

The Cultural Interpretations of “Golden Sound and Jade Vibration”*

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Limited by the writing habits of the small tradition, conventional scholars tend to interpret “golden sound and jade vibration” as a musical tempo representing virtues of saints. In fact, we can prove how “golden sound and jade vibration” are closely linked to the sacred material beliefs (e.g., “holy gold”, “holy jade”) and the prehistoric religious ritual activities, by using various oral cultures and physical images, deeply exploring the profound cultural roots of “golden sound” and “jade vibration” in the local knowledge tradition and tracing its genetic system back to the prehistoric Jade Age and Bronze Age. The concept of “golden sound and jade vibration” is the sacred aural symbol of the “sage” entering the imaginary and illusionary realm. It also highlights the genetic system of the sage having “great accomplishments” and the Chinese ritual music system.

Keywords: golden sound, jade vibration, big tradition, sage, great accomplishments

1. The Big Tradition in the Sacred Context

The existing documentation on the “golden sound and jade vibration” starts from *Mencius: Wanzhang II*, which says: “Confucius is said to be a man of great accomplishments. A man of great accomplishments also has golden sound and jade vibration. A man with golden sound can initiate the ordinance and law. A man with jade vibration can finalize the ordinance and law. The ordinance initiation is the responsibility of the wise, while the ordinance finalization is the responsibility of the sage.”¹ All scholars believe that this paragraph uses the rhythm of music as a metaphor for the virtues of a sage. This statement originated in *The Notes* by the scholar Zhao Qi of the Han Dynasty. Since then, *Shu* by Su Shi, *Jizhu* by Zhu Xi and *Zhengyi* by Jiao Xun have all interdependent upon each other for creation and inheritance. The modern scholar Yang Bojun translated it as ‘having great accomplishments’ in *The Interpretations and Notes to Mencius*: (e.g., playing music) first knock on the bell and then end with the special chiming, a process with both the beginning and the end. The knock is the rhythmical beginning and the chiming the end of the rhythm.² Mr. Yang also completely explained the meaning of “golden sound and jade vibration” in the form of mechanical rhythm of music. When it comes to “golden sound”, “jade vibration”, “courtesy difference” and “courtesy indifference” (*Shu* by Sun Shi), the sound characteristics and cultural imagination, as well as the musical functions and knowledge of

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¹ Jiao Xun: *The Right Notes to Mencius*, Zhonghua Book Company.

² Yang Bojun: *The Interpretation of Mencius*, Zhonghua Book Company.

“demonstrating the sound” and “controlling the rhyme” (*Jizhu* by Zhu Xi have been completely abandoned, so that the cultural symbol of “having great accomplishments” is “already as diluted as the boiled water”).³ The original cultural function and symbolic meaning of “golden sound and jade vibration” become more confusing and obscure.

The *Five Elements* chapters of Guodian Chu Bamboo Slips and Mawangdui Brocade Book recently unearthed give written records about “golden sound” and “jade vibration”, and provide a new opportunity to further explore the cultural structure and symbolic function of “golden sound and jade vibration”.⁴ The chapter states: “The kind practice of a gentleman has a beginning (Guodian version has no character “*ye*” and we use the Mawangdui version) and an end. The virtuous practice of a gentleman has a beginning and no end (Li Ling adds, “six characters” are missing; Brocade version is better by saying “no ending”; we use the Brocade version). This is what a sage does. Golden sound represents kindness, and jade vibration, sagesness. The kindness is the humane way; the virtue is the heavenly way. Only the virtuous can start to have golden sound and jade vibration”.⁵ As for the authoring era of Guodian Chu Bamboo Slips, the academic community basically believes that it was written earlier than *Mencius*. In the article “Golden Sound and Jade Vibration” and Related Issues”, Liu Xinfang put forward a unique opinion on the meaning of “golden sound and jade vibration” in connection with the relevant unearthed documents. He believed that “golden sound and jade vibration” is not a music issue, but an “epistemological problem”, for it used “golden sound to represent the outside world, jade vibration to represent the resonance with the inner heart, ‘golden sound and jade vibration’ reveals the relationship between the subject and the object vividly. Liu broke away from the shackles of the structure theory of music, and expanded the “golden sound and jade vibration” into metaphysical philosophical thinking. This is somewhat innovative. However, Liu also simply inferred from the internal literature and text structure of the unearthed literature, without fully emphasizing and leveraging the big tradition of the remote ancient sacred context generated by “golden sound and jade vibration”.

The sacred context mentioned above refers to the fact that secularism and sacredness are one to the ancient inhabitants, and the visual symbols they saw and the auditory symbols they heard are all related to the sacred world. As Iliad said, everything, no matter how insignificant, contains divinity.⁶ We believe that “golden sound and jade vibration” is not only an auditory symbol issued by a secular instrument, but also a vocal symbol produced by an indispensable instrument in religious etiquette; it represents a kind of symbolic narrative with divine meaning. Ye Shuxian wrote the article “Rong Chengshi” Knowledge Archaeology Paradigm of Five General Interpretations to Jian Drum Mythology about Xia and Yu to give a detailed discussion of the mystery of narrative and drum music system of the Jian drum mythology about Xia and Yu, re-interpreting the cultural connotations of the drums from the new perspectives of mythology and archaeology. Ye said: “The original percussion instruments such as bell and drum are inseparable from the prehistoric religious context of the sacred faith, and even the instruments themselves are symbols of the gods or holy wills.” Ye also concluded that “Whether it is a signal drum that simply emits sound information or a musical instrument in a ritual music system, the original root lies in the background of the drums and the ritual activities of prehistoric religious

³ [Canada] McLuhan et al, He Daokuan (translator): McLuhan Essentials, Nanjing University Press.

⁴ The Ancient Literature Research Office of the National Cultural Relics Bureau: Edited the Ma Wangdui Han Tomb, Cultural Relics Publishing House.

⁵ Li Xueqin: The Nature and Age of Confucian Classics in Guodian Chu, Li Xueqin’s Anthology, Shanghai Dictionary Press.

⁶ [USA] Mirsey Eliad: Mythology, dreams, and mysterious rituals, the encounter between contemporary beliefs and primitive realities, Translated by Philip Merritt, London.

leaders to communicate with ghosts and spirits.”⁷ Therefore, the cultural symbolic practice of Mr. Ye attaching importance to the divine context provides an epistemological and methodological guide for us to investigate in depth the cultural functions and mythology implications of “golden sound and jade vibration”.

In order to further explain the symbolic function of “golden sound and jade vibration” and the meaning of mythology, we may also cite the musical scenes of Duke Zhou who presided over the sacrifices recorded in *Shangshu Commentary: Luo Hao Story*.⁸ The Story reads: Foretell the Luo city, make it capital city of Zhou, establish the calendar system, standardize the sacrificial ritual, change the sacrificial ceremony, and establish the ritual and music system...The imperial temple is so vibrant like fine brocade. The princes and dukes of the world all come to the reign of Duke Zhou. There are 1,730 figures representing the roles of princes and dukes in the sacrificial ceremony. All of them heard the Qingzhe chiming of jade tone, jade sound and jade color. Then Duke Zhou orders the singing and string playing of the music pieces of the eras of Kings Wen and Wu of Zhou. The princes and dukes in the imperial temple swear their oaths and sing in harmony, as if to suddenly see the formation of Kings Wen and Wu, saying: Alas, this may be the grandiose style of the our forefathers Kings Wen and Wu.⁹ This passage allows us to experience the strong penetrating power and profound influence of the musical symbols on the spiritual dimensions of the princes and dukes of the Zhou Dynasty. Of course, such penetrating power and influence is more than the aesthetic effect of the rhythm of music; more importantly, it represents the mysterious experience and divine satisfaction of the illusion and ecstasy found in the ritual participants for the religious rituals. The ancient song “Pangu Creating the Heaven and the Earth” by Lan Dian Yao in Xilin County, Guangxi, gives a wonderful account of the sound generated by the musical instrument in the sacrifice ritual. The account can also help us to understand that the sound symbol of the instrument is a symbol of divinity for the Yao residents, or a “sacred object.” The song goes, “Look up, toward the clear sky; my sincere heart supports the devout gaze; lift up the hands and play the instruments of sacrifice ceremony; use the most respectful awe to sing the opening hymns.”

This paper attempts to connect with the big tradition of the sacred context, to take into account the knowledge horizons of cultural anthropology, religious anthropology, ethnology, mythology and archaeology, and to widely use the folk culture and cross-cultural materials. This paper tries to break away from the one-sidedness and limitation of the musical formalism structure theory of “golden sound and jade vibration” and focuses on the structural function and cultural prototype coding of local traditional cultural knowledge and reconstructs the narrative tradition and cultural symbolic meaning of the “golden sound and jade vibration” mythology that has been obscured by the handed-down literature. There also forms a deep cultural exploration of how the sages think of Confucius as “having great accomplishments”.

2. Golden Sound Mythology of Evil Dispelling and God Invitation

The Chinese music classic *The Book of Songs* records the musical instruments of bell (see the chapters of *Zhounan Songs: Guanju, Songs of Tang: Shanyoushu, Song of Gufengzhishi: Chuci, Songs of Putianzhishi: Bingzhichuyan, Songs of Yuzaozhishi: Baihua, Songs of King Wen, Lingtai, Songs of Qingmiaozhishi: Zhijing, and Songs of Jiayuzhishi: Tonggong*; the Yong bell (see *Songs of Wengwangzhishi: Lingtai, Song of Shang*);

⁷ Ye Shuxian: “Rong Chengshi” Knowledge Archaeology Paradigm of Five General Interpretations to Jian Drum Mythology about Xia and Yu, National Art.

⁸ Fu Sheng, Zheng Xuan, Chen Shouyi: *Shangshu Commentary*, series of books.

⁹ Lv Daji and He Yaohua (editor): *Integration of Primitive Religious Data of Chinese Ethnic Groups (Yao Minority Volume)*, China Social Sciences Press.

Zheng (see *Songs of Jiayuzhisi, Caiqi*; and small bell (See *Songs of Chengongzhishi: Zaijian*). According to the statistics of archaeological materials unearthed in recent years, the types of metal instruments discovered from archaeological discoveries in the Han Dynasty are: 1) for Shang Dynasty: bronze drums, bronze bells, Yong bell, Bo bell; 2) for Western Zhou: Bo bell, Yong bell, Duo bell, Zheng, Niu bell. 3) Eastern Zhou: Bo bell, Yong bell, Duo bell, Zheng, Niu bell, Goudiao, Chunyu, flat Yong bell. 4) for Han Dynasty: Bronze drums, Bo bell, Yong bell, flat Yong bell, Duo bell, Zheng, Niu bell, Goudiao, Chunyu.¹⁰ It can be seen from the literature and unearthed artifacts that the musical instruments belonging to the “golden sound” in the ancient times are mainly composed of bells, small bells and Bo bells, accompanied by metal instruments such as Zhuo bell and Zheng. According to *Zhouli: Artificer’s Record*, “The two sides of the bell are called *Xian*; the ends of the two *Xian* are called *Yu*; the part of the tap on *Yu* is called *Gu*; the part above the *Gu* is called *Zheng*; the part of the top of the *Zheng* is called *Wu*. The handle above *Wu* is called *Yong*; the plane at the top of *Yong* is called *Heng*. The circular bell hanging in the lower part of *Yong* is called *Xuan*; the *Xuanchong* which runs through *Xuan* is called *Gan*. The bell belt is called *Zhuan*. The protruding stalactite between *Zhuan* is called *Mei*, and *Mei* is also called *Jing*. The slightly concave and shiny part above *Yu* is called *Sui*.”¹¹ Judging from this paragraph, we know the “bell” can be an independent artifact, or it can be a “bell” of a large-scale musical instrument that is a combination of “*Xian, Yu, Gu, Zheng* and others”. Therefore, the sound of bells enjoyed a prominent position in the ancient audio symbolic system.

Commentary on Han Shi Story and *Shanghu Commentary* state that an ancient emperor must first hit the bell and then play music on occasion of both going out and returning. According to *Commentary on Han Shi Story*, “An ancient prince will have five bells on the left and five drums on the right. Before going out, Huangzhong music will be played, when the right five bells will vibrate accordingly. The horse hissing accords with the rhythm; the riders follow the decrees and rules; walking and turning accord with the rules. Then official Taishi plays the music of wagon initiation, proclaiming the departure. When coming in, Weibin music will be stricken; the manners will be unified, and appearances will be serene. As Weibin chimes, the horses hiss. The domesticated animals will stretch their necks for listening. The people inside have jade colors, the people outside, golden sound. Then the official Shaoshi plays the music of hall assembly, meaning that all people will be seated. This is what we call the harmony of music, the response of the animals and the resonance between the bells.”¹² *Shangshu Contemporary* says, “When the prince is going out, the bell of Huangzhong music will chime, and the left five bells will resonate; when coming in, the bell of Ruibin music will chime, the right five bells will resonate. The official Taishi begins to conduct the music playing.”¹³ “Why did the ancient emperors repeatedly use the “golden sound” without feeling bored? What kind of cultural function does this “golden sound” have? Coincidentally, in the 28th chapter of *The Bible: Exodus*, on the robes thereof thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and purple, and scarlet, round about the robes thereof; and bells of gold between them round about. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not. In other words, the priest’s clothes have golden bells, and when he walks in and out of the sanctuary, he can make harmony. The golden bell sounds,

¹⁰ Fang Jianjun: Discovery and Types of Ancient Chinese Ancient Musical Instruments, Journal of the Central Conservatory of Music.

¹¹ Edited by Li Xueqin: Notes to Zhouli, Beijing University Press.

¹² Xu Weijun: Commentary on Han Shi Story, Zhonghua Book Company

¹³ Xu Weijun: Commentary on Han Shi Story, Zhonghua Book Company.

otherwise it may lead to death. This is similar to the religious function and cultural significance of the ancient Chinese imperial bells when entering and exiting the palace gate. With regard to the cultural implication of “golden sound” on priest costumes, Fraser cited in *Folklore in Old Testament* various cross-cultural materials from around the world for a comprehensive analysis. He argued: “People think that the harmonious jingle of the bell can drive away the sly and evil ghosts or spirits lurking at the gate of the temple. These spirits are preparing to attack and kill the glamorously dressed priest when the priest is crossing the threshold and performs his holy ritual.... You can scare away evil spirits and ghosts by the sound of metal, whether it is the harmonious jingle of a small bell, the low roar of the big bell, the squeaky bang, the buzzing of the gong, or the noise generated by using a hoe or a wooden stick to strike a bronze or iron plate or simply the sound of copper and iron plates colliding with each other.”¹⁴ Lv Yahu wrote in *Study on Witchcraft in the Literature of the Qin and Han Dynasties in the Warring States Period* that “drum” and “Duo bell” are artifacts that can make a loud noise. Therefore, when using an aweing threat to dispel certain ghosts, these two objects can be used together to create a more powerful deterrent to accomplish the effect of intimidation and dispelling.¹⁵

In order to clarify and prove that “golden sound” has strong exorcism and cultural implication in local traditional culture, we mainly use and examine the live cultural heritage through oral instructions to describe and demonstrate the scared aspects embodied in the “golden sound” under big tradition. In the shamanism, all kinds of collision sounds emitted by the metal instruments of the wizards have the functional meaning of dispelling evil ghosts and spirits. In the north China, shamans of Manchu, Daur, and Xibo minorities all use waist bells. The earliest waist bells were made of stone and are now mostly made of iron. The bells are worn by shamans, and each shaman usually wears several to dozens of waist bells, each weighing some nearly 300 grams. With the weights being three to forty pounds together, some people cannot afford enough strength to carry. According to legend, the waist bell is the thing that the god Abu Kahehe uses around the battle skirt. The tremors of their sound made the demon Yeluli afraid and dizzy into the hell. The shaman’s waist bells hit, which means that the shaman rises into the natural universe, when the wind and thunder alternates, creating a journey that is far and wide. At the same time, people think that the waist bell ringing is not the manual shaking, but the dominance of God. It is the sound of vibration when God walks and goes.¹⁶ The Toli and the bronze bells of the Oroqen shaman are mainly sewn on the shaman’s costume. A shaman’s suit hidden in the White Silver Oroqen Culture Station is sewed with 22 bronze bells... These 6 bells are in a row, and the dresses are arranged in 3 rows, with a total of 36 brass bells in 6 rows.¹⁷ When the shaman dances, the brass bells collide with each other to make a sound. When the Bo’e shaman in Mongolian Kerqing has a dance, the old shaman wears 9 to 13 mirrors. The apprentice must wear at least 5 mirrors. These bronze mirrors are mostly of an odd number, and stringed around the waist in a sequence of small ones on the two ends and large ones in the middle. Jumping up and dancing, jingling, arrogant, and exorcism.¹⁸ The metal implements used by the Naxi witch wizard Dongba mainly include plate bells, contact bells, and gongs. When Dongba is conducting an evil-removal ceremony, he will make full use of the sound of deterrent from these metal instruments. If someone is sick in the Naxi Mingyin area, Lijiang, it is necessary to carry out a ritual ceremony. The ritual

¹⁴ [Britain] Fraser (author): Tong Yugang (translator), *The Folklore in the Old Testament*, Fudan University Press.

¹⁵ Lv Yahu: *Study on Witchcraft in the Literature of the Qin and Han Dynasties in the Warring States Period*, Ph.D. Thesis of Shaanxi Normal University.

¹⁶ Fu Yuguang, Meng Huiying: *The Study of Manchu Shamanism*, Peking University Press.

¹⁷ Liu Guiteng: *The Elunchun Shaman Music*, Lvfu New Voice.

¹⁸ Bi’an. *Mysterious Shaman World*. Sanlian Bookstore Shanghai Branch.

procedure is first to scare the evil ghosts. After reading the “Scrapping the Ghosts” in the house, Dongba went out to the altar and shook the three bells. Then he read “Please Dongba”, “The Origin of the Altar”, “The Origin of Dongshen”, “The Origin of the Sacrifice” and other scriptures, then face the altar, as a compliment. After telling the origins of the weapons, Dongba waved the bell in one hand and waved a long knife in one hand, dancing in front of the altar, indicating that God is killing ghosts. Dongba is doing the relevant verses, such as “Ghost Gate” and “Ghost Tree”, which means that the ghosts have been thoroughly suppressed.¹⁹ Naxi Lijiang County Dadong District has a “Zi Waben” ceremony. When Dongba recites *Animal Sacrifice* scripture, the chicken placed on the branches of *Artemisia scoparia* and *Rhododendron* are sacrificed to gods. After that, Dongba shakes the bells and burns the incense, and sprays some mustard wine and around the incense, to dispel evil ghosts and sprites.²⁰ In the Ludian Naxi minority area of Lijiang, when the “Sangpa (the iron ring with the handle)” is used to dispel the ghost, it is constantly shaken. The iron ring is called sala, an onomatopoeic word, and it generates “sara, sala” to exorcise the ghost.²¹ In the Dai minority wedding ceremony, there is a ceremony of “driving the Peng god”. According to the creation mythology of the Dai people in the Jiangyan Township of Yuanmou County, after the flood, the only couple called Qipu and Yueye left alive in the world, and they gave birth to seven men and nine women. Among them, the two girls called Zhuwa and Moyo are not married. After death, they became evil spirits and ghosts to often haunt children of the couple’s descendants. Whenever someone else got married, they were both jealous and attempted for trouble-making. So each family holds a happy event, in bids to drive them away, a ritual called “driving the Peng god”. While driving away the Peng god, the shaman “Abi” holds 8-12 bells, a fragrant leaf, four joss sticks, a pine branch and a wild bamboo section; shakes bells and recites scripture, in order to expel the Peng god.²² When a child of Tujia farm family gets sick, the Tu shaman will have a ceremony. His right hand holds a handle that has six brass bells with colored cloth strips. The strips are pressed on the legs, when the shaman is tiptoeing on the ground. The bells are swayed up and down. His left hand holds a small knife with a handle which wrapped with small iron rings. The Tu shaman shakes the rings while reciting.²³ There are also spells coming out of wizard’s mouth, such as “Ghost Behaving Slogan”, which says, “Three sage kings, eight thousand gods; the deities of the Five Mountains, ten thousand guards. Please hold gold daggers to cut off heads of ghosts and demons. With instruments on the heads, you just put the hammers to hit the ghosts and the lightning shovels on their necks. Catch the evils; smash the demons and all evil spirits. Five Heavenly Marshals lead the eight thousand soldiers to use electric lightening to shake the four quarters of the earth, turning demons into dust. The three sage kings supervise the killing, to find all unrighteous gods. The ghosts, big or small, are scared to lose their souls. Come to the altar and obey the rules; otherwise, they will become dust even after death.”²⁴ In the script of the slogan of exorcism, the sharp ringing of “Golden Sword” and “Blatant Thunder”, and the majestic “Holy Hammer”

¹⁹ Lv Daji and He Yaohua (editor): *Integration of Primitive Religious Data among Chinese Ethnic Groups (Naxi Vol.)*, China Social Sciences Press.

²⁰ Lv Daji and He Yaohua (editor): *Integration of Primitive Religious Data among Chinese Ethnic Groups (Naxi Vol.)*, China Social Sciences Press.

²¹ Lv Daji and He Yaohua (editor): *Integration of Primitive Religious Data among Chinese Ethnic Groups (Naxi Vol.)*, China Social Sciences Press.

²² Lv Daji and He Yaohua (editor): *Integration of Primitive Religious Data among Chinese Ethnic Groups (Lisu Minority Vol.)*, China Social Sciences Press.

²³ Lv Daji, He Yaohua (editor): *Integration of Primitive Religious Data of Chinese Ethnic Groups (Tujia Minority Vol.)*, China Social Sciences Press.

²⁴ Lv Daji, He Yaohua (editor): *Integration of Primitive Religious Data of Chinese Ethnic Groups (Tujia Minority Vol.)*, China Social Sciences Press.

and the “Electric Shovel” come to make all kinds of demons extremely scared and they fled. In the ritual of the Yi sorcerer expelling the rheumatism god, the Yi sorcerer recites the script and shakes the magic bell. When the ghost is finally smashed, the sorcerer sways the bamboo pole with one hand and shook the bell with the other, turning around at home, suggesting that he is chasing the ghost away.²⁵ The Yi people’s *Qu Shaoduo Scripture* says, “Exorcism for all, for evil spirits, for evil spirits, for evil spirits of four corners. Drive them to the stove altar, where there is a cat. The cat has sharp claws, and this is where you are doomed to perish.” “Shaoduo” means evil spirits. The Yi people think that when their relatives and friends come to their home to report funeral, they will bring filth and evil spirits. After the funeral is reported, they need to ask Bimo shaman to come their home for reciting evil dispelling scripture.

In addition, the wizards of various minorities also use “golden sound” to attract the attention of the gods, which has the effect of asking God to descend. For example, when the Buddhist monk of the Dulong ethnic group, “Nanmu Shaman”, holds a religious activity every time, he must first ring the bell or strike the drum, to inform his “Nanmu” to descend.²⁶ The Tujia people also used the sound of drumsticks to attract the gods. According to *Hefengzhou Book* of the Qing dynasty, “The people and the products thrive where god exists. Each household expects to embrace the coming of god. At the end of the ritual, the family prepares the sweet wine and sacrifices the sheep and pig, a practice called “enlightening the god”. Otherwise, some misfortune will fall. In the ritual, with the drumming and chiming, people will sing Miao songs and dance vigorously, as if in a play. When a god descends, he must present himself in a man’s body and speak. The man with the god’s soul will jump, and bite the bowl like the sweet cake; he walks on the heated iron plate and touches the hot oil in the tripod, but shows no signs of pain. This tradition remains the same today.²⁷ When the Zhuang sorcerer asks for gods to descend, he usually holds a copper chain with bells on their left hand and a fan on the right. The rhythm of the chain bells is to mimic the rhythm of the horse running. During the ritual, the sorcerer sings a witchery song to invite the gods to come. After the he finishes singing a piece of the song, he stops ringing the bells and puts away the fan, signifying that the god has descended to his body.²⁸

The Japanese scholar Iai Makoto made a special study on the “bells” in the *Book of Songs*, arguing that “bell” was originally used as a kind of instrument in the songs of the ancestral temple, and later became a common object in other sacred rituals or sacrifices. The ancestral spirits and gods of the Heaven can be requested to descend the ground through the tone.²⁹ The German scholar Biederman also outlined to us religious meaning of the “golden sound” around the world to drive away the evil spirits. He believed that in many cultures of the old world, the bell is more than a musical instrument; religiously, it is used by people to gather call in believers and ghosts and gods, so that the bell becomes a symbol in the sacrificial ritual. In East Asia, people use metal bars to ring the bell outdoors. There are many legends about the bell in ancient China... In many legends, the bells drive away supernatural things like gnomes, or prevent the devil from taking the

²⁵ Lv Daji and He Yaohua (editor): “Integration of Primitive Religious Data among Chinese Ethnic Groups” (Yi People’s Shrine Volume), China Social Sciences Press.

²⁶ Lv Daji and He Yaohua (editor): “Integration of Primitive Religious Data among Chinese Ethnic Groups (Duolong Minority Vol.), China Social Sciences Press.

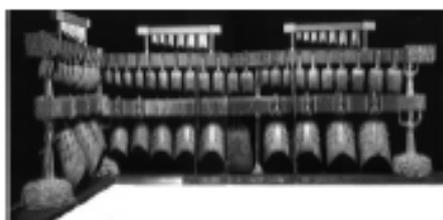
²⁷ Lv Daji and He Yaohua (editor): “Integration of Primitive Religious Data of Chinese Ethnic Groups” (Tujia Minority Vol.), China Social Sciences Press.

²⁸ Lv Daji and He Yaohua (editor) of the Integration of Primitive Religious Data of Chinese Ethnic Groups (Zhuang Minority Vo.), China Social Sciences Press.

²⁹ [Japan] Jiajing Zhenzhan, Lu Yue (translator): “The Book of Songs- Original Intention Research”, Jiangsu People’s Publishing House.

souls of the people it wants; the bells can also repel the storm (meaning to defeat the witch who made the storm). In the Exorcism and Anathema (from Shakespeare’s “The King of John”, Act III, Scene 3), the bell also played a role. Goethe’s folk song “The Wandering Bell” and Schiller’s “The Big Bell” all implicate the importance of the bell in symbolism and superstition. The bell hanging over the T-shaped cross is the symbol of the Egyptian hermit Anthony, with its role being to expel the ghosts who want to seduce him.³⁰

We can also use the unearthed objects and related images to illustrate the mythological symbolic meaning of “golden sound”. For example, in Chime-bells from the Tomb of Marquis Yi of the Zeng State (Pic. 1), the pillars are shaped like the holding hands of the wizards, which represent a kind of pleading with the gods. On a mandarin duck-shaped box in the tomb of the Tomb; its left side is a drawing of “drum beating” and right side a drawing of “striking the bell” (Pic. 2). The statues of the two birds (beasts) are shaped like a column. There are two layers beams: the lower beam provides the support for the two facing birds (beak-to-beak), with two bells hanging around; the lower beam is placed on the birds’ foot, with two chimes hanging around. There is a bird-like musician next to it, holding a bell stick to hit the bell. The part beneath the bell is shaped like a hammer with some curvature, which looks elastic.³¹ The support bell and the strike bell with holy bird (beast) show the mythological imagination of the “golden sound” of the Chinese residents, perfectly express the imaginative resonance of the “Holy Bell” with the “Holy Drum” and reflect the ancient the fact that the drum and bell music symbol is an imaginary symbol that communicates with the world of the gods. The bell-figure pattern on the bronze Dou cast of the Warring States Period (Pic. 3 also truly reproduces the sound symbol of the bell and drum that embodies the concept of communicating with the world of ghosts and gods. The picture of the stone figure striking the drum in the Eastern Han Dynasty tomb, Yinanbei Village of Shandong Province (Pic. 4) and the Tomb of Marquis Yi’s lacquer box show the very similar drum striking drawing; both are in the ancient tomb, expressing the same mythological belief.



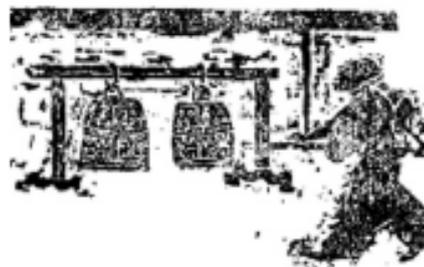
Pic 1. Chime-bells from the Tomb of Marquis Yi of the Zeng State



Pic 2. The bell striking on the lacquer box of the Tomb of Marquis Yi of the Zeng State



Pic 3. The bell figure on the bronze Dou cast of the Warring States Period



Pic 4. The stone figure striking the drum in the Eastern Han Dynasty tomb, Yinanbei Village of Shandong Province

³⁰ [German] Biederman (author), Liu Yuhong, et al (translators), “World Cultural Symbol Dictionary”, Lijiang Publishing House.

³¹ he Hubei Provincial Museum (compiler): “The Tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng”, Cultural Relics Publishing House.

The above-mentioned living cultural relics and the pictures of related artifacts throughout China give us a clearer understanding of the original cultural functions of the belief of exorcism or holy invitation via “golden sound”. We are convinced that such belief in ancient times was an extremely common cultural phenomenon. If you re-think of the popular concept of the Five Elements since the Warring State and the legends of “the west belongs to iron element” and “governing punishment and killing”, the Chinese mythology of “golden sound” is enriched. However, Fraser reminded us: “In the original etiquette, the appeal of these instruments is generally not as good as their expulsion. The purpose of using a bell or a small bell is mainly its attraction, not the expulsion, which may belong to the higher stage of religious consciousness.”³² We believe that the “golden sound” exorcism is to cleanse the environment around itself, so that the gods are descending. Therefore, the exorcism is also consistent with the practice of attracting attention of the gods.

3. The Symbolic Representations of Jade Vibration Mythology

History is not consistent in a sense. Compared to “golden sound” mythology, “jade vibration” mythology is even less known. With the development of archaeology, physiology, religious anthropology and comparative mythology, the academic community has gradually realized that there is a period of transition from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age in the world’s major prehistoric civilizations - the jade era. Mr. Ye Shuxian particularly emphasized that before the emergence of Confucianism and Taoism, the Chinese civilization had a deep and unique prehistoric belief in the jade, the jade religion. This jade religion can be traced back to the era of Xinglongyu culture jade artifacts of 8,000 years ago. After that, China experienced the development of Hongshan culture, Xiaoheyuan culture, Longshan culture, Erlitou culture, and the absorption of the elements of jade rituals of southern Liangzhu culture, Shijiahe culture and Qijia culture. Then the ritual and music system of Shang and Zhou Dynasties had evolved, and finally differentiated into the Confucian gentleman’s ideal of “comparing virtue to jade” and the Taoist belief of “eating jade for eternal life”. This jade mythology tradition is the big tradition before the emergence of the small tradition of the literary narrative. It is considered as the common source of Confucianism and Taoism.³³

Among the many cultures in prehistoric times, Hongshan culture, Liangzhu culture and Qijia culture all feature the jade culture tradition of “only jade for funeral”. Here, in order to enable everyone have a more specific understanding of jade ritual symbol system characterized by “the wizards pleasing gods by jade” (*Shuowen*), we first enumerate some textual examples here for illustration. The bone oracles give a detailed description of the concept of “only jade capable of communicating with gods”.

Gengzi hexagram! Pray for fortune, and take jade from the box. (*The Collection 4720*)

Wuxu hexagram! Pray for fortune: As king is back, play the jade music for the victory. (*The Collection 4720*)

Jiachen hexagram! Pray for fortune. I play the jade music Huangyiruo. Tell: I play the jade music Yifuruo. (*The Collection 10171*)

³² [UK] Fraser, Translated by Tong Yugang: *The Folklore in the Old Testament*, Fudan University Press.

³³ Referto Ye Shuxian’s series of papers on jade religion: “Jade Eating Belief and the Construction of Western Mythology”, “Seeking Roots”, 2008, 4; Ye Shuxian: “The Narrative of Jade, Anthropological Interpretation of the History of Mythology in Summer”, *Journal of Chinese Social Sciences*, 2009 B10 Edition, July 1st; Ye Shuxian: “The Mythical Roots of Jade Religion and Confucianism and Taoism”, “National Art”, No. 3, 2010; Ye Shuxian: “A New Examination of the Mythological Prototype of Chinese Sages--On Jade Religion as a National Education”, 《*Journal of Wuhan University*》 (Humanities Science Edition), 2010, No. 3; Ye Shuxian, “The Myth of Guanyin and Jade as Heaven”, *National Art*, No. 1, 2011; Ye Shuxian: International Perspective and Civilization of the Jade Age The origin of research is only the Chinese people love jade to say doubts, “National Art”, the second issue of 2011.

The tripod is served with three jade pieces and dog and sheep (*The Collection 30997*)

Yimao Hexagram! The jade drum is placed... (*Tun 441*)

Shang kings “took jade”, “played jade music” and “sacrificed jade” to the gods and ancestors, indicating that in the eyes of Shang kings, “jade” has the significance of serving as the sacred medium of communicating with and pleasing gods. *Zhaoyue Book* says, “Jade is also the holy object”³⁴, which vividly reveals the concept of “jade” in the hearts of the ancient inhabitants, “Jade” is the medium for the communication between gods and men. It can also be seen that the “ritual jade” and “sacrificial jade” system of the Shang dynasty is the continuation and development of prehistoric jade. Xia Qi said in *Xueliguanshi: Understanding of Ritual Jade and Sacrificial Jade*, “the jade types used in the ancient worship of the Heaven and the Earth include ritual jade and sacrificial jade. Ritual jade is placed on the holy seat, and sacrificial jade held in the hands. *Shangshu: Jinteng* says, the so-called Duke Zhou is the official holding jade Bi and Gui”. The concept of “pleasing the Heaven with blue jade and the Earth with yellow jade” as mentioned in *Zhouli: Chuguan: Dazongbo* is also the concrete manifestation of this prehistoric mythological belief in the rituals of future generations. The ritual of rewarding gods in the Plate Carving of King Yin of Qin using Jade Burial to Praying Recovery from Diseases and the witchcraft of King Huiwen of Qin using “Jade Bi (Xuan)” to cursing King Huai of Chu who had “multiple sins” can be regarded as the literal evidence of “jade” as a sacred artifact.

Of course, the discovery of the prehistoric jade religion big tradition provides us with a new horizon and a new way to explore the sound symbol narrative of “jade vibration”. We believe that “jade vibration” is the concrete manifestation of jade mythology in terms of ritual and music, and it is the mythological symbol at the mercy of the concept of holy jade. According to *Shangshu: Yiji*, Minqiu (sounding stone) is a kind of ritual jade object. The musician Kui said, “When the sounding stone is tapped or struck with force, and the lutes are strongly swept or gently touched, to accompany the singing, the progenitors (of the Emperor) come (to the service), the guest of Yubin is in his place, and all the princes show their virtue in giving place to one another. (In the court) below (the hall) there are the flutes and hand-drums, which join in at the sound of the rattle, and cease at that of the stopper, when the organ and bells take their place. (This makes) birds and beasts fall moving. When the nine parts of the service, as arranged by the Emperor, have all been performed, the male and female phoenix come with their measured gamboling (into the court).” *Commentary* by Kong Anguo says, “Tap the sounding stone, cease at that of the stopper. Bofu instrument is made of leather containing the grain shells, for the stopper of a music piece. The stone is the jade bell (inverted). It is the music instrument played in King Xun’s imperial court, which people like to use in ceremony and the gods enjoy in sacrifices. Therefore, the progenitors (of the Emperor) come (to the service).” According to Kong Yin’s *Righteousness*, “Strike the Yu and Zhu bells, to produce the chiming of sounding stone.”³⁵ Zheng Xuan said in *The Notes*: The sounding stone is a kind of jade bell. The bell is hanging to accord with the music of hall and the music of Zun.³⁶ Later scholars considered the sounding stone as jade bell. However, judging from the shape and dimension, this is not consistent with the facts. *Shuowen* says, “The stone emits the sound of jade.” These records point out that “sounding stone” is a kind of “jade sound” instrument. Jiangzhai Phase II, Miaodigou Type, Majiayao Type, Machang Type and Qijia Culture, Daxi Culture in the upper reaches of the Yellow River, Qujialing Culture and Qinglongquan Phase III Culture in the middle reaches of the Yangtze River, and Xuejiagang Culture and

³⁴ 1 Li Bujia: Notes to Yueshu Book, Wuhan University Press, 1992, p. 267.

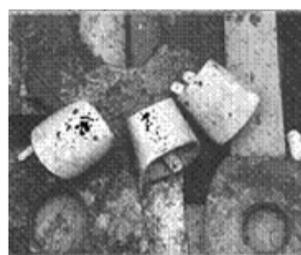
³⁵ Li Xueqin (editor): Shangshu Commentary, Peking University Press.

³⁶ Zheng Xuan: Wang Yinglin, Kong Guanglin, “Zheng’s Commentary on Shangshu”, series integration.

Majiabang Culture in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River and other sites saw the unearthing of a kind of ceramic-sounding musical instrument. The shape is spherical, bell-shaped and box-shaped. It is hollow and contains small stones, sand grains or ceramic balls. Archaeologists refer to the spherical and ellipsoidal rattle instruments as “sounding ball”, “ceramic ball” and “hollow ball”. The bell-shaped rattle is called “Tao Ling” and “Tao Bell”. In the ancient times, the concept of jade was rather vague. This kind of “sounding ball” containing some small stones is called “Jade Ball”. In connection with the music scene depicted by the musician “Kui”, we can deduce that “the sounding stone” is the “jade vibration” artifact that has been deified in religious rituals. A horse hoof-like jade piece (not shown in Pic. 5) was unearthed in the tomb of Hongshan culture. It is very similar to the oblique mouth shape of the 07M23 tomb of the Lingjiatan site in Anhui, but the latter also bear the oblique mouthpiece with jade stick (See Pic. 6). Mr. Ye Shuxian for the first time linked the jade horse hoof in the Hongshan Culture tomb to the oblique mouthpiece with jade stick found in the Lingjiatan site. With reference to the important instrument bronze bells used by the wizard when the god is descending, Ye thought these jade pieces should be “sounding instruments”, in which the jade stick can make a wonderful “jade sound”.³⁷



Pic 5. Hongshan Culture horse hoof jade



Pic 6. The oblique mouthpiece with jade stick in the 07M23 tomb of the Lingjiatan Site in Anhui Province

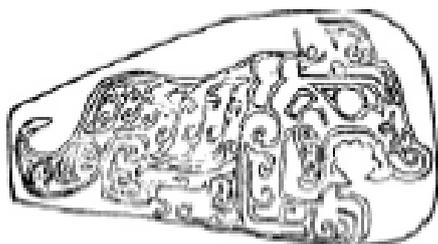
In ancient musical and ritual instruments, the most representative jade article is Qing bell (磬). In bone oracles, Qing is written as 磬 (Qian 4105) or 磬 (He 758), and from the pictograph, it seems that people use a hand-held mallet to hit the hanging stone. According to *Shuowen*, “Qing is a musical stone.” In terms of the ancient sounds, the words “Qing” and “Sheng (聲)” are of the same pronunciation, and the words “Sheng” and “Sage (聖)” two are often interchangeable in the unearthed and handed-down documents. As a result, “Qing” “Sound” and “Sage” are the phonetic loan characters. We believe that “Qing” and “Sound” are of the sanctified system of auditory symbols, which represent the mythological imagination of “Sheng”. Judging from the archaeologically unearthed artifacts, we find that the earliest unearthed Qing bell was in the early days of the Longshan Cultural Relics of the Xiangfentao Temple in Shanxi (the special Qing bell unearthed from the tomb of about 4,500 years ago, and the Tuo drums were also unearthed in the tomb. The archaeologist Su Bingqi believes that the Te drums are attached to the Tao drum, and it can harmonize when being played. The Te drum can’t be regarded as a general instrument, for it is a high-level musical instrument placed in the imperial temple, a solemn ritual instrument.³⁸ It can be seen that as early as in the Taosi period, the Tao drum and Te drum already formed a relatively complete instrumental combination for the sacred ritual system. In the late

³⁷ Ye Shuxian’s “New Studies of Chinese Mythological Archetypes—On Jade Religion as a National Education”, Journal of Wuhan University.

³⁸ Gao Wei, Zhang Yihai: *The Paralyzed Drums and Drums of the Caohe River - Su Bingqi’s Exposition on the Archaeological Discovery of the Taosi Site*; Xie Xigong (editor), “Research on the Archaeology of the Taoshi Site”, Science Press.

Longshan culture (4,000 years ago), Erlitou culture (from 4,000 to 3,500 years ago), Qijia culture (from 4,200 to 3,700 years ago), Xiajiadian Lower Culture (from 4,000 to 3,500 years ago) and other sites, a number of special features were also unearthed. Since the Yin and Shang Dynasties, Bianqing bell started to emerge, such as that found in the second phase of Yinxu Culture in Anyang. During the Western Zhou Dynasty, the number of excavated Bianqing bells was increased. For instance, the Western Zhou Bianqing bells were all unearthed in the 1984 Zhangjiapojing Jingshu Tomb of Chang’an, the 1969 Jiacun and Yuanshangguan Village Shi State Tomb of Baojia, the 1980, Fufeng Zhouyuanzhao and Chenyiqu Residential Sites of the late Western Zhou Dynasty of Baoji. A large number of Bianqing bells were also unearthed of the middle and late Eastern Zhou Dynasty, such as the Duke Qin Bianqing bells unearthed from the No. 1 Tomb of Fengxiang Nanzhihui Village in Shaanxi Province; the bells of the late Warring States Period from the Eastern Zhou Dynasty Tomb in Luoyang Jincun Village, the Tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng in Suicheng County, the Spring and Autumn Tomb of Shucheng Jiulidun, Jiangling Tianxingguan No.1 Warring States Tomb of Chu near Jiangling Jinan City; the Bianqing bells from the M13 Shangma Village Site, Houman of Shanxi province; and the Bianqing bells of the early and middle Warring States Period from the Houchuan M2040 Site, Shanxia County, Henan Province.

The Qing bell pieces unearthed after the Yin and Shang dynasties are often carved with various animal images, such as the tiger-shaped Te bells unearthed from No. 1 Yinxu Tomb in the Wuguan Village (see Pic. 7), the dragon-pattern Te bells unearthed from the Yin Dynasty Palace Building Site in the south bank of Huan River, Yinxu Xiaotun Village (see Pic. 8), the owl-pattern Te bells in Fuhao Tomb (see Pic. 9), and the Bianqing bells of the Eastern Zhou Dynasty near Jinan City of Jiangling (see Pic. 10). These combinations of sanctified artifacts and deified images (dragons, tigers and owls) have the function of visual and auditory sensation, which highlights the mythological concept of using the divine Qing bells as the ceremonial ritual and instrument. Ye Shuxian also believed that birds and beasts are the messengers of the gods or supernatural symbols. The artificially shaped images were very common in the rituals from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age. These gods and animals are visually linked to gods and spirits. If these image symbols are combined with the symbols of the instruments that emit sound, the intensively expressed concept of communicating with the world of ghosts becomes more apparent.³⁹ The Bianqing bells found in Fufengzhao Chenyi District depict the psychic image of the gods and witches (see Pic. 11), a vivid description of the original link between the Qing bell mythology and the shaman-witchcraft concept.



Pic 7. The tiger-shaped Te bells unearthed from No. 1 Yinxu Tomb in the Wuguan Village



Pic 8. The dragon-pattern Te bells unearthed from the Yin Dynasty Palace Building Site in the south bank of Huan River, Yinxu Xiaotun Village

³⁹ Ye Shuxian: The general understanding of “Rongchengshi” Xia Yu building the drums: Discussion of the five points on the “Four-Evidence Law” of the Knowledge Archaeology Paradigm, National Art.



Pic 9. The owl-pattern Te bells in Fuhao Tomb

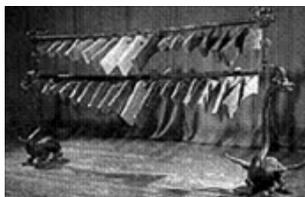


Pic 10. The Bianqing bells of the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (unearthed near Jinan City of Jiangling)

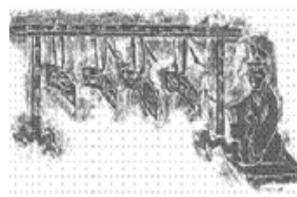


Pic 11. The rubbing of the Bianqing bells found in Fufengzhao Chenyi District

In addition, the physical Bianqing bells unearthed in the tomb of Marqui Yi of Zeng in Sui County, Hubei Province are based on the double-beast (bird) columns (see Pic. 12). The double beasts (birds) spread their wings, a vivid demonstration of the communication between the gods and the music symbols of the Qing bells. At the same time, the Bianqing bells were also found in this tomb (see Pic. 1). The physical display of the Bianqing and Chime bells perfectly explains the mythological connotations of “golden sound and jade vibration” in the ancient ritual system. We can also feel the mythological imagination of the Qing bell sound of the stones in the Han tomb paintings. Examples include stone striking picture of the East Han tomb paintings in Yinanbei Village, Shandong, (see Pic.13). In this tomb, there are drawings such as “the witch flying sword and over the circle”, “the drum beating music”, “the drumming of war” (see Pic. 14), “the bell striking (see Pic. 4)”. These mythological images come together to outline the perfect imagination of a shaman communicating with the gods. The ritualized music and dance activities of the early people are the means to improve the supernormal state of the spirit. The shaman’s experience with the god descending and the wizard’s psychic feelings of the spirits are inseparable from the various sound rhythms played out by drums, bells, and Qing bells. The Yinanbei Village Tomb of the Eastern Han Dynasty in Shandong fully demonstrates the religious needs of the ancient Chinese ancestors for communicating with the gods. Furthermore, the wizards could use the various musical symbols to enter the realm of psychic fantasy. Other similar drawings include the drawing of the stone striking the Qing bells in Wenshang Sunjia Village in Shandong (see Pic. 15), and the stone striking drawing in Jiaxiang Wu’s Shrine, Shandong (see Pic. 16).



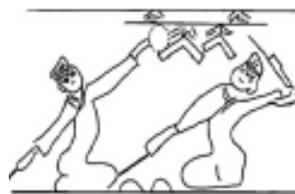
Pic 12. The Bianqing bells in the Tomb of Zeng Houyi



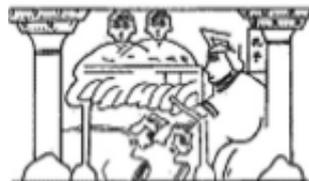
Pic 13. The stone striking picture of the East Han tomb paintings in Yinanbei Village, Shandong



Pic 14. The war drumming painting of the Eastern Han Dynasty tomb in Yinanbei Village, Shandong



Pic 15. The stone striking the Qing bells in Wenshang Sunjia Village in Shandong



Pic 16. The stone striking drawing in Jiaxiang Wu's Shrine, Shandong

Next we refer to the relevant writing materials to further enrich the sacred ritual nature of the ritual music and the function of the psychic fantasy. There is a record in the bone oracles about the king who used the jade chiming sound to achieve the state of communicating with gods. 𠄎 Tell the kingly chiming... February. (*The Collection 8613*) Play Wang Zhi Qing bells. So it is. (*The Collection 13507*) The scholar Zang Kehe believed that the word “Zhi” is “virtue”. Jade Chapter says: Zhi means the practice, which can be understood as the righteous way. In connection with the specific behavioral context in bone oracles,⁴⁰ Ye Shuxian thought that “so it is” is the “state at which the god descends to the body”⁴¹ during the ritual. *The Oracle Collection 13507* can be understood as such: King of Shang used the beautiful music of jade to achieve the state of psychic fantasy. In this process, the visual symbols of the sacred jade bells and the sacred auditory symbols of the jade sound are of great significance to the realization of the behavior of King of Shang. The Shisai Guming Script of the era of King Li of Zhou records Bohe paying homage to the gods: “𠄎 Strikes the bell once and the Qing bell five times.” King of Zhou gave the subordinates the combination of the metallic “bell” and the jade “Qing” bell, which also confirms the sacred symbol system and functional significance of the Chinese ritual system in the science of sound genesis.

In the *Book of Songs*, there often appears the description of the combination of drums and jade bells, which also provides evidence of the Chinese religious ritual system of “golden sound and jade vibration”. *Zhongu* (the bells) say, “There go the bells that ring alone. Then zithers and organs sweet in tone, mixed with flutes and sounding-stone.” *Zhijing* (inspection) says, “The bells and drums resound, with stones and flutes ringing round. Rich blessings come on earth; free blessings come on earth.” *Yougu* (blind musicians) says, “Blind musicians, a sightless hand. There in the court of Zhou do stand. The music-stands have been arrayed, with hooks and plumes displayed. There are drums large and small, plus hand-drums and chimes in the hall. *Na* (admiration) says, “How admirable! How magnificent! We’ve set up drums and tambourines. The drums resound so eloquent, to please our former kings and queens. Tang’s scion has come around. With pleasant tunes

⁴⁰ Zang Kehe: *Chinese Writing and Confucianism*, Guangxi Education Press.

⁴¹ Ye Shuxian: *Anthropology of Literature*, China Social Sciences Press.

to pay salute. The drums and tambourines resound with shrill notes of the flute. The music sounds harmonious and fine, to the rhythm of the sounding chime. Ah, renowned Tang's scion, the music is so sublime. The sounds of bells and drums rise high; The grand performance is on display. Here my worthy guests stand by. All of them are happy and gay. In days gone by, the ways of the rite were already fixed by former men, mild and pious day and night. They held the service time and again. May our ancestors heed the offering Tang's scions prepare and bring.” For example, the phrases like “bestow much bliss up us” and “honor and please our ancestral fathers” all indicate the religious ritual nature of poetry. The wonderful combination of sacred instruments or ritual items such as bells, drums, sheng and Qing bells truly reproduces the spiritual realm of the king communicating with the gods. These instruments play the role in sanctify symbols. According to *Zuozhuan Commentary*, in the 9th year under King Xiang's reign (564 BC), King Xiang was back from the banquet on the Jinhou River. With guards on the two sides, he wore a hat in the temple of Chenggong, and used the bells as a ritual”. Although this is an adult etiquette, the instruments of bells and Qing bells played an extremely important sacred role in the religious ceremonies held in the “Chenggong Temple”. This also explains the sacred combination of “golden sound and jade vibration” and its function of the divine symbolization.

We believe that only by relying on jade as the sacred big tradition can we truly understand the profound jade pendant complex of the Chinese ancestors. Ye Shuxian believed that a sage not only communicates with the gods through jade sound and has the same natural qualities as jade, he can also use jade as a medium to communicate with the Heaven and the Earth.⁴² The jade of the ancients and the harmonizing sounds it emitted reflect the harmonious relationship between men and gods. In *The Book of Rites: Pingyi*, Confucius detailed the perfect quality of holy jade, highlighting its sacred symbol function. The Pingyi chapter says: Anciently superior men found the likeness of all excellent qualities in jade. Soft, smooth and glossy, it appeared to them like benevolence; fine, compact, and strong - like intelligence; angular, but not sharp and cutting - like righteousness; hanging down (in beads) as if it would fall to the ground - like (the humility of) propriety; when struck, yielding a note, clear and prolonged, yet terminating abruptly-like music; its flaws not concealing its beauty, nor its beauty concealing its flaws - like loyalty; with an internal radiance issuing from it on every side -like good faith; bright as a brilliant rainbow-like heaven; exquisite and mysterious, appearing in the hills and streams - like the earth; standing out conspicuous in the symbols of rank-like virtue; esteemed by all under the sky, -like the path of truth and duty. According to the Ode, “he rises in my mind, lovely and bland, like jade of richest kind.”⁴³ Confucian scholars believe that always wearing the jade ware represents “the constant virtue”. Kong Yingda made a note to *The Book of Rites: Quli*, saying that a gentleman always keeps his jade pendant around himself. Jade is used as a pendant around oneself. The gentleman compares virtues to jade, and that's why he always wears the jade pendant. The jade on oneself means the constant virtues. Moreover, jade is a good ornament for wearing.”⁴⁴ The ancient gentlemen also paid special attention to “Jade Sound”.⁴⁵ *The Book of Rites: Yuzao* says: “When he was dressed he practiced deportment and listened to the sounds of the gems (at his girdle pendant). When he went forth, he bowed to all in his own private court elegantly, and proceeded to

⁴² Ye Shuxian: Study on the Prototype of Chinese Saint Mythology, Journal of Wuhan University.

⁴³ Li Xueqin (Editor): The Right Notes to The Book of Rites, Peking University Press.

⁴⁴ Li Xueqin (Editor): The Right Notes to The Book of Rites, Peking University Press.

⁴⁵ Li Xueqin (Editor): The Right Notes to The Book of Rites, Peking University Press.

mount his carriage (to go to the ruler’s) in brilliant style.⁴⁶The *Book of Songs* and *Chuci* contain a lot of descriptions of gentlemen’s “jade pendant” and “jade vibration”. For example, *Hymn to the Sovereign of the East* says “Lucky is the hour, and auspicious th’ day; Now homage to th’ Sovereign of th’ East we pay. We lay hold of our swords, which are inlaid. With jadeite, clanking the pendants of jade. Fix’d with opal weights is th’ cushion divine.” *Song to Fate the Great* says, “My attire is fluttering in th’ haze; My pendants are shedding splendid rays. Where Fragrance and Flagrancy mingle, I find that my inner beauty still in its integrity.” The *Voyage* says, “For a perfect entity my Moon Pearls glow, and jadeite pendants arc pleasant to the eye.” These textual narratives all show that jade pendant and “Jade Sound” are inseparable from the big tradition of sacred jade, and they serve as a metaphor for the mythological imaginations of the sacred rituals and implements of the Chinese ancestors. In today’s de-sanctified or secular era, we can only rebuild the supernatural deity symbol function of “jade vibration” by relying on the ancient Chinese concept of holy jade.

4. The Psychic Realm of the Sage Communicating with Gods

According to “golden sound and jade vibration”, the general scholars understand the phrase “having great accomplishments” this way: vocalize with the bell, end with the rhyme with Qing bell, and accomplish the greatness of the different sounds. They may use it as a metaphor for someone’s ability and virtue, or for someone’s wide learning and superb insight. Liu Xinfang interpreted the phrase from the perspective of epistemology, saying: “When learning the external things, a man constantly has their beauty and kindness upon his heart, which build up and become virtue. The more virtues he accumulates, the more brightly he sees, the better he sees. He shows the texture of jade at the virtuous people, because he has achieved the realm of kindness by bright eyes. He resonates with the jade vibration at the golden sound, because he has achieved the realm of sagemess by good hearing. According to *The Five Elements*, kindness is humane and sagemess heavenly. It is therefore known that golden sound and jade vibration are the highest level of understanding, a state at which a man can communicate with the heavenly Way. A man at such state can apply benevolence in the four quarters and conduct righteousness in the world. This is what we call ‘having great accomplishments’.”

According to *Shuowen Jiezi* (Literal Interpretations to Words), “The word sage means communication.” We have to ask what the sage communicates. How to communicate? Ying Shao said in *General Custom*, “A sage is good at hearing. He knows the situation by hearing.” *The Five Elements* chapter found in Guodian Chu Bamboo Slips and Mawangdui Tomb provides thorough explanations to the word “sagemess”. Here are a few of them:

Those who have seen and then know are sage; those who have personally observed it are the wise men. The brightness means intelligence, and the grandeur means sagemess. The brightness is superior and the intelligence inferior, which is what we used to say. Hearing the Way of a gentleman is what we call brightness. Hearing and knowing the Way, you will become a sage. The sage knows and follows the Heavenly way. Know and practice it, you will become a sage.

The good hearer is a man with sagemess hidden in his ears. The good seer is a man with intelligence hidden in his eyes. The good hearing is the initial stage of sagely way.

Hear the way of gentleman, and you will have good hearing. Like hearing, if you argue over the gentleman’s way, you will find the way is the sagemess hidden in the ears. Hearing and knowing it, you become

⁴⁶ Wang Zhaozhen, Wang Wenjin et al (reviser): *Dadai’s Commentary on the Book of Rites*, Zhonghua Book Company.

sagely. Hear and know the Heavenly Way, you will become a sage. The sage knows the Heavenly Way.

A gentleman has great accomplishments. The accomplisher seems to have made it and to have it at hands. The great accomplisher is considered to have golden sound and jade vibration. Only the man with golden sound and then jade vibration can have the quality of benevolence, and impose such benevolence on others; have the quality of righteousness, and treat others righteously. The great accomplisher has the sagely ears.⁴⁷

Summarize the meaning of the “sage” of these items: 1) The sage communicates with the Heaven; 2) the sage has the divine ear that overshadows the ordinary people, that is, to have extraordinary hearing ability; 3) the sage’s hearing is better than his vision. In connection with the mythological interpretation to “golden sound and jade vibration” above, we can link the “sage” to the psychic madness which the ancient shaman had when having a dancing ceremony. In doing this, we can find the genetic pattern of the Chinese ritual music system regarding “the sage to have great accomplishments”. The “sage” is able to successfully expel demons in various religious ceremonies by virtue of divine artifacts, such as bells, drums, jade, or sacred devices, and gains the approval of the gods, and accomplishes the ritual effect of communicating with the gods and the ancestors as a religious leader.

“Gold sound” is the product of the “metal” sacred worship in the Bronze Era, and “jade vibration” is the product of the “holy jade” belief in the Jade Era. From the Jade Era to the Bronze Era, the wonderful combination of “golden sound and jade vibration” shows the fusion of old and new cultures, and also reflects the roots and development paths of Chinese ritual culture. The “golden sound and jade vibration” is a symbolic system in the ritual music system, and its cultural prototypes can be traced back to the sacred material beliefs of “metals and jade” and the ritual activities of prehistoric religions. “Holy bells” and “holy jade” were originally the sacred props used by the “sage” to communicate with gods, but eventually became the most popular secular instruments in the Chinese ritual system. After the secularized entertainment function of “golden sound and jade vibration” had been revealed, its sacred symbolic representation of “sage” had gradually been forgotten. Nowadays, in order to carry out the exploration activities of ancient Chinese civilization, we must break away from the shackles of small tradition of the characters, consider the big tradition of the sacred context, and make full use of all kinds of unearthed documents and related images. In that case, we are able to truly find and reproduce the sacred belief and functional significance of materialistic and cultural symbols.

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