

A STUDY ON THE CHARACTERISTICS AND INHERITANCE OF CHINESE YAZHENG

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Abstract. Why do the *yazheng* have different shapes and production processes in different places? What is the effect of the reformation of *yazheng* in modern times? Based on the survived real *yazheng* in modern time and historical documents, this study gives an overview of the similarities and differences of *yazheng* found in different places and discusses its contemporary inheritance and development. Using the theoretical lens of ethnomusicology and perspectives including the origin of musical instruments and playing methods, this study investigates the development of the *yazheng* in the same historical context and cross-contexts. I believe the strategy for the survival of the *yazheng* originated from the influence of the strong culture at that time and was also driven by the social power hierarchy and historical environment.

Keywords: Chinese *yazheng*, distinguishing features, history, comparative study, inheritance research, diversity, culture identification

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1. Introduction

One day, at the end of the last century, in the Handan area around Hebei Province, as the busy farming season was ending, several old artists sat around and made small talk in a relaxed atmosphere. Soon after, they picked up their familiar musical instruments and sang tunes handed down from their ancestors. The ancient rhymes were melodious, calm, and carefree. One of the musical instruments they used attracted the attention of music scholars, who came to investigate.

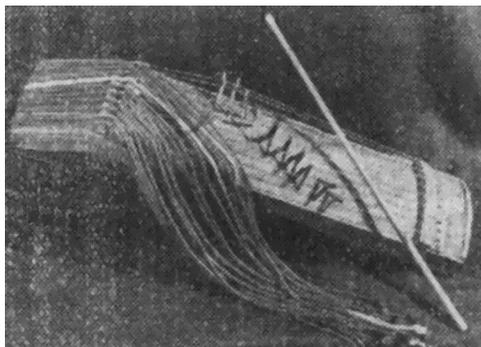


Figure 1. Hebei *yazheng*, commonly known as *yaqin*.¹

With an appearance similar to the *zheng*, each string of the instrument produces only one note. The difference is that this instrument is played with a bow. The player holds the bottom of the instrument with his left hand and supports it with his forearm. The bow, made with hair from a horse's tail, is controlled with the right hand. As the strings are rubbed gently, notes are produced by the instrument. Through interviews and reports, the history of this musical instrument gradually emerged. It turned out that it is an accompaniment instrument used in Wu'an PingDiao (Figure 1), which is a local opera popular in areas near Hebei and Beijing, where the instrument is commonly known as *yaqin*. The development of the local opera was relatively mature by the mid-eighteenth century. This kind of instrument, which is played with a bow and resembles a *zheng*, has been discovered in Henan, Shanxi, Shandong, Guangxi, Fujian, and Jilin, and has drawn extensive attention from academia (Fan 1982: 24, Li 1981: 47, Xiang 1995: 6-7, 1999: 8, Zhang and Cheng 1985: 32-33, Zhou 2009: 67-69). Apart from that, in the academic paper 'Early Chinese Friction-Chordophones', which was published early in 1965 in Volume 18 of 'Galpin Society', musicologist Laurence Picken described in detail the instrumental structure and characteristics of the *yazheng* (轧筝). *Yaqin*, which was once called a 'living fossil' by Chinese musicology scholars (Xiang 1990: 15-17), was approved for inclusion in the first batch of national-level intangible cultural heritages from Hebei Province and Henan Province. Authentic artefacts of the instrument from the last century can be seen in Henan, Shandong, Shanxi, Guangxi, Fujian, and Jilin. Among the ancient tomb murals unearthed in Shanxi, there are Ming Dynasty tomb murals and historical materials related to the Yuan Dynasty that yield insights. In the Tang Dynasty, the *yazheng* developed rapidly. It was named '*yazheng*' (Yang 2018: 374). In the Song Dynasty, along with court music and dances, the *yazheng* was brought to Goryeo. In the court of Goryeo, the *yazheng* from China was categorised as folk music (*sogak*) and was called '*ajaeng*'. During major festivals, ancestral shrine sacrifices (*jongmyo jerye*), or when music was played during internal and external palace feasts, the *ajaeng* was the main accompaniment instrument for the music and dances presented during the 'display of talents (*jeongjae*)' in the palace. Tang music (*Dangak*) numbers such

¹ 张浩玲, 程澍田, (1985): 《轧琴》, 《乐器》, 北京乐器协会, 3, 32-33.

as ‘Ball Tossing (*Pogurak*)’ and ‘Spring in Luoyang (*Nakyangchun*)’ were usually played. Among the traditional national musical instruments exhibited in the National Centre for Korean Traditional Performing Arts in Seoul, South Korea, as well as in the elegant music (*aak*) played by the orchestra of Sungkyunkwan of South Korea at Confucius Ceremonies (Seokjeon Daeje) performed during spring and autumn, the *ajaeng* represents Korean national culture. It is played to demonstrate the spiritual symbol of Korean national culture to the world.

It can be said that along with the diversified development of the *yazheng* in China, it also adapted to the changes in societies and eras through continuous changes, improvements, and evolutions in cross-contexts. This article compares and analyses the historical reasons behind these changes and the significance of the cultural identities of the *yazheng* from several perspectives, including the diversification of style in the same context, development and changes in cross-contexts, and sustainable development in the media age.

2. The historical origin of the *yazheng*

In ‘Jiutangshu Zhijiu Music II’ 《旧唐书·志九 音乐二》 (written in 945 AD), *yazheng* is recorded as follows: ‘*yazheng*: dampen the ends of *pianzhu* (bamboo slip), then rub it’². In the Song Dynasty (960–1279 AD), Chen Yang (陈旸) showed us ‘*yazheng*’ (Figure 2) in *Yue Shu* (《乐书》). From this figure of the instrument, we can clearly see that the shape of *yazheng* has an approximately ‘┌’-shape tail. As shown in the figure, the left end of the instrument has a cornered sinking tail (for easy understanding, it is referred to as ‘*luowei*’³ in this text). From the figure, we can also see that there are seven strings on *yazheng* supported by seven ‘^’-shape Ma.’码’ The ‘L’-shape ‘*pianzhu*’ (‘片竹’) that is used to play the instrument by pressing the strings is shown in the bottom of the figure. This playing tool is an important feature that distinguishes the *yazheng* from Zheng (箏) and Se (瑟).



Figure 2. Song Dynasty, *yazheng* figure in *Yue Shu* by Chen Yang.⁴

² [后晋] 刘昫 等撰 (1975) 《旧唐书》卷二十九 志第九 音乐二, 北京: 中华书局出版, 第1076页。“轧箏: 以片竹润其端而轧之。”

³ ‘落尾’指下折的尾部

⁴ [宋]陈旸, (1876): 《乐书》, 广州板存菊坡精舍巴陵方功惠署, 第146卷, 第5页。

Ya (轧) means rubbing. It is a playing technique gradually inspired and derived from the ‘striking’ way of playing ‘Zhu’ (筑), which is a string-striking musical instrument in the pre-Qin period (先秦时期). ‘Zhu’ is recorded in ‘Zhanguoce (《战国策》) (known in English as the Stratagems of the Warring States): ‘Linzi is very rich. Everyone there plays Yu (箏), Se (瑟), Zhu (筑), and Qin (琴).’⁵ In ‘The Attempt on the Life of the King of Qin by Jing Ke’ (《荆轲刺秦王》) in ‘Zhanguoce Yance III’ (《战国策》燕策三), it is recorded that ‘Gao Jianli played Zhu. Jing Ke sang with him. The music is in F major. All the scholars were weeping.’⁶ These two historical stories, narrating events of 490 BC to 211 BC, vividly or tragically reproduce the rich musical life of people in the pre-Qin period and the heroic spirit of warriors going to a battlefield. From these stories we can observe that in the pre-Qin period, ‘Zhu’ (筑) is an idiophone where sound is created by striking its strings with a wooden stick. This is a Zhu-playing image in late Western Han Dynasty (202 BC–8 AD) collected from Henan Xinye County Museum (Figure 3).



Figure 3. A Zhu-playing image in late Western Han Dynasty.⁷

In the image, the musician sits on his knees holding one end of Zhu with his left hand while leaving the other end of Zhu on the ground. There is a small stick in the right hand of the musician. The image shows the movement of the stick on the strings. From this we can see that the musician is striking Zhu to make sound. By carefully observing the shape of Zhu in the image, it can be seen that there is a cylinder that is similar to something used to fix strings, protruding from string surface on the end of Zhu – Rui (杓). In the middle of Zhu, Ma is depicted that supports the strings. At the end near the hand, Zhu has a protruding horizontal column similar to a string pillow. This image clearly displays the shape and form of Zhu during a performance. By comparing with historical documents and relics, we know that from 227 BC to the Western Han Dynasty (西汉时期) (Liu), Zhu is a musical instrument played by striking with wooden sticks, and it is very common in people’s lives. The structural characteristics of the musical instrument Zhu include the

⁵ [西汉]刘向著1365年刻本, 缙云鲍彪校注《战国策》齐卷第四册第9页载:“临淄甚富而实, 其民无不吹箏, 鼓瑟, 击筑, 弹琴。”

⁶ [西汉]刘向著1365年刻本, 缙云鲍彪校注《战国策》燕卷第三册第20页“高渐离击筑, 荆轲和而歌, 为变徵之声, 士皆垂泪涕泣。”

⁷ 中国音乐文物大系总编辑部, (1996):《中国音乐文物大系 河南卷》, 河南: 大象出版社, 194-195页。

Rui (柎), *Ma*, string pillow, and wooden sticks. In the long history that followed, *Zhu* was used as a court music instrument. With dynasty changes and wars, and the fusion of court and folk music and its exchange with the cultural life, it continued to evolve, producing stringed instruments, such as *yazheng* and *Qin* (琴) in the Song and Ming Dynasties, respectively. In terms of the shapes, these referred to the structural characteristics of *Se* (瑟) and *Zheng* (箏), which were relatively popular at that time, resulting in more interconnections between them.

I agree with the view of Xiang Yang (1999: 8) that the *yazheng* has the same origin as the musical instrument called *zhu*. It can be said that the *yazheng* was influenced or inspired by the *zhu*, a mainstream instrument at the time, in its process of evolution, and gradually developed. In the course of the evolution of the *zhu*, the width of the body and the number of strings increased. At the same time, the originally slender, hand-held part gradually became shorter as its function weakened. The slender, hand-held ‘neck’ was even omitted and became cylindrical afterward. Based on documents from the Ming Dynasty, records of the shape of the *yazheng* can be retrieved. It can be understood that the *yazheng* had compartments similar to that of the *zheng* and *se*. It was also called *qin* because of the addition of two strings. This seems to have been the name used for *zhu* on formal occasions, since it was documented that *qin* also had the common name *zhu*. In other words, the *zhu* evolved into the *yazheng*, and as the number of strings increased, it still bore the name *zhu* but was called *qin* on formal occasions.

3. Diversified development of the *yazheng* in the same context

‘Gujin Hebi Shilei Beiyao’ recorded that ‘Qin’s shape is like Se with squared ends on both sides, seven strings and seven cylinders. Dampen the ends of bamboo, then rub it’⁸. Chen Yang’s ‘Yue Shu’ in the Song Dynasty shows the shape of the *yazheng* with a figure (Figure 1). Yao Lü’s ‘Lu Shu’ describes Qin as: ‘Qin looks like Zheng, ... Qin has nine strings ... its three feet and five inches is made of Yunzi wood and is informally called Zhu (Yao). Today, rub rosin onto a branch of a peach tree, use the right hand to saw it in the pose a bit similar to striking...’⁹. ‘Sancai Tuhui’¹⁰ in the Ming Dynasty recorded the drawings of Zheng (Figure 4), Qin (琴) (Figure 5), and Zhu (筑) (Figure 6).

⁸ 宋·谢维新 虞载辑《古今合璧事类备要》外集卷十四，明嘉靖三十一至三十五年刻本，第7273页“琴形如瑟，两头俱方，七弦七柱，以竹润其端而轧之。”

⁹ [明]·姚旅《露书》 中国国家图书馆古籍资源库天启年(1621-1627)刻本 卷八.风篇上第12页。对琴描述道：“琴形似箏，……琴九弦……三尺五寸以文梓为之俗云筑也。……今用桃枝擦松香，以右手锯之稍似击形耳……”

¹⁰ [明]王圻，王思义集编，1988：《三才图会》，器用三卷 乐器类，上海：上海古籍出版社，1132页。



Figure 4. Drawing of *Zheng* (箏) in 'Sancai Tuhui', Ming Dynasty.¹¹



Figure 5. Drawing of *Qin* (琴) in 'Sancai Tuhui', Ming Dynasty.¹²



Figure 6. Drawing of *Zhu* (筑) in 'Sancai Tuhui', Ming Dynasty.¹³

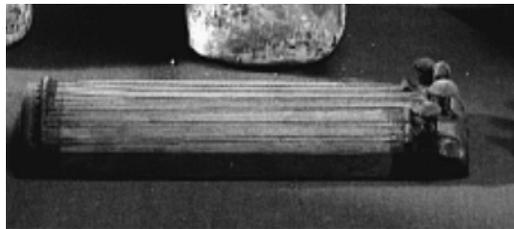


Figure 7. Part of Early Western Han Dynasty music and dance figurines playing *Se* (瑟) in No. 1 Mawangdui, Hunan, Changsha.¹⁴

By analysing historical documents in the Song Dynasty, the shape of *Zhu* (筑) was pretty similar to that of *Se* (瑟) (Figure 7), and *Zhu* was named *Qin* (琴). At that time *Zhu* was as described in the document: 'having squared ends on both sides' with protruding *Rui* (杓) to fix strings by winding and adjusting string tension. Until the Ming Dynasty, the shape of *Qin* is very similar to that of *Zheng* (Figure 4),

¹¹ [明]王圻, 王思义編集, 1988: 《三才图会中》, 器用三卷, 乐器类, 上海: 上海古籍出版社, 第1132页。

¹² [明]王圻, 王思义編集, 1988: 《三才图会中》, 器用三卷, 乐器类, 上海: 上海古籍出版社, 第1132页。

¹³ [明]王圻, 王思义編集, 1988: 《三才图会中》, 器用三卷, 乐器类, 上海: 上海古籍出版社, 第1131页。

¹⁴ 傅举有, 陈松长编著, 1992: 《马王堆汉墓文物画册》, 长沙: 湖南出版社, 第47页。

whereas currently *Zhu* has evolved into a cylindrical music instrument. There are two divisions: the one more similar to the shape of *Zheng* (like Figure 5) was called *Qin*; the one evolved into the cylindrical shape, as in Figure 6, was still called *Zhu*. It can be seen that *Qin* and *Zhu* were both stringed instruments that existed at the same time. They both have seven strings and seven cylinders. They were played by pressing bamboo onto it. Moreover, the playing technique has also evolved from striking in the Han Dynasty to ‘sawing’ in the Ming Dynasty. The ‘sawing’ movement resembles more the playing techniques for modern stringed instruments like *Erhu* (二胡) and violin, etc. In addition, the *yazheng* in ‘Yue Shu’ in the Song Dynasty has a similar shape to *Zheng*. Furthermore, in the Song Dynasty, *Qin* and *Zheng* also have similar shapes. The two characteristics of instruments having a shape similar to *Zheng* include the following: 1. the resonance cavity of the instrument increases, resulting in a shape closer to a cylinder so that greater resonance is obtained. 2. the ‘ Γ ’ shape end and the Luowei structure (see the right side of the instruments in Figure 4 and 5) is preserved, i.e. this structure has certain functions that cannot be omitted. The function of the Luowei design primarily began from the pre-*Qin* stage to Song and Ming Dynasty because the lifestyle of the ancient people included sitting on the ground. Therefore, when *Zhu* was played, the end with Luowei is on the ground whereas the other end stays on the lap (Figure 8). This structure stabilises the key part of the instrument during performance.

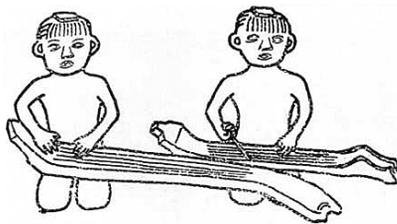


Figure 8. Musicians in the late spring and autumn period in Shaoxing, Zhejiang.¹⁵

Between the two players in Figure 8, the instrument played by the performer in front is similar to modern *Zheng*. The instrument has a ‘Luowei’ structure that bends. The performer does not need to hold the body of instrument for stability like the *Zhu* player in Figure 3. Rather he can freely play with two hands. The instrument is supported from two pivots: Luowei and the part flat on the lap.

The ‘*Qin* is similar to *Se*’ characteristic recorded in documents shows that after the evolution of the appearance and structure of *Zhu*, structural characteristics, such as one string with one cylinder, *Na*, and string pillows, were preserved. Later in time, the structure of *yazheng* retains the *Na* and string pillows. From old documents in Song and Ming Dynasties, we learned the structural characteristics of *Zhu*, *yazheng*, and *Qin* played more than 400 years ago.

¹⁵ 徐文鸣，2019：《古筑的历史研究及复原开发》，徐州：中国矿业大学硕士学位论文，第8页。

The structure, playing technique, and other aspects of *yazheng* in Hebei, Shandong, Fujian, Guangxi, Henan, Jilin and other parts of modern China have many similarities to that of *Zhu*, *Qin* and *yazheng* in Song and Ming Dynasties. *Yazheng* in Hebei, Fujian and Jilin have clear ‘ Γ ’ Luowei structures at the ends. *Yazheng* in Guangxi, Henan, and Shandong also have similarities to the cylindrical *Zhu* in the Ming Dynasty in terms of its structural aspects like *Rui* (柄), string pillow, etc (Han 2012: 34, Wen 2019: 15-21, Zhou 2014: 76-81). *Yazheng* in Jilin and Fujian both have three variations: big, medium, and small with 7 to 9 different numbers of strings. This shows that the *yazheng* has developed to a very refined and strictly institutionalized level in the following areas: using different *yazheng* in different scenarios is very similar to the style in the hierarchy of court music. There are two ways of playing, by sitting and walking. Sitting can be further divided into support by hand or by a table. During a performance, *yazheng* is put on a table in front of the performer. The performer holds a stick in the right hand and plays on the right side of *Ma*, whereas the left hand presses, trembles, rubs, and slides to match the movements on the right side of *Ma*. And both hands are used to perform the techniques for playing the *Zheng*. If the table is not used, the left hand should hold the hole at the back of the instrument and support the instrument body with the forearm and palm. Next, the body of the instrument follows the internal and external rotation of the forearm to match the bow. The *yazheng* is also played with great momentum in a band during a guard of honour in large-scale outdoor rituals. *Yazheng* musicians lift the slightly large-sized *yazheng* with their left hand to let them lean on shoulders. Their right hand holds the sticks to play while walking or standing still. At this time, the left hand must support the instrument and thus cannot be used to perform. Only the stick on the right hand can be used, by either striking or pressing. The following table (Table 1. Basic parameters of *yazheng*) clearly shows the comparisons of modern *yazheng* structures.

This table summarizes the number of strings, the size of the body, the material of the bow, the material of the strings, and how the two hands cooperate during a performance. We can see the true forms of *yazheng* in different regions. *Yazheng*, popular in different regions, has region-specific names, for example, it is called *yazhengqin* (轧筝琴) in Hebei, *Wenzhenqin* (文枕琴) in Fujian, *Cuoqin* (挫琴) or *Zhuqin* (筑琴) in Shandong, *Qixianqin* (七弦琴) or *Waqin* (瓦琴) in Guangxi (Li 1981: 47), *Fuqin* (抚琴) in Shanxi, etc. The unique names exist because after *yazheng* attained popularity, a more vivid name was used to help people remember it easily. In other words, the names are folk names, or a customary name that has been agreed upon. In some regions its folk name is ‘*Waqin*’ (roof tile music instrument) because its structure is akin to that of roof tiles in rural villages; in some regions its ancient shape is not changed, so its folk name is still ‘*Zhuqin*’ (*Zhu* music instrument) as a habit, like *Cuoqin* in Shandong, etc. Without exception, these *yazheng* all have an inseparable ‘bow’.

From the perspective of appearance, some of the *yazheng* still retain the legacy from the Song Dynasty: the ‘ Γ ’ shape Luowei structure, like *yazhengqin* in Hebei, *Wenzhenqin* in Hanjiang, and Fujian and *yazheng* in Jilin. Among them, *yazhengqin*

Table 1. Basic parameters of yazheng

Picture	Name and popular area	Having Na	String pillow on both ends	Having Luowei	Number of string and column	Length cm	Width cm	Thickness cm	Having Ranwei	Bow material	String material	Ways to hold and play
1 	Wenzhenqin, Hanjiang, Fujian	No	Yes	Yes	11 columns 11 strings	86	16	5	No	Reed stalk	Silk or cotton string	Putting on a table and playing with both hands
2 	yazheng, Henan	Yes	Yes	No	9 columns 9 strings	58	13.5	3.5	No	Sorghum stalk with horsetail bow	Silk	Left hand holding, right hand sawing with a bow
3 	Cuoqin, Shandong	No	Yes	No	13 columns 26 strings	65	13	7	No	Straw stalk	Steel wire	Left hand holding, right hand sawing with a bow
4 	Waqin and Qixianqin, Guangxi	Yes	Yes	No	7 columns 7 strings	65	16	7.3	No	Wooden stalk with horsetail bow	Beef tendon bow	Left hand holding, right hand sawing with a bow

Table 1. (continued)

Picture	Name and popular area	Having Na	String pillow on both ends	Having Luowei	Number of string and column	Length cm	Width cm	Thickness cm	Having Ranwei	Bow material	String material	Ways to hold and play
	yazheng, Jilin	No	Yes	No	8 columns 8 strings	78-85	25-31	2	Yes	horsetail bow	Silk	Putting on a table and playing with both hands
	Fuqin, Shanxi	No	Yes	No	12 columns 12 strings	68	13.5	5.5	No	Wooden stalk	Steel wire	Left hand holding, right hand sawing with a bow

1. 章振, 2019: 《不情愿的告别——青田文化乡绅黄文栋口述史研究》, 厦门: 集美大学硕士学位论文, 第68页

2. 韩志敏, 2012: 《河南舞钢轧筝音乐文化考察报告》, 河南师范大学硕士学位论文

3. 周明, 2011: 《挫琴艺术的历史还原与现代传承》, 《齐鲁艺苑》, 第27-32页

4. 陈坤鹏, 2013: 《壮族七弦琴与相关乐器之比较》, 《中国音乐》第02期, 第72-76页

5. 孙小喆, 2016: 《跨界民族音乐探析——以吉林延边朝鲜族牙琴回流与变革为例》, 中央民族大学学位论文

6. 韩志敏, 2012: 《河南舞钢轧筝音乐文化考察报告》, 河南师范大学硕士学位论文

in Hebei and *yazheng* in Jilin even retain the *Ranwei* (染尾) structure to fix strings and adjust pitch. This is absent in *yazheng* in other regions.

From the perspective of size, the length of these *yazheng* is between 68–86 cm. Since the strings are arranged side by side, longitudinally, with the number of strings between 7 and 13, their width is about 13–31 cm. Viewing from the vertical cross-section, the arch heights are different. In some *yazheng*, strings are further apart, so the arch height increases, making the shape of instrument particularly akin to that of roof-top tiles, like *Waqin* in Guangxi. This structure allows the bow to play a single string easily and accurately without accidentally hitting the strings that do not need to make a sound.

From the perspective of bow materials, legacy bows are still used in some areas, such as in Shanxi, Shandong, Fujian, and Hebei: some use wooden stalks, sorghum stalks, reed stalks, and straw stalks. The production method is to rub rosin on these plant stems whose hard skin has been removed to increase their friction against the strings, and then pressing onto it to play. In the rest of the regions, horsetails are added to the wood sticks so as to use the friction force of the thick horsetail fibres for playing. The horsetail bow was used to match the modern use of metal strings. In legacy, some *yazheng* use silk strings from silkworms. This has also been used on ancient instruments, such as *Se*, *Qin*, *Zheng*, etc. Some *yazheng* use beef tendon or cotton. Before the emergence of metal string craftsmanship, these were common string materials. Irrespective of silk, cotton or beef tendons, they all use wood sticks to create ‘ya ya’ sounds. Scholars have narrated this extensively: ‘Ya yong Shu zhu xian Chu si, qing wa wan zhuan sheng xiang sui¹⁶ (*yazheng* is made of bamboo in *Shu* (蜀), and the strings are made of silk in *Chu* (楚)). It plays clear, loud, and winding music along with a singer who follows the music.’ The first sentence described that *yazheng* is mainly made of bamboo in *Shu* and silk string in *Chu*. Since ancient times, *Shu* and *Chu* have been rich in natural resources and at the forefront of cultural and artistic developments. Therefore, in those areas high-quality materials can be produced for the manufacture of *yazheng*. The sound produced by *yazheng* that is made of high-quality materials is beautiful and fascinating. The four words ‘qing wa wan zhuan (clear, loud and winding)’ aptly summarize the beautiful music made by *yazheng*. With ‘sheng xiang sui (sound that follows)’, it shows a picture: there is a soft, clear and beautiful singing voice. The accompaniment of *yazheng* is elegant and interesting. This is a picture of leisure and contentment which is a summary of ordinary life. It shows that *yazheng* not only exist in the court ritual music, but also in the daily lives of the people.

There are two options of the way to hold the bow in the right hand. First, *yazheng* is put on a table or stand and played with two hands. The palm of the right hand that is holding the bow faces down. The index finger is on the upper part of the stick. The thumb and other fingers hold the wooden stick. The pressure from the index finger with the coordinated cooperation of the wrist, upper arm, and elbow move the bow back and forth along the arc of *yazheng* (like in Figure 9 and Figure 10). *Wenzhenqin* in Hanjiang, Fujian (Chen 2009: 15) *yazheng* in Jilin follow this way of holding the

¹⁶ [唐]皎然“轧用蜀竹弦楚丝，清哇宛转声相随”出自《观李中丞洪二美人唱歌轧箏歌》。

bow. We can see in Figure 9 and Figure 10 (Sun 2016: 36) that compared with the playing method that uses the left hand to hold the instrument and right hand to play with a bow, using tables or support to hold the *yazheng* leaves the left hand free to join the performance. The left hand can use ‘*rou yin hua an* (rubbing, chanting, sliding, and pressing)’ techniques similar to that in a Guzheng performance, to assist the vibrating string under the bow of the right hand and get rich changes, such as sliding and vibrating, thereby making the music smoother, more continuous and lively.



Figure 9. Way to hold the bow for *yazheng* (*Wenzhenqin*) in Hanjiang, Fujian.¹⁷

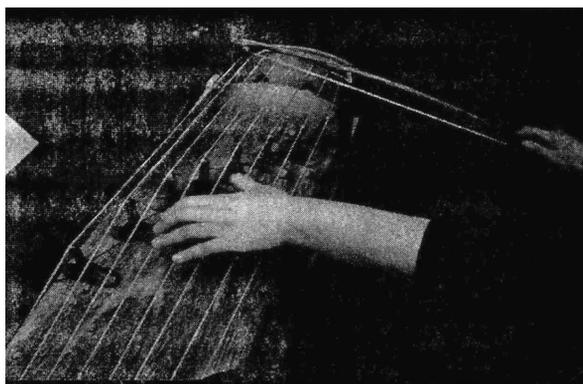


Figure 10. Li Danxiang shows the way to hold the bow for *yazheng* in Jilin.¹⁸

In modern times metal strings are used as an improvement, the bow of *yazheng* also uses horsetail hair for performance. To hold the bow, the index finger and the thumb cooperate to pinch the stick, and to play, the other fingers control the horsetail hair to press in the direction of the strings. With the cooperation of the wrist and arm, the bow moves with the curvature of the instrument. The palm faces left or up (as shown in Figure 11)

¹⁷ 莆田电视台三福寻香问宝栏目之古韵新声（文枕琴）https://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XODM3OTMxNTUy.html (检索时间2023.1.3)

¹⁸ 孙小喆，2016：《跨界民族音乐探析——以吉林延边朝鲜族牙琴回流与变革为例》，中央民族大学硕士学位论文，第36页。



Figure 11. Way to hold the bow for *yazheng*.¹⁹

To perform, the left hand cannot participate in playing as it needs to hold the body. Only the right hand can play by sawing the bow to create a continuous sound. In comparison to playing with the left hand, the variation of sound is not as rich, but the ancient simplicity is not lost. According to the ways of playing due to two ways of supporting *yazheng*, the style of holding the bow changes to suit different performance needs. From the ‘Drawing of Xianzong’s Enjoyment’ in the Ming Dynasty, we can see that this way of playing is a continuation from the Ming Dynasty (as shown in Figure 12).



Figure 12. Part of the Drawing of Xianzong’s Enjoyment in the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 AD)²⁰.

In the above drawing, the second musician from the right uses his left hand to hold *yazheng* on his shoulder and play it with the bow in his right hand. This *yazheng* has ‘ Γ ’ Luowei structure at the end. A structure similar to *Na* can also be seen clearly. This resembles *yazheng*.

¹⁹ 高苹, 2007: 《五音大鼓称谓含义及瓦琴伴奏考论》, 《曲艺》, 北京: 中国曲艺家协会, 第六期, 37-39页。

²⁰ 明代《宪宗行乐图》刘东升, 袁荃猷编撰, 2008: 《中国音乐史图鉴》, 北京: 人民音乐出版社, 第229页。

In addition, on the mural of Xu Gui's tomb in the Jin Dynasty (1115–1234 AD) in Datong, Shanxi musicians sitting in the front row are playing the *yazheng* with sticks in their right hands (Figure 13), where the *yazheng* is placed on a table. This may be a small private banquet scene for aristocrats. Behind them, there are several musicians playing in concert.



Figure 13. Mural of Xu Gui's tomb in the Jin Dynasty.²¹

Through the above classification summary and comparative analysis, although the *yazheng* have different region-specific names, they originate from the development of striking in *Zhu* to pressing in *yazheng* and the branching out in the changes of instrument shapes. Subsequently, they have developed separately. One branch is the *yazheng* in Fujian, Hebei, and Jilin developed from the 'Γ'-shaped end structure in the Song and Ming Dynasties. The other branch is the *yazheng* in Shandong, Shanxi, Henan, and Guangxi developed from the shape of *Zhu* (Figure 6) in the Ming Dynasty. To play it, the musician can either hold a bow in the right hand, and with the left hand holds the instrument in cooperation or holds a bow in the right hand with the left hand performing techniques like trembling. The *yazheng* did not develop in a single form. Different regions and ethnic groups have their own beloved forms of *yazheng*. Therefore, *yazheng* have different appearances and a rich variety of performance methods. Next, let us take a look at the musical scores of the *yazheng* and the *zheng*, which bear the same name, and investigate whether this leads to new discoveries. 'Shuang die cui' is a folk tune (*qupai*) that was popular in the Henan region at the beginning of the last century. The score of this tune is almost the same for the *yazheng* and the *zheng*.

Yazheng can perform fast notes similar to *Guzheng*. Comparing the scores of Henan *yazheng* and *Guzheng*, it can be seen in Figure 14, 15.

²¹ 韩志敏, 2012: 《河南舞钢轧筝音乐文化考察报告》, 河南师范大学硕士学位论文, 第23页。

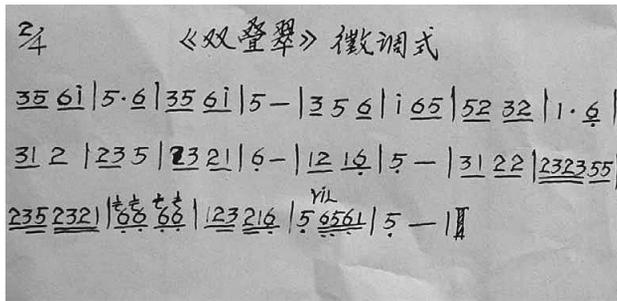


Figure 14. The score for ‘Shuangdiecui’ for Henan yazheng.²²

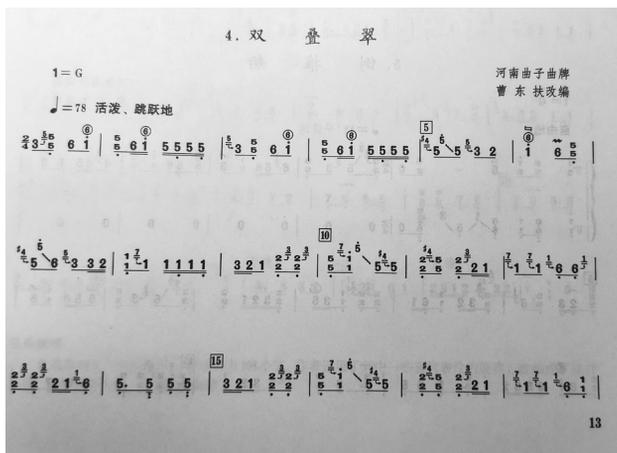


Figure 15. The score for ‘Shuangdiecui’ for Guzheng.²³

It can be said that the *yazheng* and the *zheng* are very similar in appearance, performance method, musical style, and characteristics. This phenomenon was key to the survival of the *yazheng*, as its process of development and evolution consciously or unconsciously imitated various elements of the mainstream instrument ‘*zheng*’ that prevailed in society at the time. For example, the appearance of the instrument, the playing techniques, the occasion for the performance, and even the repertoire were shared. (For the performance of ‘*Shuang die cui*’, the scores used by the *zheng* and *yazheng* are nearly interchangeable.) I believe that to ensure its survival, *yazheng* adopted a protection strategy, which was to utilise the artistic resources of *zheng* accumulated over thousands of years. In the feudal dynasties of China, the *zheng* was an important instrument in court, and represented the supremacy of the ruling class. The audience and performance venues of the *zheng* were also diversified. In venues such as the imperial palaces, private orchestras of aristocrats, and exquisite gardens where literati and scholars gathered, the *zheng* was the favourite instrument of social elites. These cultural elites who dominated public opinion boosted the

²² 韩志敏, 2012: 《河南舞钢轧筝音乐文化考察报告》, 河南师范大学硕士学位论文, 第32页。

²³ 李萌编选, 2004: 《中国传统古筝曲大全上》, 北京: 人民音乐出版, 第13页。

artistic atmosphere of the *zheng*. Obviously, the cultural and artistic atmospheres of the *zheng*, as well as its resources, were borrowed by *yazheng* players, which allowed it to develop and mature quickly. This is what I call the law of survival in the form of resource sharing. However, the *yazheng* did not develop into a stable form until the Tang Dynasty. Compared with the history and status of the *zheng*, the *yazheng* could only be considered a new instrument that was still emerging. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, it was used as an accompaniment instrument for operas and the art of speaking and singing (*shuochang*) (Zhang and Guo 2019: 286-290). It did not influence the stability and continuity of musical thought at the level of mainstream music. Therefore, it is not a popular research topic for serious academic studies. Meanwhile, ‘But however conservative folk traditions may be, one cannot underestimate their continuing creativity’ (Stephen 1995: 42), so the *yazheng* could only develop slowly in the musical environment of folk musicians. The slow pace of change may be the reason why the *yazheng* has kept its primitive style for a long time, and accurately reflects the cultural connotations of music in this period.

At the beginning of the last century, during a period of social, political, and economic reconstruction in China, the *yazheng* experienced a stagnant period of decline. The senior musicians in bands grew old and lacked successors to pass on their skills. Artists who could play the *yazheng* had also changed careers. Sporadic performances were held occasionally, but it was no longer prominent. The art of *yazheng* faced a gradual disappearance. However, in the middle of the twentieth century, under the advocacy of the main ideology of the Chinese government to protect traditional culture, the Chinese music industry actively rescued and organised the work of traditional art. Over the years, the *yazheng* has been revived. The measures to re-introduce the ancient musical instrument in the new era, uncover and organise important musical materials, and restore the musical instrument while at the same time reforming and innovating, have been particularly effective. Next, let us learn about the cases of Guangxi and Shandong.

There have been outstanding achievements in the reformation and innovation of *yazheng* in modern times. For example, there is an attempt to reform the Ma Fujian *yazheng* by replacing the Λ -shape Ma into something similar to the bridge in violins (Figure 16).



Figure 16. Reformed Fujian *yazheng*.²⁴

²⁴ 莆田老艺人合奏文枕琴贺中秋 2008-09-11 http://www.360doc.com/content/11/1126/19/7597954_167586426.shtml (检索时间2023.1.3)

Other than the change in *Ma* (琴码), the region for sawing has been changed from the original right side of *Ma* to the left side, and the region for pressing has been changed from the original left side of *Ma* to the right side. The original way of holding it with the left hand has been changed to use legs for support. This way of holding the instrument resembles the pose for playing the cello. Resting the end of the instrument on the shoulder is similar to that in ‘Drawing for Xianzong’s Enjoyment’. This reformation, compared to holding with left hand and sawing with right hand allows the left hand to participate in the performance to play single or multi-voice melodies with the right hand. However, the prerequisite is that there must be specific pitches on both sides of *Ma*. This adds more requirements to the function of the string pillows at both ends (*Yue* on head and tail). If the design of string pillows on both ends and *Ma* allows two regions (on both sides of *Ma*) that can perform real nodes, it will highlight the harmony and multi-voice playing arrangement of *yazheng*. According to the current *Guzheng* which has a similar structure, with string pillows on both ends (*Yue* on head and tail) and *Ma* in the middle, only the right side of *Ma* can be used to play real nodes. Therefore, it is speculated that with the improvement, only one side of Guangxi *yazheng* has actual music pitches. Thus, creating two playing regions on *yazheng* will require experts to invest in its reformation and conduct tests. By observing the reformed *Ma* it can be found that the original ‘Λ’-shape *Ma* arranged in order are changed to three ‘-’-shaped *Ma* which support 2–3 strings each. Compared with the original sawing area of *yazheng*, the sawing area in the reformed *yazheng* has been greatly increased. The way of playing is similar to that of the *Erhu* and violin. The reformation of *Ma* in *yazheng* is also shown in that of *Cuoqin* in Shandong. Shandong *Cuoqin* has 13 columns and 26 strings with two strings on one column (Figure 17).



Figure 17. *Ma* in reformed Shandong *Cuoqin* (Zhou 2011)²⁵.

In the picture, the number of strings is doubled by adding one more string on a *Ma* from the original one string on one *Ma* to a total of seven strings. This increases the number of strings which expands its range. For example, the original range was $g-g^2$ with one node for one column. Now there are two strings on one column. If the pitches of the two strings are set to be 2° or 3° , the range can be expanded from the

²⁵ 周明, 2011: 《控琴艺术的历史还原与现代传承》, 济南: 山东艺术学院《齐鲁艺苑》, 第27-32页。

original $g-g^2$. Furthermore, if the two strings on one column have the same degree or $2^{\circ}3^{\circ}$, it will be easier to play harmony and chord.

In terms of the global situation, the economy, politics, military, science and technology, and other fields of the West grew and flourished from the beginning of the last century. Western culture, as the dominating culture, swept through the developing countries at that time, and China was no exception, as learning from Western culture became a trend. The trend affected major areas such as culture, art, science, and medicine. Within a short period of time, in the music industry, music elements from the West such as concepts of harmony and rhythm styles became prominent in all fields of music in China.

The improvement of the *yazheng* in Fujian was inspired by the structure of the bridge of the cello from the West. Shandong's *yazheng* increased the number of strings for the adaptation to harmony in performance, and this is the 'survival strategy' of the contemporary *yazheng* in its 'reconstruction' stage. However, the entire Chinese folk music world embraces rich changes and presentations of specific styles of rhythm, and the *yazheng* is no exception. As far as the current improvement of the *yazheng* is concerned, it is actually breaking away from the traditional elements of its primitive style and losing its characteristics. The technology of the modern and fast-developing urban areas should not be used to promote the primitive-style music culture. Homogeneity in the artistic culture of the *yazheng* should be avoided. Instead, care should be taken to maintain the cultural connotations of the era in which the *yazheng* flourished. As a medium, the *yazheng* can lead people to immerse in the spiritual culture and ideological connotations of that era.

4. The diversified development of the *ajaeng* in a cross-context

Table 1 offers a general understanding of the changes in the appearance of the musical instrument *ajaeng* after it was brought into the court of Goryeo in the Song Dynasty and went through nearly a thousand years of transformation and inheritance through the Joseon period to the modern Republic of Korea.

With reference to Table 2, an intuitive observation is that the *yazheng* used in China during the Song Dynasty came in a rectangular shape with seven strings, with each string supported by one bridge. Seven independent bridges were arranged diagonally in a sequence. The tail of the instrument was bent downward. The bow used for playing had a distinctly curved bend. After it was brought into Goryeo, the description of the instrument is limited to written records in the 'History of Goryeo (Goryeosa)', and no drawing is available. However, from the document of a later generation, the 'Veritable Records of King Sejong' from the reign of Sejong, it can be observed that the shape and structure of the *ajaeng* bore a close resemblance to what was recorded in the 'Book of Music' of the Song Dynasty of China. From the above, it can be inferred that the *ajaeng* in the Goryeo period maintained the shape and structure from the period, but the bow for playing the instrument had changed slightly, going from short to long. There was no curved bend and the bow had become

Table 2. The rheology chart of the Takoto system from Goryeo to Modern Korea

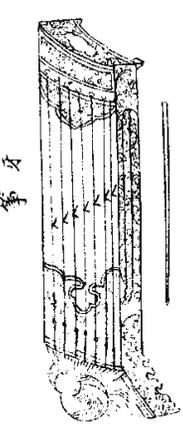
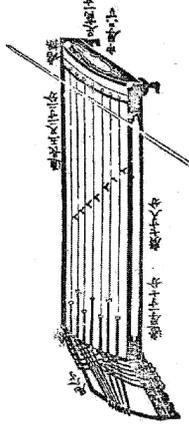
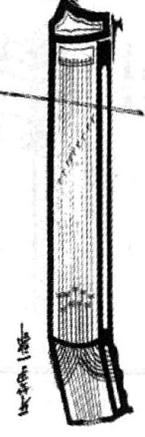
<p>‘The Book of Music’ (Yue Shu), Song Dynasty (1100)</p>	<p>1</p>  <p>Seven strings</p>
<p>‘Five Rites of the Veritable Records of King Sejong (Sejong Sillok)’, Joseon dynasty (1452–1454)</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>Seven strings</p>
<p>‘A Guide to the Study of Music (Akhakwebeom)’ (In the reign of Seongjong) (1493) Picture of Ajaeng</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>Seven strings</p>
<p>‘The Royal Protocol for the Supervision of Sacrificial Utensils and Musical Instruments’ (Chegi Akki Togam Uigwe), Joseon dynasty (In the reign of Injo) (1625)</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>Nine strings</p>

Table 2. (continued)

<p data-bbox="220 192 245 864">Presentation materials of the Seoul Art Center in South Korea (2019)</p>  <p data-bbox="220 864 245 882">5</p>	<p data-bbox="220 864 245 1705">Nine strings</p>
<p data-bbox="560 192 585 864">Korean <i>sanjo</i> (scattered tunes) <i>ajaeng</i></p>  <p data-bbox="560 864 585 882">6</p>	<p data-bbox="529 864 554 1705">Eight strings</p>

1. [宋]陈旸, 1876: 《乐书》, 广州版存菊坡精舍巴陵方功惠署, 第146卷, 第5页。

2. [朝鲜]郑麟趾等, 1926: 《李朝实录第十册 世宗 嘉礼序例 (乐器) 》, 东京: 学习院东洋文化研究所刊, 笠井出版印刷社, 第132卷, 第15页。

3. [韩]张师勋著, 朴春妮译, 2008: 《韩国音乐史增补》, 北京: 中央音乐学院出版社附录(朝鲜)成观, 《乐学规范》影印本, 轨范七, 第523页。

4. [韩]韩永愚著, [韩]金宰民, 孟春玲译, 2012: 《朝鲜王朝轨仪》, 杭州: 浙江大学出版社, 第34页。

5. 笔者, 2019 拍摄于韩国国立国乐院。

6. 진릉후, (2009) "산조아쟁의 발생과정과 아쟁산조의 유파 연구" 영남대 박사학위, 38.

a totally straight rod. Half a century later, ‘A Guide to the study of Music’ from the reign of Seongjong recorded the shape and structure of the *ajaeng*, which showed no significant changes when compared to that of the past. Two hundred years later, in the reign of Injo, the number of strings on the *ajaeng* increased from seven to nine, while other changes were not obvious. In 2019, from the archive pictures shown in the presentation hall of the National Centre for Korean Traditional Performing Arts in Seoul, South Korea, the author learned that the shape and number of strings of the *ajaeng* have not changed since the reign of Injo, four hundred years ago. The last picture in the table shows the *sanjo ajaeng* popular in Korea in the twentieth century, and its shape and structure are different from the past. Fingerboards and fixed bridges (*yueshans*) were added, while the body was enlarged. The number of strings ranges from 8 to 12. There are solo *sanjo*, steel-string *ajaeng*, and small *sanjo ajaeng* for vocal accompaniment. They come in various forms. As we have a preliminary understanding of the changes in the shape and structure, the next thing we need to do is to understand how the ‘foreign musical instrument’ *yazheng* became a traditional national musical instrument in Korea from a historical perspective. I believe that the rise and fall of elegant music (*aak*) on the Korean Peninsula during the Goryeo and Joseon periods directly contributed to the development and transformation of the *yazheng*, which changed from a foreign instrument into a localised instrument.

In the 27th year of Munjong of Goryeo (1072), Chinese music officers of the Song Dynasty who were in charge of a court performance of ‘Team Dance of Ball Tossing’ followed an imperial order that instructed them to visit Goryeo. The Chinese officers taught Song court music and dances, and brought along music scores, dance costumes and props, as well as Tang musical (*Dangak*) instruments. Chinese *yazheng* went abroad in this cross-border exchange ceremony, took root, and flourished in the overseas cultural soil nearly a thousand years ago. They were called *ajaeng*. In the 27th year of Goryeo Wenzong (1073), they were played during the Goryeo traditional Lantern Lighting Festival (*Yeondeunghoe*) and Eight Precepts Ceremony (*Palgwanhoe*), using Tang musical instruments such as *fangxiang*, *dongxiao*, *di*, *bili*, *pipa*, *yazheng*, *dazheng*, *chang ku*, drums, and *pa*. These were the accompaniment instruments used in Goryeo folk music for the team dance performances of ‘Ball Tossing’, ‘Dapsahang’, and ‘Gujanggibeolgi’. They were performed annually during the Dragon Boat Festival, while a section of the songs was sung, and 10–30% of the music was played and danced to.

These royal songs and dances from China’s Song Dynasty constituted a highly dynamic part of the Goryeo court music. During the Dragon Boat Festival of the Goryeo Dynasty, women sang and danced to ‘Ball Tossing’ during the display of talents in the palace (Yuan 1999: 189). Furthermore, during the 40th birthday of Sunjo of Joseon, members of the royal clan on the seat of honour offered a fifth cup of wine and performed ‘Ball Tossing’ in accordance with the royal protocol. The records in the ‘Royal Protocol for the Grand Banquet (*Jinchan uigwe*)’ (1829) of the Joseon Dynasty say the following:

In the Song Dynasty, the women’s teams performed ‘Team Dance of Ball Tossing’, and in the Goryeo Dynasty, ‘Ball Tossing’ was performed at the Dragon

Boat Festival, while female artists sang the lyrics in the halls. The banquets of our dynasty follow these examples.

The *ajaeng* was played at the Lantern Lighting Festival and Eight Precepts Ceremony during the reign of Wenzong, and at the birthday banquet of Sunjo. From the perspective of etiquette, the Lantern Lighting Festival was a ceremony for offering sacrifices to heaven, and the birthday banquet of Sunjo was a ceremony involving the monarch and his officials. On both occasions, elegant music had to be played. Considering the occasions where the musical instruments were used, it can be inferred that the *ajaeng* belonged to the elegant music orchestra of the courts during the period. After the reign of Wenzong, in the reign of Yejong of Goryeo, Da Sheng music was brought to the Goryeo court, and the occasions on which the *ajaeng* was played changed. After Da Sheng music created by Emperor Huizong of Song was brought to Goryeo, it was immediately put into use in Yejong's court music and became an important part of Yejong's court music system, separated from the Tang music and local music (*hyang-ak*) of the previous reigns of Goryeo. However, when compared to the elegant music that was used previously in the Goryeo Dynasty during sacrifices to heaven, the musical instruments; ritual vessels and props for row dances (*yiwu*) during the performance of elegant music in civil and martial manners; costumes; and protocols for performance processes, which were introduced on two occasions during the reign of Huizong of the Song Dynasty, were on an unprecedented scale and can be considered as 'real elegant music'. (Chi 2007: 95-101) The 'Music Records of the History of Goryeo' (Goryeosa Akji) says the following:

"On the 26th day of the tenth month of the year, [the king] personally performed the Xia ceremony at the royal ancestral temple, while new music from Song was played. ... Not to mention that the Emperor of Song specially bestowed civil and martial dances of Da Sheng music.

It is better to dedicate to the ancestral temple, gods, and spirits in the first place. On the 27th day of the tenth month, [the king] watched the elegant music of Da Sheng at Geondeok-Jeon personally. On the 2nd day of the eleventh month, [the king] personally performed the Guan ceremony at the royal ancestral temple and dedicated Da Sheng music."

Yejong's admiration for the Da Sheng music of the Song Dynasty is confirmed by the two pieces of historical data above. Da Sheng music had since been regarded as the holy book by Goryeo and was used in sacrificial ceremonies at the ancestral shrine of the Goryeo Dynasty. The functions of the elegant music in the Goryeo court in expressing political opinions, embodying ideas, and strengthening social norms was thus enhanced, while the previous sacrificial rituals from the reign of Yejong had been completely replaced. The performance styles of music in the Song Dynasty, in which music was played in the hall while bells and chimes were hung under the steps and accompanied by row dances in civil and martial manners, were adopted. In the section about Dungga and Heonga, as the king pays respect at the ancestral shrine in the Music Records of the History of Goryeo, musical instruments and dances in civil and martial manners are detailed. It indicates that the number of musical instruments and props was 323 in total. Neither in the Dungga orchestra or Heonga orchestra was

the *ajaeng* featured. However, this does not mean that the *ajaeng* disappeared from the Goryeo court. Judging from the performance procedures for ‘Ball Tossing’ in the display of talents recorded in ‘A Guide to the study of Music’, the *ajaeng* of the Tang Music was still serving in the Goryeo court. Until the late Goryeo dynasty, after the reign of Myeongjong (1170–1197) ended, due to the influence of wars, damages to musical instruments, and the rise of national cultural awareness, the details of elegant music in Goryeo were adjusted and changed under the impetus of the ruler’s ideology. Given the historical background of the development, although the rulers of the Goryeo dynasty made continuous efforts, including purchasing musical instruments from the Ming dynasty, the revival of elegant music was incomparable to its heyday during the reign of Yejong and Uijong. As there were insufficient musical instruments for the performance of elegant music, the missing parts during annual sacrifices had to be supplemented with musical instruments used for Tang music and local music. This created the conditions for the gradual integration of elegant music, Tang music and local music into the Goryeo court music. The *ajaeng* merged with the local music gradually against the background of the integration of the three streams of music and started a new developmental journey.

In the early days of Joseon, most of the music ‘inherited the features of Tang music, display of talents in Tang music, local music, and display of talents in local music in the era of Goryeo’ (Zhang 2008: 186-187). The reason was that in that period, the country had just gone through turmoil, and the new regime had just entered a steady state, while the economy was still undeveloped. Hence, the will of the royal power was yet to intervene in the field of court music that represented class power. For example, the only changes to elegant music and music dedicated to gods and spirits were the partial modifications to the lyrics. However, in the reign of Sejong, the music of the court underwent great changes rapidly. King Sejong attached great importance to the country’s music culture and advocated learning from foreign music before creating a music culture in his own country. He also advocated the implementation of a systematic reform of elegant music, writing and creating national music, and producing musical instruments to enrich the structure of orchestras. ‘In addition, 8 *qins*, 16 *ses*, 3 *zhengs*, and 3 *ajaengs* were made’. The newly made musical instruments were used at meetings of the monarch and his officials, and at dedications to the gods and spirits (Zhang 2008: 189-190). It is worth mentioning that the reign of Sejong was an important period for the rise of national music. King Sejong emphasised that ‘the people of our country should hear local music when they are born, and have elegant music played when they pass away’ (Zhang 2008: 189). To create an atmosphere for composing new music, King Sejong personally wrote new works, including ‘Chihwapyong’, ‘Chipunghyung’, ‘Yeominrak’, ‘Botaepyeong’, ‘Jeongdaeop’, and ‘Balsang’, with reference to the elements of wind and drum music and local music. The works have circulated for more than 500 years and are still regarded as national art treasures. In my opinion, the changes in the status of the *ajaeng* emerged gradually as a result of the balance of power between the three forces of elegant music, Tang music, and local music under the music policies during the reign of Sejong. Next, I will analyse how the balance

between the relationships of the three streams of music was adjusted. The *ajaeng* was originally brought to Goryeo from China for the performance of Chinese music called Tang music. In the reign of Seongjong, the section on the *ajaeng* in Volume 7 of ‘A Guide to the study of Music’ (1493) stated that ‘In ancient times, it was only played in Tang music, but is now also played in local music’, which means that the *ajaeng* was already in use for local music during the editing process of ‘A Guide to the study of Music’ (it is also possible that the *ajaeng* was used for local music even earlier). In the reign of Sejong of Joseon, King Sejong hoped to use local music (native national music) in the elegant music of the ancestral shrine (Jongmyo) to demonstrate the spirit of the country (Zhang 2008: 225). The implementation of this measure would have elevated the *ajaeng* to a higher position, as ancestral shrine sacrifices had always enjoyed a lofty status among all imperial ceremonies that involved ancestor worship. The use of the *ajaeng* would have reflected the characteristics of nationalisation and localisation in a more distinctive way. Regrettably, the goal was not achieved during the reign of Sejong. There are many reasons for this failure, with the most notable one being that the traditional custom of ‘using ancient systems’ had created restrictions. The instructions left by the imperial ancestors were not to be violated, as violations were regarded as a rebellion against the royal clan and the imperial power. Taejong of Joseon left an order to ‘follow the music legacy of Tang and Song, to establish the formal music of our great dynasty’ (Zhang 2008: 186), which expressed his ardent hope for the restoration of the heyday of the country’s elegant music system. Therefore, Sejong complied with the ancient system in the performance of elegant music at the ancestral shrine, whereas musical instruments of elegant music and the performance form of Dungga and Heonga were adopted. Therefore, his hope to promote folk music at the ancestral shrine ceremonies was not fulfilled (Sejong originally intended to promote native national music), but the creation of new local music was still in progress, which laid the foundation for the subsequent growth of local music. During a discussion between Sejong and Minister Maeng Saseong on the choice between local music and the elegant music played at royal banquets, Maeng Saseong agreed to integrate local music and elegant music in the performance process of royal banquets. Not only did this satisfy Sejong’s sincere love for the national music of his country, but it also paved the way for the replacement of elegant music with local music as the main music used at the ancestral shrine (Maeng Saseong might not have expected such a result). The ritual music of the ancestral shrine in the reign of Sejo (1455–1468) had changed and did not follow the convention in the reign of Sejong, in which only elegant music was played. Among the music played at the ancestral shrine ceremonies, ‘Jeongdaeeop’ and ‘Botaepyeong’ are national songs composed with reference to wind and drum music and local music during the reign of Sejong. This shows that as ‘local music’ was played by the Dungga orchestra for elegant music, the importance of the *ajaeng* gradually increased. The instrument was placed on the north side of the singer, which was a prominent position. The same system was inherited and maintained by subsequent rulers.

The proportion of elegant music, Tang music, and local music during the reign

of Sejong was elegant music > Tang music > local music, whereas the proportion of the three streams of music during the reign of Sejo was Tang music > elegant music = local music. In this period, the status of elegant music gradually declined. The authority responsible for the management of elegant music was willing to strengthen the position of elegant music. However, with the rise of national culture, traditional folk culture that symbolised the national spirit inevitably approached the status of mainstream culture. The balanced relationship between elegant music and local music, which King Sejong once took great care to balance, inevitably deteriorated with time. A new balanced relationship between foreign music and native music was found. During the reign of Seongjong (1469–1494), the music management authority ‘reconstructed’ the situations of elegant music, Tang Music, and local music that was chaotic, in an attempt to find a balance. The reconstructed relationship did not achieve a balance between foreign music and native music. The elegant music introduced from China was only used in Confucian temple sacrifices, while the native music created by the Koreans was collectively referred to as folk music during the reign of Seongjong. Folk music was used at the ancestral shrine and royal banquets. At the same time, folk music was included in the elegant music ceremonies of the ancestral shrine. Although the elegant music was played in the form of Dungga and Heonga, musical instruments for traditional elegant music were not used. The use of elegant music shrank further. At this time, the proportion of elegant music and folk music was folk music > elegant music. In summary, the awakening of the national consciousness of Koreans caused the national culture to advance by leaps and bounds, and the function of the *ajaeng* became increasingly distinguished and strong as Tang music and folk music became integrated. The status of the *ajaeng* rose and its penetration into the Korean national music culture increased. At the royal banquet of the thirteenth year of Sejong, the court dance Oyangseon was performed, and at that time the *ajaeng* was an accompaniment instrument. In the reign of Sejo, the Dungga orchestra was placed at the front of the singer. When it came to the reign of Injo (1623–1649), the *ajaeng* was placed at the frontmost of the Dungga orchestra at the ancestral shrine, which was an important position (Tanabe 1970: 166). It showed that the *ajaeng* had become an irreplaceable Korean national musical instrument. While the stable political environment of the country had brought about the comprehensive development of music culture, in the same way, political chaos and tyranny had damaged the country and endangered the fruits of the restoration of music, which was achieved painstakingly under several generations of rulers. During the reign of Seongjong, the power of elegant music had gradually given way to folk music, while national music culture emerged. After that, Joseon was plagued by political struggles between parties within the country. This led to difficulties such as chaotic governance, invasions of outsiders, and unbalanced income and expenditure. The maintenance of the systems of elegant music at the ancestral shrine and royal banquets faced an uphill battle, and the development of national music entered a period of stagnation. Although several attempts were made to restore the grandeur of elegant music during the reign of Seongjong, they all failed. Unfortunately, in the last years of the Joseon Dynasty, the royal family members

fought against each other for power, while foreign aggressors took advantage of the void, occupied the country, and intervened in national politics. The flames of war burnt continuously and the royal family of Jeseon was in a precarious position. The power of the state was hit hard, and people lived on the verge of starvation. The ‘Gabo Reform’, which suggested Korea perform internal reforms in the areas of politics, culture, and military, was interfered with and affected by Japan. At the same time, Korea was forced to sign the ‘Japan–Korea Annexation Treaty’. The Imperial Court Music Institute, which had a rich history of five hundred years, was about to collapse. The national sacrificial ceremony was forcibly stopped, the musicians were dismissed and the stage in the court, which was essential to the survival of the *ajaeng*, was on the verge of deconstruction. Fortunately, with the development of cities and the growth of the economy, middle classes continued to grow in the cities. Some of the court artists relied on serving the middle class in order to make a living. The aristocrats in the communities, wealthy farmers living in the cities, and businesspeople organised private entertainment activities during their leisure time, as they hired court artists to perform and entertain them. The performances included singing, dancing, and playing musical instruments. The employment of court artists by the urban middle class also showed that the middle class yearned for the entertainment style that was once enjoyed by the ruling class only. The people from the middle class considered this as a symbol of identity, which improved their class and status. Private performances of court music by musicians continued until the 1960s, and even survived through the Japanese occupation by turning into underground activities.

After the government of the Republic of Korea was established and the country entered a stable period where the economy, culture, and education industry developed, the *ajaeng* was reborn. This was like an injection of fresh nutrients, and the art of the *ajaeng* gained a new vitality and entered a stage of diversified development. On the one hand, the performance of folk *sanjo* on the *ajaeng* has become mature (Yong-ho 2007); on the other, it has taken root in higher education and cultivated talents for society. Most importantly, the state directs the strategy based on national cultural identity and plays a leading role in promoting national culture to the world. Therefore, in addition to adhering to traditions and national values, the *ajaeng* in South Korea also integrates the multi-faceted and diversified development of contemporary music and artistic elements.

First, let us talk about the origin of *sanjo ajaeng*. After the Gabo Reform, the country fell into distress. Court musicians who had been dismissed joined the community of ordinary people. They revealed their patriotic feelings in their music. In this way, traditional Korean music survived.

Shamanism is a comprehensive folk religion in Korea, and the music of the religion enjoys an essential leading position in the protocol structure of shamanic rituals. Musical rituals, songs, and dances that are difficult and complicated are used to communicate with spirits and souls in different spaces. *Sanjo* music developed from shamanic music is unique in Korean traditional music. Dispersed melodies and free rhythms are played in highly complicated music improvised by experienced

performers, and underneath that, there is an organised format and a powerful database of music, providing a steady stream of creation for *sanjo*, facilitating its continuous change and development. Different performers have rich and diverse personal styles, and even the same person can improvise different styles of *sanjo* music, with distinctive personal touches. This demonstrates the overflowing performance skills and reflects the players' profound comprehensive qualities and accomplishments in music. *Sanjo* was first developed on *gayageum*, and the *ajaeng* was also used to play *sanjo* in the late nineteenth century. Famous *ajaeng sanjo* performers such as Han Ilseob and Park Daeseong are also well known overseas.

Secondly, in terms of higher education, the reform measures of the Gabo Reform positively promoted the culture. For example, the reform introduced Western music and the mode of professional education. Western music education is on par with traditional national music education, and this had a positive effect on the development of traditional Korean music. In 1959, the College of Music of Seoul National University established the Department of Korean Music. The education includes music theory, practical performance, and talent development, and sends top elites out into society as skilled graduates. As an elective course for the *gayageum* and *geomungo* majors, the *ajaeng* also expands the compatibility of similar majors and delivers talents at a more rapid pace.

Finally, in terms of national cultural policy, the National Gugak Centre of South Korea has held concerts overseas since 1967 to showcase the historical court music of Korea, which is an important part of Korean traditional culture. This represents how the government shows Korea's rich cultural accomplishments and historical heritage to the global community. It also presents the national image of Korea to the world. These are effective measures to establish an effective competitive position in global society through continuously promoting the cultural strength of the nation.

5. Conclusion

The *yazheng* was born against a background of the culture of ritual and music, with moral connotations and thoughts including 'benevolence', 'righteousness', 'reason', and 'wisdom'. The balance and harmony between people and nature, society, and human heart are the core ideas of Confucianism. The most prominent stage is the development stage of court ritual music – only music with moral education was played. Therefore, people gained a sense of health, purity, solemnity and earnestness in music. Throughout history, the *yazheng* was reconstructed from folk music and then entered a stage of free development. In China, the *yazheng* was played for folk operas, poetry, and songs. It expressed the ideals of the cultural elite. In Korea, the *ajaeng* is the carrier of *sanjo* music, which bears the origins of sacrifice. The two streams of music are not limited to the performance of music. They embody the cultural spirit of the rich histories of the two nations, represent social trends, speak to the morals and feelings of the people, and reflect social sentiments. They are crucial to the cultural identity of the ethnic groups. The *yazheng* of China and *ajaeng* of Korea

were constructed in the age of modernisation under the influence of globalisation. Cultural diversification in China and South Korea in the respective fields appears to be particularly important. Also, within the scope of music, its diversification signifies the diversification of culture as well. China and South Korea have both achieved a lot in protecting the cultural heritages of their country's unique culture and arts in terms of *yazheng* (*ajaeng*), but there are still shortcomings. The results of South Korea's work toward the sustainable development of the *ajaeng* are gratifying. The *ajaeng* has gone through an important process of transformation from a foreign culture to native culture in Korean court music. As for introducing court music to the world, the *ajaeng* is in a leading position. However, the attitude toward the sustainable development of court music is too cautious and conservative, as a static 'museum' style has been adopted. The coming generations will always only have insights into that eternal node. This is regrettable. Furthermore, the integration of Korean *sanjo ajaeng* into the higher education system can lead to a more systematic development of the *ajaeng*, but as the higher education system has drawbacks in terms of formulation, the improvisational characteristics of *ajaeng sanjo* will be limited, and its diversity will be reduced. In the sustainable development of China's *yazheng*, it is necessary to adhere to the language characteristics of the national music and the spiritual value of the national culture embodied by the national music. The *yazheng* in China and South Korea share the same origin. The two nations share a common *yazheng* music culture, and the culture is clearly different from the foreign cultures in that period. It is the spiritual and cultural wealth created and accumulated by wise people over a long time, and it has become a crucial cultural heritage for the people of the two nations. More importantly, it represents the cultural identity of the people in the region, and the mutual recognition in the cultures of the two nations. The cultural recognition built by the *yazheng* enables both nations to share traditional cultures from cultural ceremonies and common social experiences. This promotes understanding, respect, peace, and co-existence between the two countries and with other countries around the world.

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