

The Music Elements of Henan Traditional Guzheng Music

Bo Zhao

Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Khon Kaen University, Thailand

Kritsada Wongkhamchan

Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Khon Kaen University, Thailand

Pat Kotchapakdee

Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Khon Kaen University, Thailand

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Corresponding Author : Bo Zhao

E-mail Address : bo.z@kkumail.com

Abstract

This research is qualitative research with the objective of studying the music elements of Henan traditional Guzheng (古筝) music under the guidance of "Ethnomusicology" theory and "Cultural Ecology" theory. The data is collected from the target group of people related to Henan traditional Guzheng music, selected using the purposive sampling method. The collected data was analyzed according to the objectives through two types of data analysis: the analysis of the documents analysis of documents and field data. The formation of the Henan Guzheng music genre is a process that has undergone long-term accumulation. Centered around the Nanyang region, Henan Guzheng music is widely disseminated throughout the province, with this region also possessing rich cultural and historical materials related to Guzheng music research. Centered around the Nanyang region, Henan Guzheng music is widely disseminated throughout the province, with this region also possessing rich cultural and historical materials related to Guzheng music research. This study aims to explore the musical elements of Henan Guzheng music, revealing its formation and artistic background, including four aspects: music source, dialect tone, composition and playing techniques. Among these elements, the "Bantou-tune" and "Paizi-tune" within the "Dadiao-tune" serve as the main sources of traditional repertoire in the Henan Guzheng genre. The local style of Henan Guzheng music is rooted in the Henan dialect, with the technique of left-hand portamento effectively emulating vocalization on the Guzheng. Additionally, the musical style of Henan Guzheng

music reflects the optimistic, simple, hearty, and straightforward characteristics of the people of Henan, with unique playing techniques distinct from other genres. These musical elements collectively shape the distinctive local characteristics of Henan Guzheng music expression. This research can enable people in diverse music cultures to learn more about the Henan Guzheng genre and the cultural connotations behind it.

Keywords: Music elements, Henan Guzheng music, Traditional music, Ethnic music

Introduction

The Guzheng, one of the most representative traditional Chinese musical instruments, traces its roots back to the Qin State during the Spring and Autumn Warring States period. Over time, owing to factors such as warfare and shifts in political and cultural centers, the Guzheng gradually spread across China. The Guzheng, one of the most representative traditional Chinese musical instruments, traces its roots back to the Qin State during the Spring and Autumn Warring States period. Over time, due to factors such as warfare and shifts in political and cultural centers, the Guzheng gradually spread across China. China's vast geographical expanse encompasses diverse natural conditions, customs, and cultures. As the Guzheng migrated to different regions, it absorbed local folk music, cultural elements, and nuances, giving rise to five distinct Guzheng genres, each with its unique characteristics. China's vast geographical expanse encompasses diverse natural conditions, customs, and cultures. As the

Guzheng migrated to different regions, it absorbed local folk music, cultural elements, and nuances, which gives rise to five distinct Guzheng genres, each with its unique characteristics.

The significant cultural disparities between China's northern and southern regions led to the classification of these five Guzheng genres into two main categories: the northern Guzheng genre, epitomized by Henan Guzheng and Shandong Guzheng, and the southern Guzheng genre, represented by Zhejiang Guzheng, Hakka Guzheng, and Chaozhou Guzheng. The northern Guzheng genre emphasizes figurative expression, its style is aggressive and rough, the music is ups and downs, and the atmosphere is rich. In terms of playing techniques, the expressiveness of the right hand is more prominent, while the string pressing with the left hand is mainly "quick" and "deep". Southern Guzheng genre is famous for its flowing, graceful, subtle, and delicate style. In terms of playing techniques, it pays attention

to the meticulous grasp of the "rhyme" of the left hand. It has very delicate requirements in vibrato and fretted strings, and there are many changes. Building upon this traditional foundation, contemporary composers and Guzheng players have innovated and expanded the Guzheng repertoire, resulting in the creation of four additional genres: Shaanxi Guzheng, Fujian Guzheng, Korean Guzheng, and Mongolian Guzheng, collectively known as the nine major Guzheng genres. (Song, Y., 2021)

Among these, the Henan Guzheng genre has emerged as a pivotal component of China's Guzheng art scene, distinguished by its simple, vibrant, and lively style, as well as its direct musical expression and strong local flavor.

The inception of the Henan Guzheng genre dates to the early 20th century. Also known as "Zhangzhou ancient tune," Henan Guzheng music took shape following the construction of the capital of Bianliang (now Kaifeng) during the Northern Song Dynasty. (Wang, D., 2012) The emergence of the Henan Guzheng music genre is intimately intertwined with the development of Henan's "Dadiao-tune". During the Ming Dynasty, a popular folk music style known as "Xian Suo" emerged in the regions of Yu, Anhui, and Lu. This music incorporated instruments such as the Guzheng, Pipa (琵琶), Sanxian (三弦), along with wind instruments like flutes (簫) and pipes (管) for accompaniment. As China's feudal society

declined from the late Ming Dynasty to the Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty, socio-economic changes prompted many individuals to transition into handicraft trades. Concurrently, folk songs began to migrate into urban areas, giving rise to a new genre known as "Xiao qu". Over time, "Xiao qu" merged with the "Xian Suo" music prevalent in the Central Plains, culminating in the formation of the distinct folk traditional music form "Henan Dadiao-tune". (Wang, X. and Wang, X., 2021)

The Guzheng, as an essential accompaniment instrument for Dadiao-tune, has gradually emancipated itself from the dependence on Dadiao-tune through continuous development and the refinement of artists, evolving into the independent Henan Guzheng genre. Among the Dadiao-tune, the purely instrumental string ensemble form Bantou-tune and the singing-style Paizi-tune with lyrics are the main sources of Henan's traditional Guzheng genre repertoire. Originating from local music in Henan, Henan Guzheng music is influenced by the Henan dialect. The technique of left-hand portamento emulates vocalization effectively on the Guzheng. Evolving from initially being flavored by dialect nuances to being influenced by opera music, Henan Guzheng music has consistently retained the tonal characteristics of the Henan dialect. The technique of left-hand portamento effectively emulates vocalization on the

Guzheng. Evolving from initially being flavored by dialect nuances to being influenced by opera music, Henan Guzheng music has consistently retained the tonal characteristics of the Henan dialect. Typically tuned to G, with a rhythm of 2/4, and primarily utilizing the pentatonic scale, Henan Guzheng music often incorporates large intervals of the fourth, fifth, and sixth degrees, along with portamento of major seconds and minor thirds, portraying a robust and powerful sensation, reflecting the straightforward, honest,

and hearty characteristics of the Henan people. The designation of Henan Guzheng music as a distinct genre is closely tied to its unique expression of tonal colors and the application of techniques. Emphasizing the use of the thumb and middle finger of the right hand, while the left-hand employs techniques such as pressing, trilling, portamento, and rolling to supplement the sound, forming a distinctive performance style. (Wang, X., 2010)

Research Objectives

1. To study the music elements of Henan traditional Guzheng music.

Research Methodology

This study is qualitative research with the objectives of studying the music elements of Henan traditional Guzheng music through

1.The target group:

The target group was selected through the purposive sampling method. The target group can be separated into the three following groups:

1.1 Key Informants : Inheritor and performer of Henan's traditional Guzheng music,

2.The research tools:

The tools used for data collection were survey, interview, and observation.

2.1 Survey : The survey points to the documentary analysis. This study mainly uses

collecting data from the target group related to Henan traditional Guzheng music.

4 people in total.

1.2 Casual Informants : Guzheng teacher, folk Guzheng artist, Guzheng student, 15 people in total.

1.3 General Informants : Guzheng music enthusiasts, local residents, 10 people in total.

existing books, journals, papers, audio, musical scores, videos, and historical archives as references to obtain valuable information comprehensively and accurately. This paper will

sort out the historical and cultural connotations of traditional Guzheng music in Henan and provide clearer research ideas and theoretical support for this paper.

2.2 Interview : The content of the interview mainly focuses on the research objectives of this paper. The sample interview questions mainly focus on the origin and development of Henan Guzheng music, its

3.The research procedures:

This paper includes the following four stages,

Stage 1 : General information collection phase.

Stage 2 : Field investigation data

4.The data analysis:

The researcher followed a structured approach aligned with the research objectives. This involved several steps: categorizing the data based on the objectives, assessing the completeness of information obtained from data collection, and employing two types of data analysis: document analysis and field data analysis.

4.1 Document analysis entailed verifying

artistic characteristics, music composition and unique playing techniques.

2.3 Observation : The researcher observes the artist's performance of Henan Guzheng music as a non-participant, and also plays Henan Guzheng music as a participant with the artist to further communicate and experience the melody, rhythm, and performance techniques of the music.

collection phase, including plan for field research, field research and data collection.

Stage 3 : Data analysis phase.

Stage 4 : Discussing results and reaching conclusions.

data against theoretical concepts, particularly utilizing the "Methods of Agreement" framework.

4.2 Field data analysis encompassed examining all data types to derive conclusions, resulting in three analytical approaches: analysis and interpretation of concrete events or phenomena, classification of information based on theoretical frameworks, and comparative data analysis.

Research Result

For the research on the music elements of Henan traditional Guzheng music, the researcher analyzed data from the field study acquired through survey, interview, and

observation. The result from the analysis is presented from the following four aspects: music source, dialect tone, composition and playing techniques.

1. Music Source

The Henan Guzheng genre is closely linked with the Henan "Dadiao-tune". During the mid-Ming Dynasty, a popular folk music style called "Xian Suo" emerged in regions like Yu, Anhui, and Lu, featuring instruments like Guzheng, Sanxian, and Pipa, accompanied by flutes and pipes. As feudal society declined from the late Ming Dynasty to the Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty, rural folk songs began to spread to urban areas, merging with urban art forms to create "Xiao qu". This blend of "Xiao qu" and "Xian Suo" music from the Central Plains led to the development of the Henan "Dadiao-tune," characterized by linked melodies. The "Bantou-tune" and "Paizi-tune" within the "Dadiao-tune" are important sources of traditional repertoire in the Henan Guzheng genre.

1.1 Bantou-tune

The "Bantou-tune," originally a component of the Henan "Dadiao-tune," is popular in regions such as Nanyang and Kaifeng in Henan Province. It is a style of instrumental music characterized by its simple and elegant demeanor, imbued with rich local flavors. The "Bantou-tune" serves as a prelude in instrumental form before the singing of the "Dadiao-tune," creating a tranquil atmosphere. Over time, through continuous development and refinement by generations of musicians, it has evolved into an independent genre of string

ensemble music, capable of both solo and ensemble performance, gradually detaching itself from its association with the "Dadiao-tune". "Bantou-tune" features flexible and diverse performance styles with rich expressive content, earning the admiration of the masses. It stands as one of the important genres of folk instrumental music in China.

The Henan "Bantou-tune" can be classified in two ways: by the content of the pieces or by their structural format. In terms of content, "Bantou-tune" offers a diverse range of themes and musical styles. Some pieces, like "Birds Welcoming Spring," "Little Peach Blossom," and "Spring Rain and Willow," depict natural landscapes vividly, while others, like "Lion Rolling a Ball" and "Pu Tuo Wheel," portray the joys of daily life with charm and expressiveness. Some pieces delve into social themes, like feudal women's grievances or sincere love stories. Many pieces are inspired by historical stories or folk legends, such as "The Story of the Western Wing" or "Dragon Boat Race."

Structurally, "Bantou-tune" can be divided into three categories: slow-paced, medium-paced, and fast-paced. Slow-paced pieces typically express sadness, using an eight-section structure with a predominant 2/4 beat rhythm. Medium-paced pieces share the same structure but have a slightly faster tempo. Some

medium-paced pieces deviate from the traditional structure by adjusting the number of sections according to the piece's development. Fast-paced pieces feature lively melodies and upbeat rhythms without specific sections. Various flexible section formats exist based on the music's plot and performance needs, such as transitioning from fast to slow or vice versa.

The "Bantou-tune" traditionally serves as a prelude to the "Dadiao-tune" or fills intervals during performances, setting the mood and tuning the instruments. It's an ensemble style of string music featuring instruments like the Sanxian, Guzheng, and Pipa. The Sanxian, often the smaller middle-drum type, provides deep bass tones, while the Pipa offers clearer, brighter tones for the higher registers. In recent years, the Guzheng has seen advancements, now boasting more strings and a clearer sound, with the twenty-one-string version becoming more prevalent. With its versatile techniques, the Guzheng enriches the ensemble, complementing the Sanxian and Pipa. (Wang, S., 2016)

The performance style of "Bantou-tune" is primarily ensemble-based, allowing each instrument to add its own embellishments and variations, creating a diverse yet harmonious performance. Structurally, it follows the traditional "eight-section" format, consisting of eight sections totaling 68 sections. This format has been refined over three hundred years and

remains consistent across various tempos, including slow, medium, and fast sections. Each piece typically maintains the 68-section structure, offering a balanced and mature performance.

The representative pieces of "Bantou-tune" include "High Mountains and Flowing Water" and "Chen Xingyuan and Fan," as well as "Ascending Stairs," "Descending Stairs," "Universal Harmony," "New Opening," "Geese Flying," "Enjoying Autumn," "Lament in the Boudoir," and so on. (Jia, Y., 2008)

1.2 Paizi-tune

"Paizi-tune" is a musical genre characterized by specific musical patterns interconnected to form its basic theme. In Henan Dadiao-tune, these patterns are traditionally categorized into several types, including commonly used Guzi miscellaneous tunes, commonly used Xiaokun tunes, and rarely used tune patterns, many of which are inherited by the Guzheng. The structure of this genre primarily relies on connected patterns, although some pieces may adapt a single-section structure with repeated patterns. However, variations in lyrics and rhythm occur with each repetition in pattern music to create contrast. Therefore, when notating, each pattern must be meticulously recorded separately to capture the integration of vocal music lyrics and melody.

The origins of many folk instrumental

music patterns stem from vocal music patterns, originally intended for singing. These patterns, closely tied to their lyrics' profound meanings, are transplanted from Henan's narrative songs and developed into independent Guzheng melodies, representing a crucial pathway for the evolution of Henan's Guzheng music.

In the traditional repertoire of Henan Guzheng music, the Paizi-tune genre is a type of music adapted from vocal music's tune patterns, mainly derived from "Dadiao-tune". The tune patterns of "Dadiao-tune" are traditionally classified into three categories: commonly used Guzi miscellaneous tunes, commonly used Xiaokun tunes, and rarely used tune patterns. Commonly used Guzi miscellaneous tunes consists of tunes with short and easy-to-learn music scores, widely sung and circulated. They are an important part of "Dadiao-tune" and are among the more common tune patterns. In Henan Guzheng music, examples of commonly used Guzi miscellaneous tunes include "Sigusheng," "Lang Taosha," and "Dieluoluo." Commonly used Xiaokun tunes is another common category, these tunes, besides Guzi miscellaneous tunes, are the most frequently used. These tunes typically feature alternating long and short phrases and originate from Kunqu Opera's melodies, hence the name "Xiaokun" (literally "small Kun"). Their structures are relatively concise and refined, making them easy to sing.

Rarely used tune patterns were initially derived from instrumental music but are less frequently used in Dadiao-tune. Some Guzheng music pieces adapted from these less common tune patterns include "Crying Zhouyu" and "Niuzui Niang." Originally performed on other instruments, they have been adapted to suit Guzheng performance after modification.

In the realm of Henan Guzheng music, Paizi-tune compositions are adaptations of traditional vocal melodies for the Guzheng, following a structured format that provides stability. Most Paizi-tune pieces in the Henan Guzheng genre adhere to a 2/4 beat, showcasing unique traits through rhythmic combinations and emotional themes. For example, "Guan Shan Yue" features a lively tempo expressing cheerfulness, while "Crying Zhou Yu" conveys sorrow with a moderate pace akin to storytelling. Additionally, "Su Wu Si Xiang" employs a slow tempo to evoke nostalgia and sadness, focusing on character portrayal.

Tonally, Paizi-tune Guzheng music, like Bantou-tune, primarily uses the pentatonic scale with minimal chromatic notes. According to "The Complete Collection of Traditional Guzheng Music from Henan and Shandong Guzheng genres," compositions mostly feature the Gong mode, followed by Zhi, with occasional use of other modes like Yu, Jue, and Shang. Gong, Shang, and Zhi serve as primary tonal degrees, forming the structural basis for

compositions. Zhi-mode pieces commonly end with a downward jump from Gong to Zhi, while Gong-mode pieces often conclude progressively to provide resolution. Overall, Paizi-tune in Henan Guzheng music preserves the narrative essence of traditional vocal tunes, blending melody progressions with emotional expression, resulting in compositions rich in storytelling and emotional depth.

2. Dialect tone

In traditional Han Chinese Guzheng music, each region's style possesses unique characteristics, resulting in significant differences even when performing the same piece. These distinctions stem not only from variations in scales, melodies, and playing techniques but also from the strong local flavor embedded in each region's music. Henan's Guzheng music, for instance, is deeply influenced by the region's dialect, which is reflected in its techniques like left-hand portamento, mimicking vocalizations on the Guzheng. Initially inspired by dialect flavors and later evolving from opera music, Henan Guzheng music has preserved the tonal qualities of the Henan dialect. The influence of dialect on Henan Guzheng music is profound, as it is deeply rooted in the essence of the Henan dialect. This dialect tonality is essential to the allure of Henan Guzheng music, continually

There are not many pieces of Guzheng music adapted from song lyrics. Henan Guzheng music presents two forms in this inheritance process. One maintains the tones and melodies of vocal song lyrics, such as "Jian Jianhua" and "Nan Niu Si"; the other is based on the musical themes of vocal song lyrics, such as "Xiao Taohong" and "Weiduo"

shaping its character and driving its development.

2.1 The relationship between Chinese language and music

Music has the remarkable ability to mirror the nuances of language by replicating its tones and movements. In Mandarin Chinese, where each syllable carries a distinct tone, this tonality is crucial for conveying meaning. Language is constructed from these phonetic units and vocabulary, following specific syntactic structures. In contrast, individual musical notes lack inherent meaning; it is through their arrangement into phrases or melodies based on tonal relationships that music conveys emotion or information. Since single musical notes cannot represent the tonal shifts of Mandarin, these changes are expressed through note variations, using melody lines to mirror language tonality.

In music composition and performance,

one can emulate language tones by manipulating tonality, melody, rhythm, and note arrangements. "Following tonal patterns" and "adapting melody to text" are key aspects of traditional Han ethnic music composition. Unlike European music, Han music's foundation lies in Mandarin's tonal language, imparting a melodious and winding beauty that aids in meaning differentiation. Consequently, the tonal patterns of lyrics influence melodic development. Despite modern influences, ethnic music retains traditional techniques, reflecting regional richness through musical imitation of dialect features. This close tie between music and dialect often aligns the geographical spread of music with that of corresponding dialects.

2.2 The use of Henan dialect in Henan traditional Guzheng music

In Henan dialect, the yinping, yangping, and qusheng tones are frequently used, corresponding to the first, second, and fourth tones respectively. The pitch contour for yinping is (2-4), going from Re to Fa; for yangping, it's (4-2), from Fa to Re; and for qusheng, it's (3-1), from

Mi to Dol. Each tone involves a transition from one pitch to another, typically no more than a third interval. This transition is crucial for pronunciation, emphasizing the full expression of each tone.

In Henan Guzheng music, this transition is mirrored through the left-hand portamento technique. For instance, the yinping tone, transitioning from Re to Fa in Henan dialect, is echoed by portamento from Re to Fa in the music. Thus, the final pitch reached by the portamento encapsulates the essence of the dialect.

Various tone combinations in Henan dialect, such as yinping-yangping, yinping-qusheng, and others, translate into different portamento techniques in Guzheng music. These include upward portamento, downward portamento, tremolos with portamento, and more, reflecting the diverse tonal patterns of the dialect. As fundamental elements of the dialect, these tones are prominently featured in Henan Guzheng compositions, as seen in pieces like "Hanjiang Rhythm," which combines yinping and yangping tones.



Figure 1 The portamento in the "Hanjiang Rhyme" fragment reflects Yinping and Yangping tones.

In the first measure of the second line, the upward portamento from "La" to the downward portamento "La" represents a combination of yinping and yangping tones. Their tones are (2-4, 4-2), forming a minor third interval. In Guzheng music, when portamento from "La" to the next note ("Dol"), it is essential to portamento to the pitch of "Dol" to complete the full pitch of "La," representing the complete pronunciation of yinping. Similarly, when portamento downward from "La," it must return from the pitch of "Dol" to complete the full pitch of "La," representing the full pitch of yangping. These upward and downward

portamento are both minor third intervals, which precisely match the tonal characteristics of Henan dialect.

In Henan dialect, it is also common to have the same tone repeated two or three times consecutively. This can be observed in the Henan Guzheng piece "Hanjiang Rhythm," where there is a significant amount of repetition of the same pitch, played two or three times on a single string, representing consecutive 2-4 minor third interval slides. (Li, S., 2018)



Figure 2 Significant amount of continuous upward portamento in the "Hanjiang Rhyme" fragment

The continuous upward portamento of "La" of the score illustrates this characteristic.

2.3 The influence of Henan dialect tones on the melody of Henan traditional Guzheng music

The distinctive feature of Henan Guzheng music lies in its rich local flavor, primarily expressed through the left-hand portamento technique. In Henan dialect, words exhibit significant pitch variations, demanding smooth transitions between pitches. This is achieved through skillful portamento usage. The diverse tonal nuances of the dialect find expression in Guzheng music through various sliding techniques, prominently featured in compositions. These techniques reflect the influence of dialect tones on Henan Guzheng melodies, showcasing the evolution of dialect tones in musical development and creation in the Henan style.

Portamento techniques play a crucial role in Henan Guzheng music, closely intertwined with the tonalities of the Henan

dialect. Rooted in local musical traditions and heavily influenced by folk sources, Henan Guzheng music effectively mirrors everyday speech patterns through portamento effects. Each tonal trend in the Henan dialect finds expression in Guzheng music, preserving its unique tonal qualities.

These portamento techniques can be broadly classified into two categories: melodic and decorative. Melodic portamento forms an essential part of the melody, while decorative portamento embellishes main notes. What distinguishes portamento techniques in Henan Guzheng music are their abundance, encompassing almost every word, the combination of upward and downward portamento, and the varied forms such as vibrato-enhanced or combined with vibrato. Additionally, fast portamento speeds, frequent usage within minor third intervals, and the repetition of the same portamento multiple times are distinctive characteristics of Henan Guzheng music's portamento techniques.



Figure 3 Significant amount of decorative portamento in "Chen Xingyuan Hefan" fragment

The musical score above illustrates a piece.
large number of decorative portamento in the

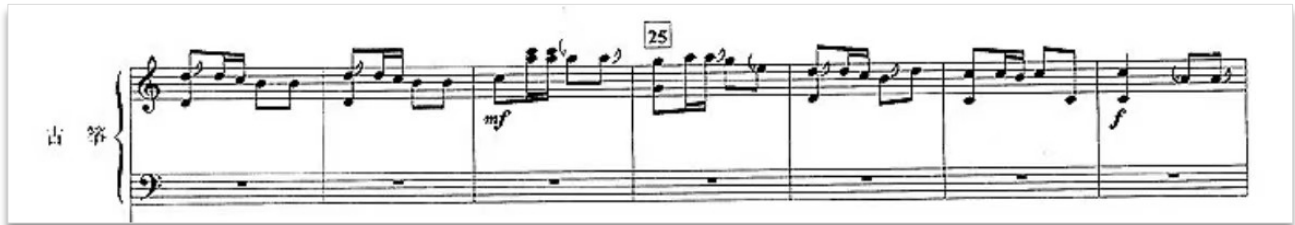


Figure 4 Significant amount of melodic portamento in "Hanjiang Rhythm" fragment

From the musical score above, it can be observed that in the Henan Guzheng piece "Hanjiang Rhythm," almost every note is accompanied by a portamento, indicating a significant number of melodic portamento throughout the piece.

Henan dialect also have an important influence on the adaptation and creation of Guzheng music style works. Mr. Cao Dongfu, a pioneer of the Henan Guzheng genre, significantly contributed to its establishment by composing numerous pieces and publishing the influential "Cao Dongfu Guzheng Collection." His works, rooted in Dadio-tune melodies and adapted Bantou-tune melodies, are exemplary of the Henan Guzheng style. Among his creations, "Lantern Festival" stands out as a masterpiece, embodying the essence of Henan

local music with innovative techniques. This vibrant piece captures the spirit of the Lantern Festival, employing simultaneous hand techniques, thus enriching Guzheng performance methods and pushing the genre to new heights.

The influence of Henan Guzheng music extends deeply, evident in modern compositions like Qiao Jinwen's "Hanjiang Rhythm" and Ren Qingzhi's "Xingfu Qu", which embody the Henan style. Additionally, works such as "Wang Gu Xiang" by Mr. Wang Zhongshan draw inspiration from Henan dialect, local music, and opera elements. Continuous refinement has elevated Henan Guzheng music, with its growing repertoire rooted in the fertile soil of Henan's local music and the simplicity of its dialect.

3. Composition

Henan Province is located in the inland plains of China and has long been dominated by agriculture. Thanks to its geographical

conditions, agriculture has been relatively developed since ancient times, leading to a self-sufficient lifestyle. This lifestyle has shaped the

character of the people of Henan to be optimistic, simple, honest, straightforward, bold and hearty. The music style of Henan Guzheng music also shares these characteristics. It exhibits a wide range of emotions, with fluctuations in mood, bold and vigorous tones, bright and impassioned melodies, as well as a robust and simple texture, resonating with strength and power.

3.1 Melodic characteristics

The melodic characteristics of Henan Guzheng music often employ the G major scale, typically in a 2/4 time signature, with the primary use of the pentatonic scale, mainly in the Mixolydian mode. Key tones include "Fa" and "Si," highlighting the Lydian mode, with emphasis on tonic, subdominant, and dominant tones as backbone elements. Melodic development throughout the piece revolves around these backbone tones, with melodies featuring large leaps of fourths, fifths, and sixths, accompanied by frequent use of major seconds and minor thirds in portamento, conveying a

robust and powerful feeling. Overall, the melodies are characterized by strong melodiousness and a rich, sincere performance style. While the tempo remains generally consistent, there are notable contrasts in beat emphasis, and the melody undergoes significant variations.

In Henan Guzheng music, melodies are centered around the tonic, subdominant, and dominant as backbone tones, often concluding with leaps or stepwise progressions between these elements. Among the various Henan Guzheng pieces, melodies can be categorized into two main themes:

The first type primarily expresses emotions of sadness, melancholy, and bitterness. These melodies typically begin on the subdominant note, progress to the dominant, repeat the same note, and frequently return to the subdominant, with the piece often concluding on the tonic note. An example of this can be found in the opening of "Chen Xingyuan and Fan."



Figure 5 "Chen Xingyuan and Fan" begin on the subdominant note, progress to the dominant, repeat the same note and return to the subdominant, concluding on the tonic note

The second type of melodies predominantly evoke feelings of joy, brightness, and positivity. These pieces can be further

classified into three types based on their starting notes: starting on the dominant, tonic, or supertonic.



Figure 6 Fragment of "Hundred Birds Pay Attendance to the Phoenix" Starting on the dominant



Figure 7 Fragment of "Lantern Festival" Starting on the tonic



Figure 8 Fragment of "Mountains and Flowing Waters" Starting on the supertonic

3.2 Theme and structure

Most compositions in Henan Guzheng music are built around one or more central themes, employing techniques like repetition, variation, and extension. As a result, the theme serves as the fundamental essence of Guzheng music, with varying utilization rates among different themes, indicating hierarchical distinctions. There are three categories based on the number of themes used. "Single Theme Category" is derived from a single theme, compositions in this category maintain the same or similar theme throughout the piece. While

each piece may have different titles, melodic lines, and structural forms, they exhibit a uniform theme without emphasizing contrast. "Multiple Theme Category" is developed from two or more themes, compositions in this category combine or compose sets of themes. Each theme and its sections display contrasts, typically in a single or double-section structure. Examples include "Su Wu Thinking of Home" and "Wild Geese Flying." "Miscellaneous Category" is lacking typifies features, the compositions in this category feature themes used only in a single Guzheng music piece. Each piece has its unique

theme and appearance, with structures ranging from monothematic to multiple sections with sets of themes. Examples include "Slow Recitation" and "Imperial Bell". (Liang, H., 2019)

The thematic characteristics of Henan Guzheng music align with the general style of Henan music in terms of mode, pitch, and melody. The dominance of the Gong mode in Henan Guzheng music reflects the general style of Henan music. From a regional color perspective, themes can be roughly categorized

4. Playing techniques

The designation of Henan Guzheng as a top genre is inseparable from its unique expression of tone color and the application of techniques. In Henan Guzheng music, there is an emphasis on using the thumb and middle finger of the right hand, while the left hand employs techniques such as pressing, trembling, portamento, and kneading to complement the sound with rhythm.

4.1 Right-handed playing techniques

When playing the right-hand techniques of the Henan Guzheng genre, the ring finger and pinky finger need to be anchored first (acting as a pivot resting on the strings). Then, the large joint of the thumb and wrist is used, coordinated with the movement of the arm, to perform the distinctive techniques of the Henan Guzheng genre, such as "datuo pi" (big support and split), "duan yao" (short shake), and "you

into Gong and Zhi modes and Jue and Gong modes. The former incorporates Southern style with local Henan characteristics, while the latter, like the Jue Gong mode, features jumps with partial deviation and characteristic pitch. The bright and vibrant nature of the Zhi and Gong notes allows for the expression of both sorrowful and joyful emotions, while the subdued Shang note tends to convey somber and melancholic feelings. (Ou, H. and Yao, T., 2016)

yao" (floating shake).

"Datuo pi": In the Henan Guzheng genre, "datuo pi" differs from the "xiaotuo pi" of the Shandong Guzheng. It involves the large joint of the thumb for a forward and backward motion, emphasizing a strong force and focusing the sound. When playing, the thumb first supports and then strikes. The thumb strikes close to the adjacent string, followed by a strike using inertia. This technique produces a strong sound with great penetration. (Liu, H., 2017)

"Duan yao": This technique mainly involves the wrist as the driving force for rapid successive "datuo pi" movements of the thumb. The sequence of finger movements is to support first and then strike. It is characterized by heavy tones, high density, strong continuity, and a powerful musical effect. The thumb shake in Henan Guzheng music is always accompanied

by techniques like "rou, chan, an, hua" (pressing, trilling, pressing, sliding) of the left hand, creating a seamless musical phrase and pushing the melody to a climax.

"You yao": This involves starting from near the bridge and gradually moving toward the Yue Mountain (far from the bridge), resulting in a gradual increase in brightness and a dynamic change from soft to strong. While the left hand slides and trembles during string pressing, the sliding interval is a minor third in the descending range, used to express the melancholic tone of the Guzheng music. Additionally, because clarity in pronunciation is emphasized in "Dadiao-tune", emphasizing the beginning of the sound during shaking is important. This technique was initially created by Mr. Cao Dongfu. (Song, T., 2011)

"Ti zhi": Named after the technique where the middle finger, with a false nail, strikes outward. In the past, performers wore metal false nails that were placed on top of their natural nails, making it more convenient to strike outward than inward, resulting in a powerful and resonant sound. This is a unique technique of the Henan Guzheng, created by Mr. Cao Dongfu. However, today, due to changes in false nail wearing methods from external to internal placement on the fingertip, it is cumbersome to perform this technique and the sound produced is not as loud as before. Therefore, this technique is rarely used

nowadays.

"Jia tan": This involves using two fingers to press the strings with a certain pressure before producing sound. The ring finger anchors on the string, and the thumb performs continuous "Datuo pi" or the thumb and middle finger simultaneously play octaves. During performance, special attention should be paid to prevent the thumb joint from collapsing and the second joint of the middle finger from stiffening. The sound produced by "jia tan" is penetrating and powerful, with strong penetration whether in the high or low register.

4.2 Left-handed playing techniques

"Supplementing sound with rhyme" is a major characteristic of Chinese traditional musical instruments, with the Guzheng particularly excelling in this aspect. While the right hand plucks the strings to play the melody, known as the "sound," the left hand enhances the musical flavor through techniques like "rou, an, hua, chan" (pressing, portamento, shaking, trilling), which represent the "rhyme." Using these left-hand techniques to enhance the musical flavor increases the artistic expression of the music, making the piece more captivating and resonant with the audience's emotions. The Henan Guzheng genre's music fully exploits this characteristic.

"Trill": The small trill involves rapidly and repeatedly plucking the vibrating string with the left hand, using the movement of the forearm

to produce a trembling effect. The amplitude of the tremor is small but the frequency is fast, used to express deep sorrow and melancholy emotions, evoking a strong sense of empathy.

"Vibrato": The large vibrato is another technique similar to the small trill, with a larger amplitude usually spanning a major second or a minor third. During performance, it's important to maintain a balance between the tension and relaxation of the arm and wrist. This technique is often used to express intensified or heightened emotional passages.

"Portamento up": In the Henan Guzheng genre, portamento up are performed at a fast pace without transitional notes, producing a direct and decisive feeling. The pitch changes not only by a major second but also frequently by a minor third, such as from "jue" to "zhi" or from "yu" to "gong". It requires fast finger movements to create a rapid change in pitch for decorative effect.

"Portamento down": Henan Guzheng music features a large number of portamento

down, similar to portamento down but lacking transitional notes, reflecting the straightforward, rugged, and unrestrained character of the Henan people.

"Pluck and Trill Interlude": This is a special technique that alternates with the right-hand octaves. After plucking the string with the right thumb, the left hand presses the string once, followed by the middle finger hooking the string and the left hand trilling the string again using the residual sound from the right thumb's pluck, creating a fluctuating melody. This technique utilizes the residual sound or harmonics produced by the strings, playing an important role in highlighting the characteristics of Henan local music.

"Fast Sliding": During performance, the left hand fingers first press the string to the desired pitch, then release slightly to lower it by a minor second, and quickly slide back to the original pitch within a short time frame. This technique highlights the local style of Henan music and is frequently used in compositions.

Conclusions and Discussion

1. Conclusions

1.1 The "Bantou-tune" and "Paizi-tune" are vital elements of traditional Henan Guzheng music, originating from the broader "Dadiao-tune" repertoire.

Initially part of "Dadiao-tune"

compositions, these tunes gained popularity in regions like Nanyang and Kaifeng. Henan "Bantou-tune" Guzheng music can be classified based on musical content and structural patterns. It features diverse themes and is

structurally divided into slow, medium, and fast-paced compositions. Over time, "Bantou-tune" became preludes or interludes in "Dadiao-tune" performances, enriching ambiance, and tuning techniques. Common instruments for ensemble performances include Sanxian, Guzheng, and Pipa. While ensemble playing is fundamental, each instrument allows for flexible ornamentation. Representative pieces include "High Mountains and Flowing Water," "Chen Xingyuan and Fan," "Ascending Stairs," "Descending Stairs," "Universal Harmony," "New Opening," "Wild Geese," "Enjoying Autumn," and "Maiden's Lament."

"Paizi-tune" music revolves around specific musical phrases linked in a series. Within the context of "Dadiao-tune" compositions, Guzheng utilizes various types of tunes, including Guzi miscellaneous tunes, Xiaokun tunes, and less frequently used tunes. Guzi miscellaneous tunes are known for their simplicity and ease of learning, while Xiaokun tunes feature concise structures and alternating long and short phrases, aiding transmission. Less frequently used tunes, adapted from instrumental music, are relatively rare in "Dadiao-tune" compositions. Most "Paizi-tune" music follows a 2/4 beat rhythm, each showcasing unique themes and characteristics through different rhythm combinations. Tonally, Henan Guzheng music employs a pentatonic scale with minimal accidentals. Representative

pieces include "Shearing Flowers," "Nan Niu Silk," "Little Peach Blossom," and "Weiduo."

1.2 Music can reflect the characteristics of language by imitating the changes and movements of language tones.

In music composition and performance, techniques such as scales, melody variations, rhythm, and arrangement of notes are often employed to mimic the intonation of language. In the creative process of Han ethnic music, the methods of "composing according to words" and "intonation changes with words" are significant aspects. Music is closely related to dialects, typically spreading in areas where dialects are prevalent. In Henan dialect, the yinping, yangping, and qu tones correspond to the first, second, and fourth tones respectively, with changes in pitch forming complete pronunciation. In Henan Guzheng genre, the transition of these tones is demonstrated through the technique of left-hand portamento. Portamento is extensively utilized in Guzheng music, playing a crucial role in expressing the melody. The trajectory of pronunciation for each word in Henan dialect is reflected through portamento effects in Guzheng music, allowing Henan Guzheng music to authentically reproduce the flavor and tones of dialects. The influence of Henan Guzheng music is profound, with many contemporary pieces showcasing the Henan style, such as Qiao Jinwen's "Han River Melody," Ren Qingzhi's "Happiness Canal," and

"New Opening," among others. Works like Mr. Wang Zhongshan's "Looking Back at Hometown" are created based on Henan dialect, local music, and theatrical elements.

1.3 The music style of Henan Guzheng reflects the character traits of Henan people - simple, straightforward, and hearty.

It embodies varied emotions with melodies that are vigorous, bright, and lively, yet also carries a robust and forceful tone. Typically tuned in G, with a rhythm of 2/4 beats, it primarily utilizes the pentatonic scale, often featuring large jumps and portamento, conveying a rugged and powerful sensation while maintaining a rich and simple melody. Though rhythm changes are minimal, there's a clear contrast in beat emphasis, with significant variations in melody. Henan Guzheng compositions usually revolve around one or more themes, employing repetition, variation, and extension techniques. Themes play a crucial role, categorizing compositions into single-theme, multi-theme, and miscellaneous categories based on their usage.

1.4 The reason why Henan Guzheng

music is considered a top genre lies in its unique expression of tone color and the application of techniques.

When playing Henan Guzheng pieces, the right hand technique requires initially using the ring finger and pinky as anchoring points, relying on them to rest on the strings. Then, utilizing the knuckle of the thumb and wrist, coordinated movements with the arm are employed to perform the unique techniques of Henan Guzheng genre, such as "datuo pi," "duanyao," "youyao," and "tizhi." An important characteristic of Chinese traditional instruments is the use of "yun" (rhythm) to complement "sheng" (sound), and the Guzheng particularly excels in this aspect. While the right hand plucks the strings to produce sound, the left hand enhances the musical flavor through techniques like kneading, pressing, portamento, and vibrato, known as "yun." Henan Guzheng compositions fully demonstrate this characteristic by employing techniques such as small vibrato, large vibrato, upward portamento, downward portamento, kneading interludes, and rapid portamento with the left hand.

2. Discussions

2.1 From the perspective of ethnomusicology, the Henan Guzheng genre indeed shares a close connection with the Henan "Dadiao-tune" compositions, evident not only in their musical styles and performance

forms but also in their historical roots and cultural heritage. Therefore, the "Bantou-tune" and "Paizi-tune" in the traditional repertoire of the Henan Guzheng genre can be seen as extensions and developments of the Henan

"Dadiao-tune" compositions. They carry the rich folk music traditions of the Henan region and reflect the characteristics and styles of the Henan Guzheng genre in musical expression and performance techniques. This close connection promotes the mutual development of the Henan Guzheng genre and Henan "Dadiao-tune" compositions, enriching the cultural connotations of Chinese folk music.

2.2 From the perspective of cultural ecology, the musical styles of each region reflect its specific cultural environment and social background, which in turn are influenced by various factors such as regional culture, language, and folk customs. As a form of expression originating from local music in Henan, Henan Guzheng music is deeply influenced by the local dialect. Henan dialect has unique tones and phonetic features, which are reflected in Henan Guzheng music. For example, the use of left-hand portamento techniques to create resonance can mimic the tonal characteristics of dialects, giving the Guzheng music a more localized flavor. The strong local style of Henan Guzheng music is rooted in the Henan dialect, and the essence of dialect phonetics continues to drive the innovation and development of Henan Guzheng music. This regional diversity in musical styles not only reflects the diversity of cultures in different regions but also enriches the artistic forms of traditional Han Guzheng music, making

it an indispensable part of Chinese musical culture.

2.3 Henan Guzheng music, influenced by its geographical and historical environment, reflects the attitudes and emotional characteristics of the people of Henan. With agriculture as its long-standing backbone, Henan province has fostered a self-sufficient lifestyle, shaping the forthright and hearty character of its inhabitants. The music of Henan Guzheng is marked by its varied melodies and rich emotions, exuding a passionate and unrestrained aura that embodies the warmth and sentiments of the people of Henan. This musical style is closely intertwined with the natural environment, agricultural lifestyle, and character traits of the region, serving as an integral part of Henan culture and a genuine reflection of its attitudes towards life and emotions.

2.4 The Henan Guzheng genre is renowned for its unique playing techniques. Among them, the right-hand techniques mainly involve the use of the index and middle fingers, which are responsible for plucking the strings and controlling the dynamics and volume of the notes. Left-hand techniques include pressing, vibrato, portamento, and kneading, among others, generating rich tonal effects through various finger movements. The application of these techniques endows Henan Guzheng music with distinctive timbres and expressive

power, thus imparting greater richness and depth to the performance pieces' artistic

significance.

3. Recommendations

Suggestions for future research:

3.1 There should be a continued effort to explore the unique regional characteristics and cultural significance of Henan Guzheng music. This is crucial for its preservation and evolution, showcasing its cultural and artistic value in the modern era.

3.2 There should be an increase in the production of contemporary Henan Guzheng

pieces to enhance the repertoire of this genre and broaden its reach and impact. In the face of rapid globalization, Guzheng music is evolving with new trends. While creating new works, it's important to maintain the traditional artistic traits and styles of Henan Guzheng music, while also innovating to cater to the tastes of modern audiences.

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