

**Sun Xiaohui**

## **The Intentions of Zhang Zhidong and Tan Sitong’s Guqin Philosophy (Chinese Zither) as Well as the Political Preferences behind**

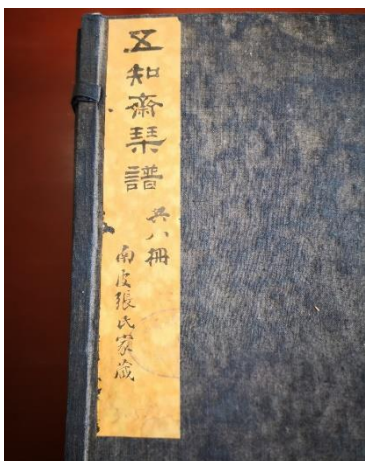


Fig.1 The Guqin score found in Wuhan Conservatory of Music— “The personal collection of Zhang’s in Nanpi county”, *Wuzhi Zhai* (五知齋, Wuzhi House) score

**Abstract:** This article begins with the Guqin score “The personal collection of Zhang’s in Nanpi county” once belonged to Zhang Zhidong which is now carefully stored in the library of Wuhan Conservatory of Music, it presented the music philosophy passes down in Zhang’s family and his relationships with his masters. Ji Xiaolan have gifted a treasuries Guqin of Li Qingzhao’s who lived in the Song Dynasty, this Guqin was then in the hand of Zhang’s maternal grandfather Jiang Ce. Zhang’s mother, a woman goes by the name Zhu was good at practicing. Zhang practiced the art of Guqin with a master in the field— Huang Mianzhi and who was crafty at making Guqin himself. As for Tan Sitong, his knowledge on Guqin all originated from Liuyang Guqin Style and was heavily influenced by its philosophy—all knowledges must be useful for the betterment of nation. He studied after Liu Renxi and Tang Shoutian, there are two Guqin last till this day made by Tan named “thunder echo” (Can Lei) and “thunder burst” (Beng Ting). Tan Sitong had a different philosophy than Zhang Zhidong, he believed that the core value of bourgeois should be “To base on the form of ether then implement on love.” Whereas Zhang hold a stream of Guqin value that stress on peaceful mentality which enables him to reconcile the old and new forces in late Qing Dynasty. In contrast, Tan’s life is much like the magnificent tragic rhythm of Guangling Verse (an ancient Chinese verse).

**Keywords:** Zhang Zhidong, Huang Mianzhi, Tan Sitong, Liu Renxi, Guqin production, The philosophy of form and Metaphysics

**INTRODUCTION:** It all begins with the Quqin score found in Wuhan Conservatory of Music—“The personal collection of Zhang’s in Nanpi county.”

When I was in Wuhan Conservatory of Music looking for special ancient books I found “The personal collection of Zhang’s in Nanpi county”, *Wuzhi Zhai* (五知齋, Wuzhi House)<sup>1</sup> hand written by Zhang Zhidong, there are eight books in the whole series, the books are covered in elegant blue wooden cover

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<sup>1</sup> Five representative music scores of Guangling School: Chengjiantang Music Score, *Wuzhi Zhai* Music Score, Jiaoan Music Score, Dead Wood Zen Music Score, and Ziyuantang Music Score.

and their titles were written on yellow book notes . The author is the master of Gangling Style Guqin—Xuqi, who have been around places and visited masters of other styles such as Jinling (nowadays Nanking), Yushan and Shu (nowadays Sichuan Province) and have took the essence of each schools into this book in year 1721, the 60<sup>th</sup> year of reign under Emperor Kangxi of Qing Dynasty, the book was known to be the masterpiece and most influential score of Ganglion style music. The score was so popular and influential that “every Quqin musician has one”. From the notes and circles made on Zhang’s copy we could know that he had valued this book as well.

Was Zhang a Guqin musician? What story does Zhang and Guangling style Guqin unfold? How many scholars practice the art of Guqin in late Qing Dynasty and what influence did it bring to their social accomplishments and behaviors? What does the scholars present through Guqin their music preference and political preferences?

### **ZHANG ZHIDONG’S INHERITANCE OF GUQIN AND THE INTENTIONS OF MAKING THEM**

Zhang’s maternal grandfather passed down his collection of Li Qingzhao’s (the famous female poet from Song Dynasty) Guqin. Zhang Zhidong (from 1837 to 1909), born and raised in Nanpi (located in nowadays Hebei Province) was an important high-ranking official of late Qing Dynasty trusted by the royalty and one of the representations of Westernization, his styled name was Xiaoda, Xiangtao and Xiangyan, he also styled himself in the title of Mister Yi and Hermit Wujing (the man of no desire) and Baobing (the man who embraces ice) in his senior years. His great grandfather Zhang Yixiong was the county magistrate of Yin county, Zhejiang province and his paternal grandfather transcribed books in the department of the great library (Siku Guan) later he was awarded the title of The Jianchangyan Ambassador of Fujian province Zhangpu county, then later filled the spot of county magistrate in Gutian county. Zhang Zhidong’s father Zhang Ying grew up in a poor family without much relatives, he devoted himself in school to become an official in the imperial court, he made his name during his magistrature of Anhua county then was moved to Guizhou province to be the magistrate of Guizhu, Weining county and then promoted in Guizho, after that he became a higher-ranking magistrate of Xingyi prefecture under the ministration of Guidong Route (located in nowadays Guizhou Province). Zhang Ying have managed to ask two grate masters of Confucianism—Han Chao and Hu Linyi with mindful respect to teach his son “the wisdoms passed down form Qianlong and Jiajing

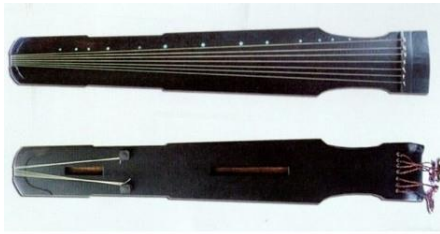


Fig.2 Liqingzhao's Guqin, passed down to Zhang Zhidong from his maternal grandfather, this piece is now stored in Nanfeng Guqin Art Museum in Yangzhou.

periods” then bought ten full cases of books for Zhang Zhidong and ordered him to “read after class with individual thoughts.”

Zhang Zhidong passed the provincial civil service examination under the old Chinese examination system in his youthful years, then he moved to Beijing and lived with his maternal grandfather (father of his step mother to be exact) Jiang Ce (Yi Yingtao, 1995: 8). Ji Xiaolan was a great scholar of Qing Dynasty and he had a famous Guqin under his name—the Guqin was made with marvelous craft and was ordered especially by epigraphy master Zhao Mingchen for his legendary wife—the famous female poet of Song Dynasty, Li Qingzhao.<sup>1</sup> Ji later gifted this Guqin to Jiang Ce who later passed it down to Zhang Zhidong. Now the masterpiece is collected in the Nanfeng art museum in Yangzhou which was founded by Ma Weiheng. The Guqin is of Zhongni style with snake skin inside cavity and cursive top shaped like mountains, the bottom surface has cracks shaped like running water and cow hair, the masterpiece was shaped with elegant curves as well.<sup>2</sup> It was said that the instrument was bought from family Feng in Sichuan province in 2006.

The emotional memories of mother and the sound she made while existing the room with beaded curtains. Zhang Zhidong was born in the magistrate mansion of Xingyi prefecture, Guizhou province in September 2, 1837. His mother was the daughter of the magistrate of Zhili province (nowadays Hebei province) and Qiongzhou, Sichuan province. Zhu Shaoen. Zhang Zhidong's mother is good at Guqin, her mother's talents in Guqin have affected Zhang dearly. Zhang was four years old (1840, the 20th year of reign under Emperor Daoguang) when he lost his mother to illness. After that he was raised by one of his father's concubine Wei Zhixiang who treated him as one of her own. Zhang's mother left him two Guqin, during the 46 years he spent as an official, he had carried those two Guqin wherever he goes till the day he died. He wrote a poem that goes “woke up from the dream, only realizing I was drawn in tears. Two Guqin is resting in fancy fabrics without practice. Those laughs I made while I was young is fading as if it's memories from my last life, where can I find the days where mother left the room with the echoing sound of beads plunging pillar” (Hu Xiaoman, 2002: 2-3)?

Zhang Zhidong's Guqin education—learned after Huang Mianzhi. Zhang Zhidong learned to practice the art of Guqin during the 11 years spent in

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<sup>1</sup> Family Ji and Family Zhang of Nanpi have a marriage relationship. *Notes of Yuewei Thatched Cottage* records, “there are dozens of girls from Family Ji who have married to sons of Family Zhang, and those from Zhang to Ji were almost the same in number.”

<sup>2</sup> Zhao Jun. Li Qingzhao's Zither Appears in Guangzhou? *Yangzhou Evening News*, 2012-04-12.

Beijing where he won the first place in provincial imperial examination at the age of 15 and won the third place in national imperial examination at 26. He mainly resides in the city during that time. He was 16 (1852, the second year of reign under emperor Xianfeng) when he attended and won the provincial imperial examination back to his hometown, Shuntian prefecture of Zhili province, he made his name and talent recognized in the country because of that. On the fifth year of Emperor Xianfeng's reign (1855) he was 19 years old and his father wiped off Miao minority's peasant rebellion led by Yang Feng. That fall Zhang and his wife said farewell to his father and went for national exam in Beijing taking Sihuan and Shaanxi route. On March, 1856, the sixth year of Emperor Xianfeng's reign, Zhang was 20 years old and took the exam in the ministry of manner and became the scholar of royal palace to teach princes. He was 26 when he made it to the central examination then won the third place among competitors throughout the nation, he was granted the honor to become a scholar by the royal court afterwards.

Zhang learned to play Guqin during emperor Xianfeng's reign in Beijing with Huang Mianzhi (from 1853 to 1919) who happens to be a Guqin teacher in the city (Wang Feng, 2016: 155). Huang was buried right next to Zhang's memorial hall in Taoran pavilion, Beijing, a grand gesture to show the deep connection they share as teacher and student.

Huang Mianzhi is a master of Guqin from late Qing Dynasty and was believed to have managed the essence of Guangling style music. He had devoted himself in Buddhism and became a monk for a while and practiced buddhist script with Shi Kongchen. It is also believed that he learnt to play Guqin with Mr. Tao Menglan of Xiaoshan. Huang often claims himself to have mastered the essence of Guangling style music and founded a music salon to promote the authenticity of Gangling music. Members of student in his Jinling Music Salon includes Yang Zongji (who later created Jiuyi style and passed it down to his students such as Guan Pinghu, Yang Baoyuan and Peng Zhiqin), Zhang Zhidong, Fu Dong, Ye Shimeng (also known as Fuyinnibu and passed down knowledge to his student Gao Luopei), Jiao Kuofeng (who also passed down to his student Yue Ying), Shi Mengmei, Li Ji, Gui Baizhu and so on, all those person were happened to be in Beijing at that time. Huang have also gotten closer with important figures such as Zhang Baixi, Wang Shunan, Yan Xishan and Feng she. That is to say when Yang Zongji and Yeshimeng were studying with Huang Mianzhi, they were classmates with Zhang Zhidong. Yang Zongji learnt 20 verses doing his apprentice with Huang from 1905 to



Fig.3 Mr. Huang Mianzhi: Zhang Zhidong's Guqin teacher

1907, he had gotten education only from Huang and was the key note of contemporary Guqin performance and research.

There are three important historical findings in regards to Huang Mianzhi, the first one being “the tombstone of my Guqin teacher Huang Mianzhi” written by Wang Shunan (Jinqin), the second one was the biography edited by Yang Zongji named “My teacher Huang Mianzhi” and the last one is called “the story of Guqin from Mr. Yang Shibai of Jiuyi Mountain” written by Li Boren. There are also hand scripts named “In Memory of Listening to Music (1 to 4)” which mentioned Huang in script number two that says “I tried to find a better teacher traveling with boat to places yet there is hardly anyone better than Huang Mianzhi. The seven strings of Guqin makes brilliant rhythms as if our magnificent master is still with us from heaven.”

The rubbings of “the tombstone of my Guqin teacher Huang Mianzhi” is placed in the library of Music Department in Chinese National Academy of Art, on the rubbings it says: “I have no idea who Huang Mianzhi is other than he is a Guqin teacher. His original family name might have been Tong before he fled to a buddhist temple somewhere in Jinling (nowadays Nanking) after breaking the law, later he was being falsely charged of crime then changed his name completely and quit being a monk. However, he himself claims that he became a monk because he wanted to learn how to play Guqin with a monk who only pass down his music knowledge to people of his kind—a monk. After he had learnt everything from his master, he quit serving Buddha and came to be normal all over again. No one knows what exactly happened to him. Everyone who lived in Beijing believed what Huang Mianzhi had claimed no matter they know him personally or not.... Huang Mianzhi deceased from illness in Yulu, Xuannan at the age of 66 on January 28th, the year of Yiji (1919), lunar calendar.

In the article Li Boren wrote to commemorate his teacher called “the story of Guqin from Mr. Yang Shibai of Jiuyi Mountain” he stressed that Huang learnt to play Guqin under the guidance of Tao Menglan who lived in Xiaoshan, and denied he was the student of Monk Kumu of Guangling because his fingering is significantly different from another student of Monk Kumu—Monk Qigu. “Mr. Mianzhi was from Jinling and started to practice Guqin under Tao Menglan of Xiaoshan. The tombstone made by Wang Jinxing had noted that our teacher was the student of Monk Kumu, which is not true. The monk is still alive so is his music scores, I have heard his student monk Qigu play and it was completely different from the way our teacher play. There are three

people who studied together with our teacher, one is a monk from Tiantai, one is a Taizhou man<sup>1</sup> whose last name is “Jiang”<sup>2</sup> and the last one is a woman with a second name “Tao”<sup>3</sup>. I accidentally run into a swordsman who gives himself a name called “Yiyuanzi”, he is a man of talent, determination and will who is willing to achieve his goal and have a comprehensive understanding about Guqin, I have learnt a lot from him thanks to his openness and genuineness. He acquired more in his practice in Guqin, it benefited his sword performance as well. His masculine figuring also has some soft touches that come out conservative and bold at the same time, the sound of notes he plays strike your very soul that even short verses sounds epic. There are eighteen people in total who studied the art of Guqin under him and only hermits could get the essence of his wisdom. Huang to Guqin is like Zhuangzi to Daoism, or to say he is as important as Sima Qian and Han Ban to literature.”<sup>4</sup>

The most important student of Huang’s is Yang Zongshe, he wrote “The Biography of Huang Mianzhi, The Guqin Master” in which Huang’s educational concept, master status and educational back-grounds were explained, the book also presented brilliant talent of Huang’s in both swords play and Guqin practice as well as his legendary life story vividly. Huang had taught hundreds of students in his decade long duration in Beijing and claimed himself to have founded the most authentic Guqin Academy of Guangling Style music, it was said that his music performance was “the best in hundreds of miles, the brilliance and poshness in his music is another level, completely different from the mediocre bunch.” It means he had learnt his skills from a monk in Guangling apart from studying after Mr. Tao Menglan of Xiaoshan.

“Huang Minzhi is one of a kind, he speaks loudly and clearly with a Nanking accent. He has a very lean figure and not physically attractive, his eyes are small yet full of life. He walks as a gentleman yet take sudden turns without hesitation, left only wind fall behind is motions. He rarely says a word and when he does the words are eclectic, even in a room filled with people he could manage to talk as if he was all by himself. He can sit in the position of padmāsana a whole day without even moving, his knees are of different length as well. He always holds a straight posture even

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<sup>1</sup> The character ONE (一) was left out before the four characters *JI XIAN SHENG YE* (即先生也).

<sup>2</sup> The entry of “Tao Menglan” in the *Biography of Zither Players of All Dynasties (Qing Dynasty & Republic of China)* is entitled as “Jiang Qing of Taizhou.”

<sup>3</sup> Maid Tao was Tao Menglan’s daughter. The entry of “Tao Menglan” in the *Biography of Zither Players of All Dynasties (Qing Dynasty & Republic of China)* tells that “his daughter was engaged in his craft throughout her life.”

<sup>4</sup> Huang He. *Research on Li Biren, a Guqin Player of Hunan Province*. It was a master’s thesis of Hunan Normal University in 2012, Notes 7-8 being added by the author, pp. 32-34.

when he was ill, he kept his head up straight whenever he walks, sits or stands. He didn't read much about Confucianism yet have detailed knowledges about Buddhist regulations. His words are inspiring and philosophical as if being inspired by Buddhism. He seems to have done some research on Taoism as well. He said to have practiced the art of swords at the age of twenty then quit after a few years. As dorky as he might seem, Huang impresses others with his sharpness when arguing with people which doesn't last long nor happens frequently. He moves swiftly and it was said not more than hundreds of people could win a fight against him nationwide. As for Guqin, he devoted himself mainly on the practice of figuring techniques. He has quite an unique style and technique of Yin Nao (figuring in which the artist press the string and shift back and forth) that variate into hundreds of different figurings on both hands, every single one of them are marvelous in a sense. If one were to apply those techniques on ancient notes the music would be of unique rhythm. He most values the importance of tempo which in fact differentiate his figuring techniques from one another. Different music tempo in the music he plays were mainly contrasts of different means of Yin Nao that flows under the rhythm of breath. When he lay his hands on Guqin the music tempo is based on the rhythm of his breath which become faster and faster then finally calm down to a normal speed. His posture is also very important to his performance, when he sit down he barely touches the chair, hanging on the edge as if he was riding horse hunting, his body remains far from his instrument and arms in a fashion of archery position, as for his feet, they are pointing opposite directions with one foot move to the beat. His devotion to his work is other worldly, he would give full attention to adjusting strings and things of that nature. There is a very refreshing technique that he uses to make music sound bleak which he uses only when he feels extremely excited. Whenever holy spirits stop by, he would stop playing all of a sudden and when he gets in the mode, he looks like a wood barn and his spirit hold within. When he plays, he shut his human sensations and breath through his fingertips, his mouth shivers as if murmuring. He uses his right hand to pull strings back and force with only the tip like calligraphy masters control their brush, he does seem to have put much pressure on the string yet he actually hold it very deeply and the music sounds loud and solid, even Guqin that are brand new makes no disturbing noise when being played. He is a master at playing ancient notes, different layers of emotions

unveil themselves without changing a single music note, as he breath tempo flow, for us to listen to his music is as awestricken as seeing a piece of magnificent landscape scroll. I doubt the original composer could perform better if they came back to life. He has an unique teaching method as well where his student sit right opposite and try to make chord with single notes while he plays, if the student is new to Guqin then he'll pretend to play with hands in the right position and hum the note he intends to put in. This way, even the least enlightened could participate and practice. He is very energetic and passionate about teaching as well, once a class was dated between his student, he would never cancel no matter how awful weather might be like. The only time he talks to his students with strict tone was when they try to debate on how to play ancient scores— "For an artist, music come from their fingertips, not their tongue or brush tips." There are times when he would find the right rhythm to an ancient song, then he would practice nonstop for ages or even months until he gets the gist of it, and once he does the part he practices over and over is the highlight of all. His figuring varies based on different scores which is also a reflection of the craftiness of ancient masters who are not afraid of challenges. Huang have also said that practicing Guqin is not practicing for skills but for its philosophy, for those who have comprehend the depth of Guqin they use the instrument to express themselves and better themselves for the rest of their lives. Someone asked him how to achieve that level he will answer with " If you can manage to immerse your music note with the way breath, you are almost there." He didn't quite understand at that moment and the concept stuck in his head for a long time, when he think about it today he could understand how wise his words are. Scholars are very interested in how he started his artistic journey and who lead him onto the right path, some are obsessed to know how he managed to practice Yin Nao the way he does, but everyone was impressed and said" it's no doubt that he is a hard worker, no one in the world is comparable to him and even if there is it's impossible for us to know."

Huang started his "authentic Guangling Style Guqin club" with seven people and meet with grand master exemplar Liu Zhongliang when he was the provincial leader of Zhejiang, his skills are benefited from Mr. Tao Menglan of Xiaoshan, this master have Jiaowei (burnt end) Guqin under his collection, he have exams more than thousands of Guqin and nobody could compete with him in that aspect. Swordsman Yiyuanzi got the best



of his knowledge, others call him Mr. Yiyuan respectfully. He doesn't seem ordinary either, his eyes are green and shaped in square, looks like an insane old man in his eighties who only wear one layer of cloth all year round, he carries gourd with him wherever he goes and sits on the ground. He likes children and laughter fly whenever they are together, which is why there are always tens of children accompany him through his life. He arrived at Beijing only ten year ago and it was said that he has a same pattern when spending time with his friends and teachers. He meditates or receipt Buddhism scripts when he listens to fellow Guqin players practice, when they finish and ask his opinion he would only say "good" and nothing else. He would change subjects once they want discuss further. Dozens of his friends became the same once they started to hang out with him for half a year, they all find other people's performance unbearable. There are reliable stories of him being a monk somewhere in Nanking and famous for his Guqin skills in Jiangnan region, he was held under custody for something then changed his name and seek for a career as officials in Beijing. If you want to know his life stories it would be the most reliable version, if you don't believe it to be then how did we know he hadn't live a lifestyle of a hermit in the edge of mountains and became immortal, if that's so, his lifestyle and Guqin performance is nowhere to be found, not mention to pass down to later generations. We don't know much about his life stories but it is certain that he was known for his Guqin skills that are incomparably wonderful than common man. Beijing is a city filled with talents from all over the country and no one fail to express their appreciation towards his style after seeing what he does with his figuring techniques. When they learned that he passed away everyone expressed condolence and sad about their loss, it's obvious they think his unique talent is rare so they tried to pass it down on his behalf and notice them what a master he was.

They wrote a poet in appreciation that goes "there are many artists practicing Guqin in Qing Dynasty, not much masters were being appreciated in the royal court yet many free spirits living on the mountain edge. Loudong style have not yet decay and Guangling is lively, the next trend would be Pucheng (Yang Zongji, 1994: 408-415).

Huang Mianzhi's figuring technique is of Guangling style which focuses on the importance of following scores exactly as it notes, he even set standards on how many turns one should take on each YinNao, as rigid as it might seem,

it was an indication that the length of YinNao determines the tempo of verses (Ding Chengyun, 2006: 50). Monk Kongchen wrote in the autobiography “Kumu score” (the song of dead standing tree), “the elegance of Guqin performance lays in its figuring, and the brilliance of that is only written in notes. Once you practice long enough you could comprehend it and come off as a competent musician.” He had also said “think about the concept behind the music, cut down the excess and focus on core values, harmonious state of mind between you and music would appear once you managed to follow the above, remember figuring technique is the most important skill to master” Yang Zongji hold that value as well since he wrote in the book “The Art of Guqin Series—the heart of Guqin practice”—“the law of Yin is that it moves faster and Nao slower, other Nao is just like the opposite of Yin when you practice. I learned about 20 Guqin pieces, each and every single one I practice exactly as it was noted in the pieces of “The Land of the Immortals,” “Becoming immortal,” “Swan geese in fall time,” “Hujia” (a traditional Chinese instrument), “Daffodil,” “Swan geese up north,” “Xiaoxiang” (nowadays Hunan province), “Li Sao” and so on. I added some twist in scores such as “Jishan mountain,” “words of monk,” “Hermit life,” “Plum Blossom,” “Water spring passing the stone,” “Living on the edge of the mountain,” “Yi Lan” and “traveling with the immortals.” There are also some that I kept the figuring techniques as secret in scores such as “the song of the fishermen” “Desert” Yang Guan” and “The four grand landscapes”. There is no way of playing ancient Guqin scores without having ideas on how to Yin Nao, if you have practiced to play for a long time, you will get the gist of it in a year or two. Just notice that when you practice Yinnao, you hear the sound but can’t see the motion.” The biography “Guqin Teacher Huang Mianzhi” is a more direct research finding on how Huang combined tempo with Yinnao. Its goes “Huang is especially talented in Guqin performance, his fingering technique is basically focused on Yinnao that has a certain fixed routine. There are around hundreds of variations of Yinnao, he is an expert in each and one of them. Using his technique to play ancient Guqin pieces is like listening to the real spirit of the piece and he have got quite a unique tempo as well. Speaking of which, he values tempo a ton and differentiate each Yinnao techniques with tempo. The rhythm of the music flow from his Yinnao technique and it changes according to the tempo he plays which is solely determined by how long each breath he took.” Such educational method has Yang Zongshe said “it was the same as having classes on Confucianism masterpieces, hints on gesture as well



Fig.4 Guqin made by Zhang Zhidong—"The Sound of the Bleak Spring"

as time span of each Yinnao is notified on the right-hand side of the score." In his book "The mirror of Guqin", Huang have created a popular method of noting "Gong Che" to read scores, "setting tempo" to follow the rhythm of music and "chord" to practice music sensitivity.

Zhuang Zhidong was taught with real essence of Guangling style music from Huang Mianzhi and learned "The Score of Wuzhizhai" from him. There are assistants of his who are also good at Guqin performance, one of them is named Zhu Qilian (father of Zhu Zhixin) who wrote a Guqin score series called "Understanding of Guqin passed in Mr. E's memorial" that contains his understandings of Guqin rhythms from general to depth, the correlations of each character in Xuangong chart, a remastered version of "Sorrows from ancient times" as well as The Twelve Rhythmic Charts. There also four sets in his book with two scores of "Huizhao" (as draft) included.

Zhang zhidong making guqin Not only was Zhang good at practicing Guqin, he was also known for making them. He have made around a hundred of them and one of the master pieces he made preserved in good condition is the one he made in Guangxu period of Qing Dynasty, its name "the sound of bleak springs", the piece is of Zhongni style, 121.3 in length and height as 5 centimeters, the widths are 17.5 on the front part, 18.4 on its middle part and 13.5 on the end part. Both its top and bottom are made in paints of dark chestnut color, no trice of crack could be seen. The Guqin's body part and tuning pegs are made in paulownia and incorporated yellow pear wood in parts such as Goose Feed, Mount Yue, Dragon Pond, Ceremonial Cap and Bottom Surface. There are 21 characters carved on the bottom and two sides of the Dragon pounds that translate into "Huanggong made in Ghengyin year of Guangxu period under the name of Hermit Wujing with customized materials being used" and "The sound of bleak spring" was engraved on the Peg Pond in seal font, "The second" is carved down below in running script. A rectangle seal was under Dragon Pond that reads" Guang Ya Hall" as well as his self-named title "Hermit Wujing." It was one of the hundred Guqin he made that spreads all over China. He befriended Wang Xianxjang in the year of Jiawu, late spring who mentioned another Guqin Zhang made in his book "My journey of Guqin appreciation in Jinling" that goes "There is a Guqin under Mr. lee's collection that have similar features on the body part and seals, only it was named 'living simple with goals' engraved and 'the seventh' written on the lower right side with regular script in small font" (Taipei Municipal Orchestra, 2000: 188).

## **THE EDUCATION TAN SITONG RECEIVED ON GUQIN AND THE GUQIN HE MADE**

TAN SITONG'S EDUCATION IN GUQIN Tan Sitong was born in Liuyang in year 1865 and executed in 1898 as one of the six gentlemen executed after the failure of Wuxu Revolution, he styled his name as Fusheng, Zhuangfei as well as “the common man of Huayang”, “Mr. Qianming of the eastern sea” “Tong Meisheng” and the “Lord of Liaotianyi”. He is a scholar who have talents in writing, swords and Guqin, a man of chivalrous nature.

When speaking of the local traditional music of Liuyang region people think of the sacrificial music played in Conscious temple. It was recorded in book *Sacrificial events in Liuyang Region* written in Tongzhi period that “there are no music made in the region before magistrate Du Jinjian started spreading education of such from 1829, his deed is still highly phrased till this day.”<sup>1</sup>

Qiu Zhilu brought back the lengthy scores from Confucius mansion in Qufu when he went there specifically for studying of such kind in year 1829 and spread it around in the form of teaching, that is why Mr. Yang Mengliu had the chance to record live performance on his visit to Liuyang in the 50s (Yang Yinliu, 1958: 61). Tan Sitong was immersed in such music form growing up that he wrote about Qiu Zhilu and traditional Liuyang music that says “My fellow man Mr. Qiu Zhilu have managed to figure out the original scores with a determined heart and unlimited patience, his unique skills in the art of compose have finally paid off into the full version that made our hometown known for its music.”

As a matter of fact, there is another famous music genre in the region as famous as the traditional one called “Liuyang Style”. It only exists because people like Qiu Zhilu have firmly defended the art from, they are the true spreader of Guqin. There are also other Guqin masters of Liuyang Style who lived in the late Qing Dynasty and the beginning of The Republic China, they are He Ruxue, Qiu Zhilu, Liu Renxi, Tan Sitong, Zhang Jian, Ouyang Zhonggu, Yang Shusen, Zhou Kongming, Jiang Fijian, Qiu Qingshan, Qiu Qinghao, Qiu Qingyue. They have researches on traditional music as well such as “In Depth Research of Guqin,” “Notes on Traditional Music Served on Sacrificial Events” by Qiu Zhilu, “The Law of Guqin—Shenqiu” by Liu Renxi, “Scripts on traditional music” by He Ruxue, and “The take on making traditional music

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<sup>1</sup> Qiu Zhizhen (Qing Dynasty). On Preparing for the Rites and Music of Ding Ji, Vol. 1, the edition made in the 21-year edition of Daoguang, collected by the Library of the Chinese Academy of Art; another version is collected in the library of Hunan Province.

great again”, “The traditional music of China” written by Liu Ruizhong, first born son of Liu Renxi.

Qiu Zhilu was born in a middle-lower ranking official’s household in Weiduan (nowadays Taiping Bridge Town), west village of Liuyang County, Hunan Province in year 1783, son of Qiu Huaichuan. He was talented in literature and music and often entertain himself with instruments, he showed interest in music at a very young age and mastered the art of Guqin, his fellow country man have donated hundred acres of land that covered his daily spence and have extra to found a music academy to teach youth traditional music and etiquette. Stories go that he had taught a lot of students in the region and three sons of his, Qingshan, Qinghao an Qingqin have mastered the techniques of Guqin. The third and fourth volume of his book “In depth research of Rhythmic music” contains explicit knowledge on Guqin as well as the standard of Guqin production with images, in volume eight he have put in scores dated back to “The Book of Songs” such as “Huanghua,” “Yuli” “Mr. Jiayu from the south” “Sedge Grow in the Mount Nan” “Ivy league that grows” “Xanthium” “Harvesting Artemisia” “Harvesting Pin Fern”. Qiu makes Guqin himself to play music according to the scores.<sup>1</sup>

His fellow country man Liu Renxi who had styled his name in Weilu was born in 1844 and died in 1919, he passed the imperial examination at the county level and was given the title of Xiucui in the third year of Emperor Tongzhi’s reign (the year of Jiazi, 1864), 13 years later he made it to the highest imperial examination and was given the leading role of the ministry of works and served his duty in provinces such as Zhili, Hena , Jiangxi and Guangxi. He returned home to Hunan in Year Dingwei, 33rd reign under Guangxu 1907) as the headmaster of Zhonglu Normal Academy, he was later named to be the president of Education society of Hunan in winter. During Xinhai Revolution he was the head of Secretary for Home Affairs of Hunan. He founded and served as headmaster of the academy of Chuanshan on the original address of Sixian academy once founded by Guo Songdao in year 1914, a year later he cofounded newspaper “The Grand News” with other people, one of them being Bei Yunxi, in Changsha whilst being the Provinal Governor and Provincial Military Governor of Hunan.

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<sup>1</sup> Ningjiangbin. A Survey of the Guqin Players—Qiu Zhizhen, Yang Zongji and Gu Meitang—All from Hunan Province [master’s thesis], Hunan Normal University, 2009.

Liu Renxi's wife is the older sister of Wang Zhixiang who taught her to play Guqin. Both of them were from Tongzhou, Zhili Province.<sup>1</sup> It was recorded in the first of July, 1887 from the book *Diaries from Luwei's* that he started to practice Guqin under the guidance from Wang Zhixiang and Zhang Chunpu in year 1886—"I started to learn how to play Guqin with Tieshan from last year, his fellow teacher Zhang Chunfu taught me figuring techniques, I have known that it was not exactly taught in ancient scores so I went through books of that nature yet never fully comprehend the essence." He then was inspired by "In Depth Research of Guqin" written by Qiu Zhilu, "To devote myself in the study of Guqin then practice the thoughts onto strings, that's when I started to discover the history of Guqin as well as the knowledges disappeared thousands of years ago, with the knowledges I acquire, it's easy to understand the strength and weaknesses of each styles." "Mr. Qiu's book is not easy to comprehend when you just start to practice Guqin, however after years of studying and teaching I started to understand what he meant." There are records proving that Liu Renxi, Zhang Jian and Ouyang Zhonggu have private relationships in regards to Guqin performance, they all believe Wang Chuanshan's Guqin concept is "the medicine to save China" and promoted his thoughts with best efforts.<sup>2</sup>

Liu Renxi admires Qiu's talents and wrote "Qiu's Philosophy in regards to Guqin" to promote his thoughts, he practices on "Yule" score as well. In the book he wrote "Qiu's talent and contribution to traditional music is unforgettable and underestimated, that is why I want to write this book to commemorate him by and hope his life stories be spread. He already has unshakable status in Epigraphy yet he is even bigger in the field of Guqin where there is not a single thing he didn't understand. He is an expertise in all kinds of musical instruments, especially Guqin, I am not professional in the field since I have only studied this art form for a few years, I am dreadful of the possibility of me passing down his concept incorrectly and I apologize if I failed to meet my goal." The Guqin scores of ancient times named "Qiu's Philosophy in regards to Guqin" was written by Liu Renxi who's also called Liuyang in Michou year of Guangxu period, the book has one volume where he composed two songs after Qiu's version of score "Yule", the two songs were made in two different traditional Chinese rhythms called "Huangzhong"

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<sup>1</sup> *Weilu Diaries*, Scripts, 30 volumes, from the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Tongzhi's Reign (1870) to 1917, collected in Hunan Library. Cited from Qu Yufu. A Study of Liu Renxi, a Guqin Player of Hunan Province [master's thesis], Hunan Normal University, 2016, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Elucidation of Confucianism, Vol. 2, Chang Ding Jiang Han (continued), Part · On Learning. *Journal of China*, Vol. 7.

and “Taicu”, you can find the scores in chapter “the eighth of Xuangong”. His intention was to serve as an explanation for Qiu’s Twelve Scores of Fengya, hence the name. However, his explanations are really of poor quality.” What master Qiu stress is improvise on music, the books he wrote later his years are fascinating, those scores he composed are designed for traditional sacrificial events, the lyrics wrote based on scores are of traditional characteristic however innovative words are also suitable for the rhythm. There are students of his in Liuyang region acquired the knowledge and wisdoms of his, Liu Renxi is one of them.”

Liu Renxi was forty-five years old in year 1888(the 14th and 15th year of Guangxu’s reign) when Tan Sitong started learning “The knowledges to better the society” as well as Guqin skills with him. Tan have taken deep research into books written by Huang Zongxi, Wang Fuzhi and Gu Yanwu. He was interested in renovate literatures especially “Books left by Chuanshan”, he started his fame in Liuyang region then soon became the leader of Xiang literature.

Tan have acquired Guqin skills not only from his two teachers—Liu Renxi and Ouyang Zhonggu, but also from another master in a little town named Xiaoyi in Liuyang county whose name was Tang Shouting. Tang have his own Guqin academy where students from all China joined to study, he was not a fan of rigid literature format and have commonly express rebellious thoughts on classics of Confucianism with his students which inspired youngsters. Tan Sitong is one of his students who studied Guqin skills as well as literature. Tang’s son was Tan’s confidant for whom Tan have said to others” We have been friends for twenty years and I would give my life for him. There is nobody I cherish that much in the whole wide world.” After Tan was executed, there are little fellow country man wrote him words of condolence for the fear of being accused of treason. Tang Caizhi’s father Tang Shouting wrote some words with his friends reads “Human’s fate is much unpredictable than nature, he had fallen like so yet who could blame on that? The ones who create new things are of both innovative of rigid minds, why did it happen the way it is!” His subtle words carry much emotion.

**TAN’S GUQIN ONCE BELONGED TO WEN TIANXIANG** Tan admires the heroic and upright personality of Wen Tianxiang who would rather die to surrender himself to the Mongolia Empire, he had carefully collected Guqin “Jiaoyu” once belonged to Wen and dedicated a song to “cosmos” the Ink

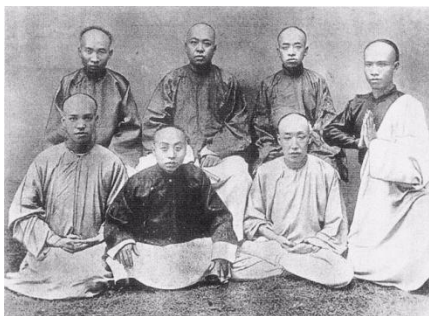


Fig.5 “Seven Brilliant Gentleman” taking picture outside of the photo studio near The Bund, Shanghai, September 25, 1896. The one on the far left is Liang Qichao and the one the far-right hand side Tan Sitong.

Stone that also belonged to Wen. <sup>1</sup>During the Guangxu period, a man from Liling named Zhang Levyng discovered a piece of rectangle ink stone which naturally present images that looks like cosmos and Taiqi chart, there are words engraved on top of the stone that reads “This magnificent stone piece have cosmos naturally presented on top, no matter what you do to the piece the color remains white, discovered by Wen Tianxiang” (Huang Zhenping, 2012: 96). That was the ink stone “cosmos” once belonged to Wen Tianxiang. Tan wrote a song addressing to the stone called “Cosmos Ink Stone of Duck Wen”, he said himself that the song “had received many compliments which drives me to compose more ” He also wrote a poem contributed to Wen’s work “ The Righteous Spirit”, Wen’s work reads as follow:

There is a righteous power on earth and in the sky,  
Which exists in various forms.  
On earth are the rivers and mountains,  
up in the sky are the sun and the stars.  
In people we call it the virtue of righteousness,  
which fills the unlimited cosmos.

Tan’s poem addressing to this particular work goes

The Ink stone was collected by Mr Zhang from Liling, it length five inches and width about half, the texture is silky and seems opaque, there is a small circle of ink blending spot on the stone styled in black and white around and yellowish center, the stone itself was centered in the color white. The round spot on top looks lively and mild as sun in fall time, as for the two stars like spots, one has a diameter of one fen (traditional measurement of China that equals to 0.31cm), the other one has half the length. Two starlike spots set in front of hazel background with twisted trace of black and white that seems like natural landscape scene. Besides that, the ink stone also bear one Taiqi images that was split in half with white and red, its width 2 fens and sits on a background of subtly blended color that resembles sunset and clouds. On its right hand side words are engraved— This magnificent stone piece have cosmos naturally presented on top, no matter what you do to the piece the color remains white, on the end it says discovered by Wen Tianxiang”. Back in ancient years, Yang Tieya have seven famous friends and one of them have another famous ink stone of Wen’s—Yudaisheng, under his collection, I don’t know how to feel about

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<sup>1</sup> Wen Tianxiang was once appointed as the Duke of Wen Xin, so later generations called him this way.





Fig. 6 Wen Tianxiang's Relic, "Cosmos" the Ink Stone.

that. Unlike Mr. Zhang who cherish the ink stone and hope nothing more than having another one, Tiewa was a man who cannot be bothered by trifles and got the name of "the free spirit of Literature." I have Wen Tianxiang's Guqin Jiaoyu which is also a piece of rare treasure, I want to express my emotions through poem.

If cosmos and nature landscape was carved based on righteous spirit, the rest of the spirit must form into this strange looking stone. Ay! Yellow river and the Five Grand Mountains only fancy man of great mind, then how come great man as born alongside the stone? The stone wasn't made yesterday and it didn't plan on disappearing anytime soon, Wen Tianxiang had only come across it accidentally yet thousands of years later anyone who have encountered with it were blessed with the refreshment of mind. Calling back to Wen's life battling in war zones, his mindset is just like the white part of the stone that under no circumstance, change its color. You could say that the achievements he has done takes shine from Tianshu the star. When Tianshu star loses its shine, the earth was split in half where waves don't move and oceans became desert, Royal fleet sunk as mountain Yashan scrambles into pieces, the war drum was strike is calling for Lieque. Emperor Huang runs accompanied with howling wind. Sky fall into the ocean without a flicker of light, bamboo Ruyi was broke in half and hollies lost its color. Who could see beyond Mountain Die? Were the cosmos shining at this moment? Only this piece of stone would capture the night sky that never falls and sun moon that never sets. (Tan Sitong, 2012: 77)

Tan Sitong wrote in his book "the Ink stone Cosmos of Wen Tianxiang" that "the Guqin Jiaoyu I collect is a rare masterpiece," the Guqin mentioned in the sentence was the instrument once belonged to Wen Tianxiang. Tan is lucky enough to find it on his way traveling around China. Tan Sitong wrote the "Guqin Jiaoyu of Wen Tianxiang" in running script on a piece of calligraphy silk scroll in 1890, the scroll is 126cm in length and 27cm in width. He wrote as follow:

Guqin Jiaoyu once belonged to Wen Tianxiang, the minister of China in Song Dynasty. This year happened to have dreadful drought that turned the land into noting, I felt how fast things shift in the world in a single day. So I decided to use music as a form of consolation. Wen have said "The sea wiping and sky falling, rain falls on Bajiao leaves, crushing. Tears of the last loyal man, fears to drop." Ay! Those words are the reflection of Wen's mind! He could have done nothing to save a country that is doomed to end,



Fig.7 The Calligraphy Written by Tan Sitong on Horizontal Silky Scroll—An Article about Guqin “Jiaoyu” of Duke Wen  
 Luoxia Style, Qing Dynasty  
 Museum of Forbidden Palace

the capital was destroyed in flame and the rightful heir to the throne gone. Wen remained loyal to his deceased emperor and wrote a song to express his emotions. Wasn't it an epic tragedy! One doesn't need to be a saint to feel for Wen's mishaps. He was not doomed to this, the land he stands is still the same while his fellow officials busy starting new lives with enemy, he was the only one who stood out and done the deed that pushed him into abyss. How could someone process the fact that their county has come to an end? Song Dynasty was just hanging on its last breath toward the end, nobody, however brilliant could have made a difference. He was true to himself when he was a high ranking official in the royal court and felt so in the peaceful years as well. The world has seen other brilliant minds yet how come Wen wins everyone's heart even thousands of years later?

Wen wrote on the Guqin, "It was engraved in Ganzhou in year 1273." Xiangyang city surrendered itself to the Mongolians the same year, he wrote an article to express his sorrow and shame of losing his county to the enemies. It could be found on the year book that Wen wrote when he was transferred to Ganzhou as magistrate in the year of Jiawu, yet from here we read he was in the city in the year of Guiyou, maybe he was there a year before that? The Guqin of his is about three feet and seven inches long (Chinese measurement), six inches wide. The cracks on the instrument is fine as cow hair hence the name "cow hair cracks. On the bottom surface words engraved in running script that reads "Jiaoyu" (rain on banana leaves). Besides that, all scripts were written in running font that is not only sleek in brushstrokes but also elegance in forms. Two seals could be found on the instrument with one saying "Marked by Wen Tianxiang" and the other one "Mr. Wenshan". On the inside cavity running script could also be seen that says "A hermit have opened the inside and restored the piece in September, 1254." This treasure is definitely much older than we think since Hermit Luling is the name Wen styled himself in, if he had restored it then it means the Guqin was at least a few hundred years older than Wen and makes it around eight or nine hundred years old now. What could be last in around nine hundred of years without decay? I believe it reminds in good shape not for the Guqin itself but for Wen Tianxiang. I have Zhao Xuesong's Guqin under my name, that piece is not so well made and the texture of music it makes can't compare with "Jiaoyu". I don't value it as much as other collections of mines. It means if an object has nothing to commemorate by that gives it a soul then it will decay eventually even if



Fig.8,9 *Canlei* by Tan Sitong  
Luoxia Style  
Museum of Forbidden Palace

you tried to keep it in good shape. In the poems written by Wu Xilin who lives in Qing Dynasty as well there are pieces addressing to the Guqin of Wen's and expressed his admiration. That is a different Guqin than this one which will finally return where it belongs, I will just wait for that day to come. I don't know what to day when I found out Wu had written a poem to the Guqin so I decided to write another one to address that nature, there must be someone present himself onto the world as a brilliant gentleman.

This article is written to express my gratitude of having this masterpiece under my name in Jiangxia, March 1890.

Tan Sitong, also known as Tan Fusheng of Liuyang

The word "To work with ultimate force" was engraved in relief and "To leave sorrow in aromatic heart" in intaglio (Tan Sitong, 2012: 473-4).

Tan also got Wen's sword "Fengju" from his trips and never left it behind him. After Tan was executed those two objects were being carefully stored by his widow Li Run in their home "The mansion of scholar". However, during the salvage archeology research on the traditional music of Liuyang we have found a tragic news that Tan family have asked a peasant to keep some of Tan Sitong's belongings during agrarian law reform, "Jiaoyu" was one of them. Unfortunately, peasant Tan kept those belongings underground that caused "Jiaoyu" to rot.

**TAN AND HIS CRAFTY SKILLS ON MAKING GUQIN** Tan Sitong was very talented in Guqin practice, besides that he was able to tell what could make brilliant Guqin materials and craft one himself. There are two Guqin made by him that are still existing till this day named "Bengting" (thunder burst) and "Canlei" (thunder echo). The first one is stored in the Provincial Museum of Hunan and the other one in The Forbidden Palace, from the name and scripts written on the Guqin we could tell that these two are the real pieces made by Tan, both are rare masterpiece made from plane trees cut down by thunder storm. One mid-summer night, 1881, One of the two plane trees taller than 60 feet grown in the back of Tan's house was cut down by thunder, he was only 16 years then. Later in 1890 Tan made two Guqin from the trunk of the tree and named it "Bengting" and "Canlei". He carried these two pieces alongside "Fengju the Sword" with him up north seeking revolution in Beijing.

The piece is 119.8 cm long, the widest part is 19.3 cm and 13 cm wide on the end part. It is currently stored in the Museum of Forbidden Palace. The paint on this Guqin is of reddish black and words "Made by Tan Sitong" was



Fig.10 Tan Sitong portrait and *Canlei*,

written on top of it to indicate the maker of this piece is Tan Sitong, a patriotic gentleman in late Qing Dynasty. Chinese character “Canlei ” was written on the Dragon Pond and under it 35 regular script was written in small font that goes:

Under the burst of a thunder, the tree was cut in half. Its flash was flayed and inside out. Even though it’s bones are brilliant to be used as Guqin materials, however the tragedy that happened to this tree is unbearable. Here I tear for the mishaps. By Tan Sitong.

“Canlei” was made in the color malachite green. Under the poem there is a red seal that have two Chinese characters on top that reads “Zhuangfei”. On the inside cavity twenty characters are carved that means “Guqin thunder was made by Tan Sitong of Liuyang whose name goes by Fusheng under the 16th reign of Emperor Guangxu”. The poem “Canlei” was in the handwritten book by Tan “Random pieces for the autumn rain”, He was only 25 years old when Guangxu emperor ruled China for 16 years (1890). This Guqin was donated by Mr. Qian Junyi in year 1952 to The Museum of Forbidden Palace

“Benglei” is stored in the Provincial Museum of Hunan. The piece was styled in Zhongni style with a total length of 117.5 cm and a width of 16cm on its forehead, 18 cm on the shoulder and 12.7cm for the end part. The surface of the Guqin was made from plane tree, the bottom cigar tree. Other parts such as Ceremonial Cap, Mount Yue as well as Chenglu were made from rosewood. Its Goose feed made out of cow horn, Tuning pegs from ivory and marker in mother of shell. There are no cracks on the piece that was coated in black lacquer, both Dragon Pond and Phoenix Pool is of rectangular shape with rosewood and sanders on each edge. Under its name “Bengting” there are words carved, which means “It all begins when thunder cut the tree in half and end with me making Guqin out of it. The thunder might be a blessing for this Guqin but a curse to the tree. Written by Tan Sitong”, “Guqin Thunder no.1, made in the mid-autumn in year Ghengyin, the 16th year of reign of Emperor Guangxu.”

On the Guqin “Bengting”, words of condolence written by his confidant Tang Caichang goes “ I didn’t die with Tan, my friend who I swore to guard with my life, the man of righteous spirit, pledged his loyalty to the country was gone, left with musics of Xiao( a vertical bamboo flute) singing elegy. I will take 4 billion years of me burning in hell in change to left his righteous spirit here with us.”



Fig.11 *Bengting* Guqin made by Tan Sitong hongni style (Provincial Museum of Hunan)

## THE METAPHORS BEHIND ZHANG AND TAN'S MUSIC PHILOSOPHY

FROM ROYALIST WHO DARE TO POINT OUT DECAYS IN THE SYSTEM TO REVOLUTIONIST WHO BELIEVES WESTERN KNOWLEDGE HAVE POSITIVE EFFECT ON CHINA, ZHANG ZHIDONG IS THE INTERMEDIATE TO BOTH OLD AND NEW FORCES Zhang Zhidong have held the concept of knowledge should serve the need to better the country his who life and changed his political aspect of a Royalist to Revolutionist. Hu Linyi and Han Chaoying cast the most influence on Zhang from his youth. In his youngster years he has taken education in Guizhou and Zhili province, he served his duty of being the magistrate of academy in Hubei and Sichuan province. His family oath is to be an honest and upright person who is free from corruption, he applied the oath to his career where he stayed upright and straight forward with his thoughts. It also reflects the life goal and desire of his to make great effort in building a stronger state.

His royalist gang is called "Qingliu" (clear spring, resembles freshness and clarity in Chinese), it's a special political party that have occurred in different dynasties where the officials are not afraid to provoke the emperor for his political preferences and express their state of minds without hesitation. There are other parties that could be included in this category, the officials in Eastern Han Dynasty that was called "Danggu" is one of them, as well as the students of The Imperial College and "Donglin" party of late Ming Dynasty. Qingliu in Qing Dynasty is mainly host by teachers of the Imperial Academy who are fascinated by the art if epigraphy research, literature salons and academic researches, when there are current political events they would gather up and wrote to the emperor, bashing other nobles men for their wrong doings and impeach officials of high statues. They have brought much pressure onto the royal court. Scholar Li Hongzao is the leader of this party, fellow officials of imperial court joined later with known names such as Pan Zumeng, Li Ciming and Wang Yirong (whose sister became the second wife of Zhang after his first spouse passed away), Zhang have very close relationships with them all. Later Zhang Zhidong met with the soul person of northern Qingliu Zhang Peilun who then become the backbone of the party. Zhang Zhidong, alongside with three other scholars—Zhang Peilun, Huang Tifang, Baoting are named as the "Four upright scholars of the imperial academy," them plus Liu Enbo and Chen Baochen were known for being "the six upright gentlemen of Qingliu", among six of them the leader is really Zhang Zhidong himself. They are not

afraid to be punished by provoking the emperor and have people's best interest at heart, such deeds indicate their true nature of being the guardians of justice, a core value of Qingliu. More admiration gathered under his name after he justified for two falsely charged crimes—the unjust case of Dongxiang, Sichuan province and Wumen case in year Gengchen, not mention he had made some changes in the unfair treaty Qing government made with Tsardom of Russia (Huang Huawen, 2007: 23-4). He has arranged some important role of Qingliu in the academy under his name such as Liang Dingfen, Wu Zhaotai, Miu Quansun, Shen Zengzhi, Zheng Xiaoxu, Chen Qingnian, Chen Yan and so on.

Zhang became a revolutionist during his magistrate career in Shanxi province and became the representation of the party, he has hired missionary Timothy Richard to spread advanced western knowledges. He has founded the Bureau of Western Affairs then published article “For those who are talented in western knowledges”, during that period he had developed metallurgical industry then trained military with western methods. As for the 18 years he spent being provincial governor of Hubei province, he managed to develop entity economy, literature and education, he also trained military troops with western methods then educated talents of western knowledges. Thanks to his diligence, the first modern provincial system was made that contains everything from waterway traffic, both heavy and light industry, cultural education to a complete military and city system.<sup>1</sup>

Due to the special forces in late Qing Dynasty, Zhang was caught in between both old and new concepts. He promotes to seek better changes with advanced foreign knowledges yet also stands as a loyal royalist who pledge to protect the decedent feudal system. His conflicted mindset made him the intermediate to connect both old and new worlds together as a task handed by history. There are 24 articles in Zhang's book “A persuasion for you to learn western knowledges” which is finished on the eve of Hundred Day's Reform then published later that year. He has set from the perspective of a Confucius scholar to promote the concept of “better the state with advanced western knowledges under traditional Chinese philosophy”. He has stressed more than once that the backbone of Chinese philosophy is the Three Cardinal Guides—objects of his majesty should obey their emperor, a child should obey his/ her father, a wife should obey her husband. He thinks it's crucial that the western

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<sup>1</sup> See Wan Jianhui: The First Regional Modernization System Established by Zhang Zhidong during the Westernization Movement of China [J], *Changjiang Daily*, 2017-09-04.

knowledges being used under the rightful traditional Chinese Philosophy such as The Three Cardinal Guides. His concept has become the basic rule of late Qing Dynasty and extend its field into cultural and education sphere. In the book Zhang Edited "The school system of the Year Guimao" have made his intension clear that "better the state with advanced western knowledges under traditional Chinese philosophy" was stress as the purpose of education, he said " the key factor of education is to stress the importance of loyalty and filial piety, to use our traditional culture as guidance to the barbaric minds and remember the purpose of learning those techniques were to implement it in reality." That is to say Zhang promotes to use the advanced techniques to better the state in the hand and form of feudal system, the system comes first and techniques are only a way to maintain Qing Dynasty's reign. What westernization proponent and the minds of enlightenment of the royal court have in common was the mindset written in the article Wang Tao wrote to Zheng Guanying's book "Word of Change"—To use advanced western techniques as a way to better our state, however the core ideology remains to be confucianism as it is the unchangeable law to nature." The article "A persuasion for you to learn western knowledges" contains important leading concept of westernization to guide themselves save the country, it promotes immersion of both Chinese and Western cultures and urges to learn from western countries with an intention to keep traditional Chinese culture alive which serves great progress under the society then.

The core value of Zhang's concept is to apply advanced techniques onto a deep rooted, rigid ideology of traditional Chinese philosophy as an aid. The contradictory behind the concept is a reflection to the contradictions on scholars who lived on the edge of two worlds. Zhang is the contradiction and the embodiment of both New and Old. He was enlightened in a way that he could accept come concepts and changes made by Revolutionists. The leader of Hundred Day Reform Kang Youwei has written in "Gongche Petition" that "Zhang Zhidu is admired by the whole of China" to express his admiration and hope for this high ranking official who managed large soil. Tan Sitong have also said that "Among the brilliant minds in China, Zhang Zhidong is the only one who is able to change our country for the better deed in all aspects, he has a flexible mind and down to earth like on one else." Zhang have made Wuchang revolution of Year Xinhai (1911) possible in a way, as Sun Yat-sen said in 1912 during his visit to Wuhan—"Nanpi (self-styled name of Zhang

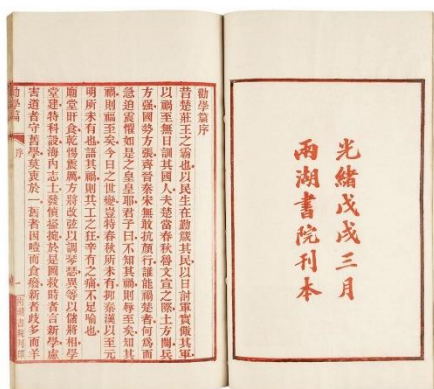


Figure 12 Zhang Zhidong have strongly promoted the concept “To Incorporate Western Techniques with Chinese Philosophy Behind” in his book *A Persuasive Petition for You to Learn Western Knowledges*

Zhidong) is a true revolutionist who never claims himself to be.” However, he is also conservative toward his attitude on Qing governing.

Zhang’s contradiction is a resemblance of scholars in late Qing Dynasty for he is the representation of mainstream Confucianists and their mentality. The contradiction was dramatic because he lived in a time where society is shifting to another form, during that time his value of life was suddenly challenged by reality and his mind trapped within his experiences, as a result, the awareness of potential danger came into being. He has kept the Guqin philosophy of being upright and peaceful then finally became the intermediate of both worlds being caught in between reform and revolution.

There are three poems he wrote that reflects his state of mind of perspective on life. Being the official who is free from corruption, he started to appreciate the concepts of “mediocracy” and “peaceful state of mind” in Guqin. In his poem “A poet on Qintar platform” he wrote “Here I fiddle with Guqin strings in solitude, what is composed in this era is only to be known generations later. Mountain Meizi clear and lake under white, what a being to be able to practice Guqin.” The two Guqin he made “Shanshui Qingyin” (bleak sound of spring) and “Dan Bo Ming Zhi” (living simple with a heart of gold) are also reflections of such mentality. Apart from that, he is determined to make progress through diligent work yet stumbles upon a journey of hardship, despite that he had always been insightful about the future of the nation and supported his works with best efforts. In the same poem he wrote “Zhuangzi have Shihui leading the role of his confidant and Boya (known as a master of Guqin) have quit Guqin after the death of Zhongqi. Friends together are like dragon flying within clouds, just as stones being clear about the movement of a stream of spring. There is no use of me wanting to find a confidant in an environment of chaotic solitude. Pushed Guqin away for petition, who knows if it became a failure out of fate or skims.” Lastly, Zhang admires Wen Tianxiang as much as Tan Sitong that he wrote a poem for Wen called “For two Guqin’s of Wen” that says” There is no periods of China that values the virtue of Confucianism as Song Dynasty, and among those scholars in Song, Wen Tianxiang outrank the rest. To the places where wind howls in Chaishi (where Wen Tianxiang was executed ) and where smooth water under Qiaoting Pavilion, if you don’t feel shamed for letting Wen down then you are not even good enough to be a women of no strength, what a man of righteous spirit that he chose to practice belief in death.”





Fig.13 Tan Sitong have pointed out the importance of “Incorporate Ren onto the body of Yitai.” in his book *The Art of Ren*

TAN SITONG PRACTICES ON GUQIN BENGTING AND DANCE WITH FENGJU THE SWORD, HE WAS EXECUTED FOR THE RIGHTEOUS DEED. Late Qing Dynasty was under a time when new ideology challenges the old, the society faces tremendous troubles from both domestic and international spheres, behind this chaotic scene flows a stream of unknown power that will later turn the county upside down. The traditional ideology and moral standards of Confucianism is being challenged and peoples’ belief was shaken. A group of enlightened minds seek a new pathway to balance their ideology as well as a political system which applies to the mind. The strongest strike to feudal rule at that time was the mindful bash made by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, as well as what Tan had heartfully expressed in the prelude of his book “the art of Ren”—“To be free from the oppress of ruler, to be free from the restrain of mind”.

Tan Sitong finished his grand work “The Art of Ren” which contains the essence of his philosophy, the core value is to “Incorporate Ren onto the body of Yitai (a belief that the world was made in particles name Yitai),” the word Yitai played an important key role in his concept, “Only when a scholar understands the meaning and functions of Yitai should one speak to him.” Tan Sitong have altered the traditional definition about “ren” and brought to it concepts of Freedom, Equality and universal love that belongs to bourgeoisie. His act is to build a new concept in China to incorporate western bourgeoisie—an alteration from feudalism to constitutional monarchy. He had radical thoughts of revolutionism feudalism in all from his words “The two thousand years of feudalism is led by tyrants; the ideology dominated the country are forged by hypocrites. It was a consistent chaos of Tyrants controlling people through hypocrites and hypocrites do to serve their king.” The ideology and concepts of French democracy was also being incorporated in his book—Kill every single one of king to bath people’s hatred toward them in their own blood.”

Tan Sitong could see beyond surface and have realized the limitations of the westernization concepts held by Zhang Zhidong and his fellow men, and cried “How could the ideology reminds sound when what serves as reflection is changed? To say we need reforms to better the country without touching the fundamental problem is inappropriate, since one cannot separate reflections from fundamental systems when how could you say advanced techniques could save the decadent philosophy?”

From that he came up with bourgeoisie concepts “United interests of both techniques and systems”, “technique came into being with systems that supports”. As for Tan’s ideology, the birth of the concept “Incorporate Ren onto the body of Yitai” is the results of multicultural clash at the end of Qing Dynasty that mainly call for political reformation—from feudalism to bourgeoisie. Standing from his class His other concept “technique came into being with systems that supports” serves as an in-depth reflection of inter cultural relationship after The War of Opium broke out and criticized Zhang’s ideology directly.

His radical concept has awakened the minds of millions, loud and clear like thunder in the spring time. Just as what Liang Qichao commented in his book “A Generation Academic Findings of Qing Dynasty”—Tan’s words are sharp as knives, an active revolutionist who is determined to overrule Qing’s governing.

As a firm believer of “He who have mercy at heart is not afraid of death,” his death is a completion of both his mind and works for he said to himself “I am determined to break free from tyrants, I will pay any price to liberate our Huaxia (Chinese)nation.” As a matter of fact, he managed to convert his mortal minds in wisdom which completed the highest level of Jing through his death and reached harmony between man and nature.

**CONCLUSION** Guqin is an intermediate to one’s state of mind, tangible objects are merely reflections of a certain ideologies, the two must be in accordance with one another. Guqin is an instrument that will levitate your soul, an object that is deeply connected with ancient Chinese scholars. Zhang Zhidong is the leader of westernization and Tan Revolutionist, both of them are surrounded by people yet deeply connected to Guqin due to their educational background of authentic Confucianism as well as traditional Ritual Culture. Literature and Guqin have occupied their life, they might be living a simple life without much financial security but they never leave without Guqin. In their art concept, they are the scholars who also keep the core values in mind which are “To set an ultimate goal with noble tensions and implement through humanity. One needs to set a high moral standard based on merciful mind and be good at six noble traits, that is to master ceremonial manners, music, archery, literature and skills of driving carriages.” As for their political and spiritual aspiration it was to govern the country to make it a better place for people.

Metaphors are the pathway to a man’s inner world as well as the key to open the unknown of the history. The Rationalistic Confucianism in the Song

and Ming dynasty use Guqin as a tool to seek inner peace, and within the philosophy they have separate thoughts regarding to its ideology and techniques—one of them being “the ideology carries its techniques” and “techniques serves the purpose of practice, nothing more,” to learn from the unknown and always be humble. Scholars who held this point of view were Zhou Dunyi, Shao Yong, Zhang Zai, Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi. Another concept was supported by Cheng Jing, Lu Jiyuan, Wang Shouren and Li Zhi who believes Guqin is your heart, to play on Guqin is expressing your thoughts—“the technique you practiced is the ideology behind.” “Technique and ideology is one unity” (Fan Xiaoli, 2015: 1). Zhang Zhidong firmly believes the first concept and Tan Sitong the second.

Zhang Zhidong learned to practice Guqin with master teacher Huang Mianzhi, he was really good at making Guilin and classmates with other Guqin player such as Yang Zongji, Fu Tong, Ye Shimeng (Foyinnibu). He have combined Confucianism with the art of Guqin and stick to the mentality throughout his life, with the peaceful mindset effected by the art of Guqin, Zhang was able to mingle from both worlds while he was trapped within, he swunged back and forth in innovation and conservative mentality, from reform to revolution, from traditional Chinese mentality to western ideologies, as a result, he became the intermediate of both worlds. Zhang Zhidong thinks highly of Guqin and said it was the best of all music forms, he believes one should learn moral virtues from the art of Guqin and its philosophy to guide themselves becoming a better person and implement good deeds. He wants to promote Confucianism through Guqin to his students, to strength the restriction of Three Cardinal Guides as well as hierarchy. Zhang was a big promoter of mediocracy; he has laid the ground work of westernization with his concept being used as the basic value of the movement. However his mind was being trapped under his own restrictions of advocating ancient values of cardinal guides.

Huxiang culture have influenced both Tan’s personal and Guqin philosophy. Huxiang culture is a historical concept of culture in Hunan region. Scholars of Liuyang culture call it “The study of Liuyang”—a fusional Rationalistic Confucianism that played the leading role in Hunan from Song Dynasty to Qing Dynasty. Tan Sitong was heavily affected by “Three Scholars of Liuyang”—Ouyang Zhonggu, Liu Renxi and Tu Qixian hence his concept of “the knowledge learned must be incorporate in reality” inspired by the modern school of Xiang, a direct inheritance from Wang Fuzhi’s concept on

objects and ideology (Zhu Hanmin, 2013: 129). Tan come up with “tangible objects used according to its ideology” is a political aversion of “to use Yitai as form and mercy as concept”. If we were to figure out Tan’s take on life based on the two Guqin he has left the world, we could see that he was another version of Niezheng who fought bravely in battles, Jikang who can’t wait to break himself free. Just as what was recorded in Yang Zongji’s book addressing his performance of “Guangling Verse”—When he plays, the sound came out of his fingertips are much like roaring troops of soldiers battling in the war zone, too thrilling to believe it was actually a musical piece.

When Tan Sitong was executed without any signs of fear, he was much like Jikang who bear the similar fate. Everyone in China is devastated for their loss. He rebelled against feudal restrictions in such heroic move that after he completed his revolution in death a new righteous system was build. He sacrificed for modern capitalistic philosophy he inspired, his scarification is also the wakening call of the death of Qing government, with his death, he played them *Guangling Verse* in a heroic manner!

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**Author:** Sun Xiaohui, Professor of Wuhan Conservatory of Music. Wuhan, China.

Email: sunxiaohui1968@sina.com