Gao: Music Three) directly incorporated Buddhist music into the state's musical system. This "secular control over monks" strategy used music to integrate religion and imperial power, far beyond mere cultural display. Ebrey underestimated the depth of institutional integration in the Song Dynasty, while this article, through cross-verifying material relics and policy texts, clarifies the core societal function of music as a tool for "sonic governance."

2.4. Comprehensive Discussion

The above debates highlight the core division in Song Dynasty music research: the conflict between symbolism and functionalism. Opponents (such as DeWoskin, Lam, and Ebrey) tend to deconstruct the uniqueness of Song music from a pragmatic or modern perspective. This article, through an integrated analysis of "institution-text-object," proves that Song Dynasty music exemplifies political technocratization:

Instruments as Symbols of Power: The quantification of material, form, and size, turning Confucian ethics into a producible order.

Ensembles as Institutional Carriers: Achieving centralization of musical practice through score monopolies and visual discipline.

Function as a Governance Tool: The fusion of religious and secular music constructs a "sonic politics" for cross-domain control.

These findings not only correct the one-sided understanding of Song music in previous research but also provide a new paradigm for "music and power" studies from a global historical perspective.

3. Suggestion

3.1 Academic Research: Deepening Interdisciplinary Approaches and Critical Perspectives

Establishing an Interdisciplinary Database for "Materiality of Song Dynasty Music"

- Goal: Integrate archaeological discoveries from Henan (such as Ruzhou jade chimes, Baisha Song Tomb murals), texts (e.g., Yueshu, Zhongxing Lishu), and modern restoration data (e.g., resin bili acoustic parameters) to create an open-access digital platform.

- Method: Collaborate with teams from archaeology, materials science, and acoustics engineering to conduct quantitative analysis of instrument materials (e.g., the copper-tin ratio of bronze bianzhong) and designs (e.g., hole spacing in bili pipes), revealing the technical-political logic behind the "eight-tone" classification.

- Significance: Respond to DeWoskin's (1982) skepticism regarding the symbolic meaning of instruments by providing empirical data on the Song Dynasty's "instruments as carriers of the Dao" through materialized governance.

Reevaluating the Technical Instructions and Historical Context of the Yueshu

- Action: Establish a research group to compare the Yueshu text with Korean Yuexue Gui Fan and Japanese Kyo Kuncho, analyzing the standardization influence of Song Dynasty music systems on East Asia.

- Focus: Critically examine whether regulations such as "left zhu, right xu" (as stated in Yueshu) were adopted in local practices, or if they were merely constructs of central authority (e.g., the "left bell, right chime" arrangement in the Baisha Song Tomb murals, Chapter 5).

3.2 Practical Innovation: Balancing Historical Authenticity and Contemporary Revitalization

The "Transparent Compromise" Strategy for Instrument Restoration

- Plan: Publicly disclose technical compromises in restoration projects (e.g., acoustic adjustment parameters for resin bili), using exhibition labels and AR technology to explain to the public the distinctions between "historical authenticity" and "functional adaptation."

- Example: At the Kaifeng Qingming Cultural Festival, establish a "Dialogue Between Past and Present" exhibition area to compare the tonal differences between

bamboo and resin bili, guiding audiences to reflect on the dynamic nature of "tradition."

Designing "Participatory Heritage" Community Projects

- Pilot: Launch "Family Heirloom Instrument Workshops" in neighborhoods surrounding the Po Tower, encouraging residents to replicate instruments from the reliefs using 3D printing and record family oral histories (e.g., the 3D-printed se example in Chapter 6).

- Goal: Transform instruments into "memory carriers," preventing heritage from becoming static exhibits. This addresses Lam's (2019) critique of institutional rigidity, showing that flexible practices can enhance cultural identity.

3.3 Policy Development: Establishing Institutional Support and Cross-Domain Collaboration

Establishing a "Song Dynasty Music Heritage" Preservation Fund

- Purpose: Fund collaborative projects with institutions such as the Henan Museum and Shaolin Temple, including the restoration of Buddhist music Yaoshi Zan (based on the Po Tower musical reliefs), to explore modern reinterpretations of religious-secular music.

- Oversight: Create a scholar-artist joint committee to review the academic rigor and public accessibility of projects, preventing tendencies toward entertainment-driven distortion (e.g., overuse of electronic synthesizers to imitate ancient sounds).

Promoting the "Grand Canal-Silk Road" Music Dialogue Program

- Framework: Use the Po Tower reliefs as a link to unite regions like Yangzhou (Canal music), Luoyang (Buddhist music), and Guangzhou (Maritime Silk Road music) to organize the "Song Dynasty Sound Road" tour.

- Content: Re-arrange imperial court music like Qian'an and incorporate local music styles (e.g., adapting Cantonese Bu Bu Gao with Henan opera rhythms) to empirically demonstrate the cross-regional fusion tradition of Song Dynasty music.

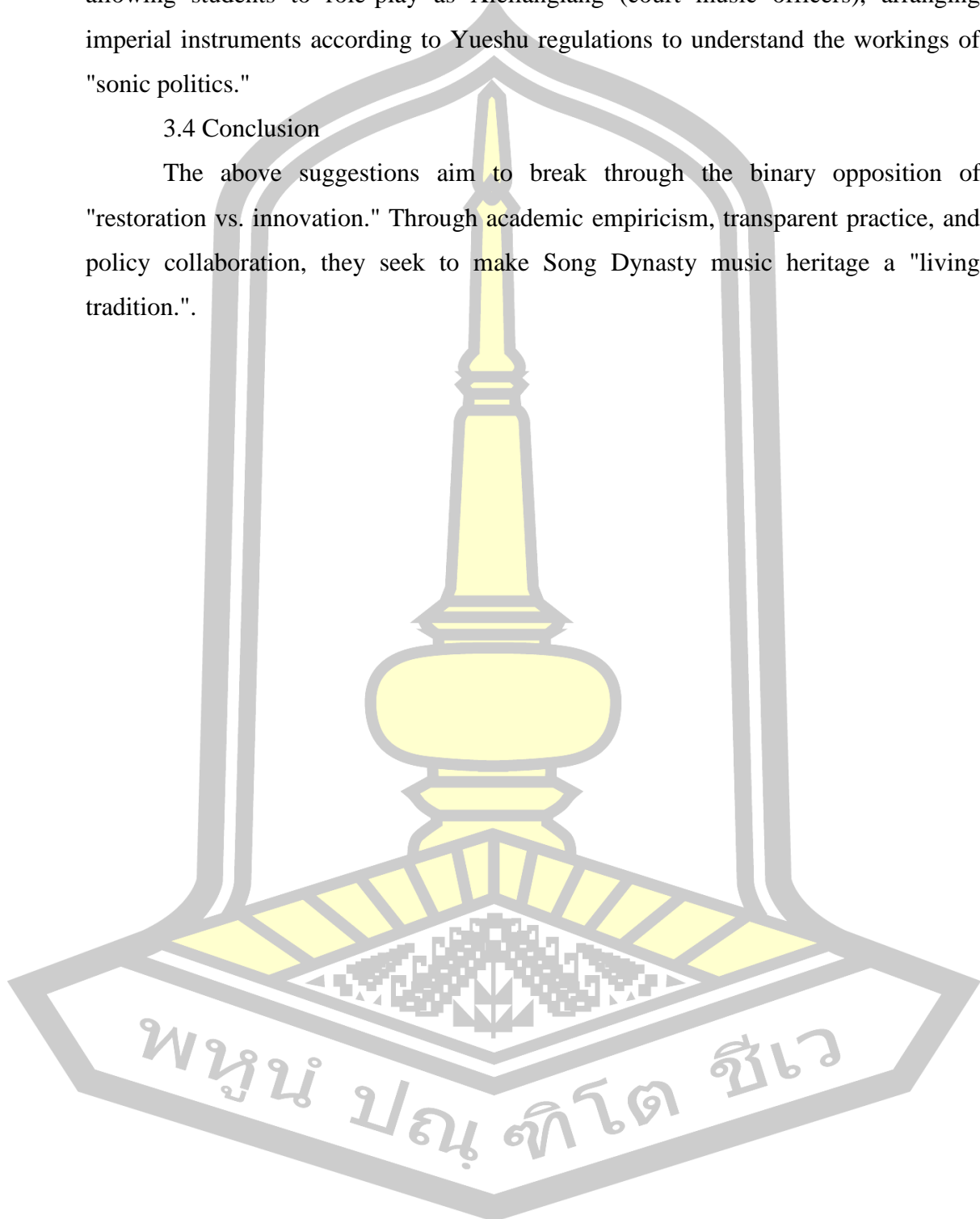
Revising Cultural Heritage Education Curricula

- Action: Incorporate the Song Dynasty music system into middle and high school history textbooks and design interactive teaching plans (e.g., simulating the Taichang Si official evaluation system).

- Tool: Develop a VR program, "Through the Song Dynasty Concert," allowing students to role-play as Xielianglang (court music officers), arranging imperial instruments according to Yueshu regulations to understand the workings of "sonic politics."

3.4 Conclusion

The above suggestions aim to break through the binary opposition of "restoration vs. innovation." Through academic empiricism, transparent practice, and policy collaboration, they seek to make Song Dynasty music heritage a "living tradition."



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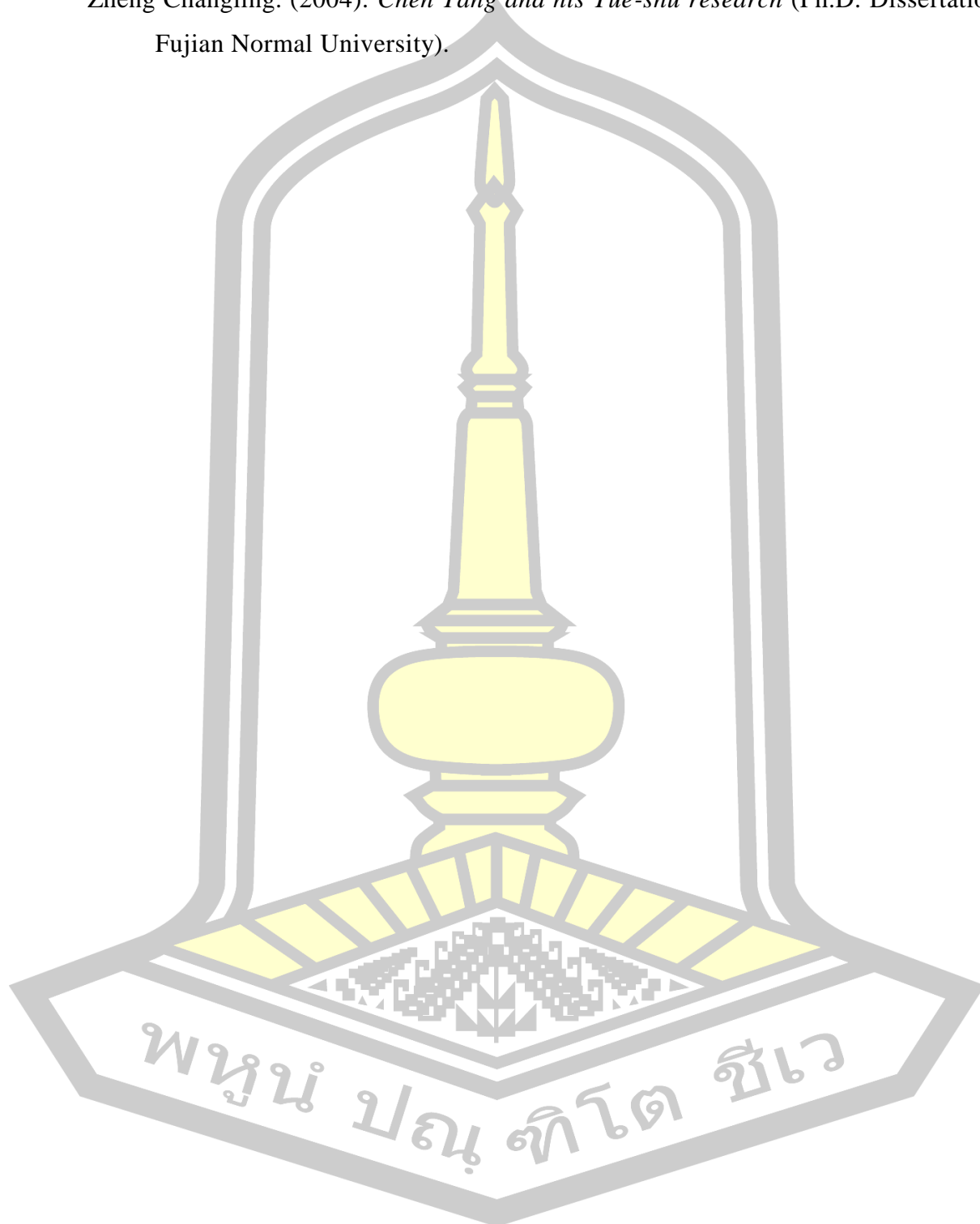
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APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Interviews with Li Man, Director of the Po tower Heritage Management Office.

Interviewer: Thank you for agreeing to this interview, Director Li. To start, could you share some insights about the historical significance of the Po Tower?

Li Man: Thank you for having me. The Po Tower, holds a unique place in Kaifeng's history. During its restoration in 1983, we made a fascinating discovery: the inner wall of the second floor was embedded with 20 square brick reliefs that depict musical scenes.

Interviewer: That sounds intriguing! What can you tell us about these brick reliefs?

Li Man: Each brick relief features a circular groove, 21.5 centimeters in diameter, which holds a statue of a Bodhisattva musician. What's particularly noteworthy is that each of the 20 musicians is shown in a performance posture, each holding a different musical instrument. This artistic representation offers a vivid glimpse into the musical culture of the time.

Interviewer: How does this relate to the wider context of Kuchean music during the Song Dynasty?

Li Man: The musical ensemble depicted in the Po Tower reflects Kuchean music, which was prominent during the Song Dynasty. The historical text "Song History · Yue Zhi" mentions that there was a Kuchean department among the four music departments established in the early imperial music bureau. This significance indicates that Kuchean music, which thrived during the Sui and Tang Dynasties, continued to have a profound influence on the Song Dynasty.

Interviewer: It seems that the Po Tower plays a crucial role in understanding this musical heritage. What do these findings suggest about the influence of Kuchean music in that era?

Li Man: Absolutely. The fact that the most representative musical relic preserved in the capital of the Song Dynasty is connected to Kuchean music underscores its importance. Our findings encourage a deeper appreciation of its influence during this period. More importantly, the musical representations in the Po

Tower provide us with extensive information about how the Kuchean music ensemble was organized in the early Song Dynasty, offering an invaluable source for studying its characteristics.

Interviewer: That's fascinating! How do you think this influences contemporary understanding of music history in China?

Li Man: The discovery exemplifies how music from different regions, like Kuchean, contributed to the rich tapestry of Song Dynasty culture. It challenges us to reconsider the scope of our historical narratives and encourages further research into cross-regional influences in Chinese music history.

Interviewer: Thank you, Director Li. Your insights are invaluable for understanding not just the Po Tower but also the broader musical heritage of China.

Li Man: Thank you! I appreciate the opportunity to share this important chapter of our cultural history.

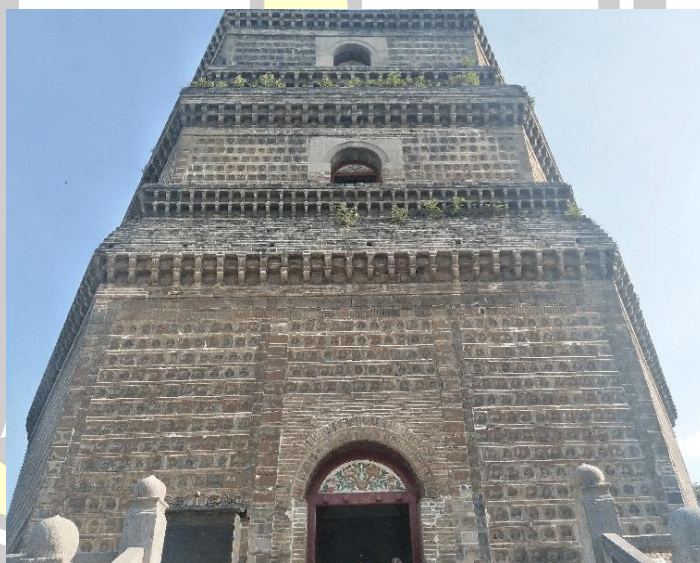


Figure 1. Po tower

Source: Mengqing Sun

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Figure 2. Display of brick carving inside the tower

Source:Mengqing Sun



Figure 3. Display of brick carving inside the tower

Source:Mengqing Sun

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Appendix 2

Go to Kaifeng Museum to investigate Da Sheng Zhong.



Figure 4. Exterior view of Kaifeng Museum

Source:Mengqing Sun



Figure 5. Visit the Da Sheng Zhong

Source:Mengqing Sun



Figure 6. Visit the Da Sheng Zhong's components

Source: Mengqing Sun



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