

# The Challenges and Opportunities of Buddhist Music Discipline in a New Era—The Practice and Application of Mind and Body System in Chinese Buddhist Chanting\*

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Religious music is an inevitable and important topic when exploring the significance of the “new” or “deep” dimension of religion or spirituality. Traditional Chinese culture influenced Chinese Buddhist chanting practices, developing special melodies, languages, and meaning, and establishing special mind and body practice system spanning thousands of years. Advances in music therapy, meditation, and vocal research give the Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practice system enough theoretical support to facilitate the construction of the discipline in the modern era. This paper adopts the scientific approach to tracing and analyzing the origins of the body and mind system in Chinese Buddhist chanting practice and reviews how the system benefits the mind and body and modern society in general. This paper also examines the issues confronting the standard and development of special chanting skills in Chinese Buddhist music in the modern era.

*Keywords:* Chinese Buddhist chanting, body and mind system, religious music, spirituality, axial age

## Introduction

Modern civilization is threatened by numerous unprecedented risks, including climate change, resource depletion, nuclear weapons, and social polarization and inequalities. The solutions to these crises, including scientific and technological innovations and political agreements, which are also indispensably correlated with the logic of human development, have been proposed but never led to a practical transformation of society. Hence, many have turned to reconsider the significance of the “new” or “deep” dimension of religion or spirituality, seeking “civilizational transformation” or “ecological civilization”. This dimension relates to such concepts as “transcendental breakthrough” or “transcendental sensitivity” embedded in the great religious traditions of the East and the West and extensively discussed in the notion of “axial age” introduced by Karl Jaspers.

It is noteworthy that although Buddhist chanting classes already exist in many Buddhist temples in China, most stop at the ritual teaching. The current debates involve making the system more mature (i.e., reducing inherent issues), clearly outlining the benefits of body and mind in Chinese Buddhist chanting practices, and connecting the body and mind system with music therapy and vocal teaching to benefit society. More research is needed to solve these issues across diverse areas, including the design for vocal teaching, the connection

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between music therapy and Buddhist knowledge, and the links between the vocal and music parts and meditation.

Nonetheless, the challenges for attaining the preceding are quite complex. In the article “Voice Science and Vocal Art, Part Two: Motor Learning Theory”, Lynn Holding (2008) analyzed the transference of voice technique from teacher to student through the development of motor skill—a branch of cognitive science. The researcher discussed the problems between the three elements during the teaching time: teacher’s view, student’s view, and voice. Linking Holding’s notions to Buddhist chanting practices expands the challenge of transferring voice technique, especially when another influential element is considered—meditation. In this vein, the teaching process becomes four elements: teacher’s view, student’s view, voice, and Buddhist knowledge and practice (including meditation). Therefore, there is a need to further explore the ties between these four elements and their potential values.

Most of the current research discusses Buddhist chanting and meditation separately, and although most mention their relevance, they lack a holistic view. The paper makes a tentative analysis of the overall use of the Chinese Buddhist chanting body-mind practice system and discusses the main contradictions and advantages of Buddhist music’s development. China’s Buddhist music physical and mental training system is the result of the conflict and integration of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism and the product of the localization of Buddhism caused by historical environmental changes. The system’s function aligns with Western positive psychology’s yearning to stimulate potential human productivity. The physical and mental training system for Buddhist chants always exists in an open and inclusive form of expression, laying the foundation for intercultural and interdisciplinary exchanges. More importantly, researching this system as a sample can facilitate innovative thinking about “transcendence and integration” in different areas, and has the possibility of sparking a new era similar to Jaspers’ “axial age” phenomenon, depending on our practice and application.

In the following section, the author will introduce the physical and mental cultivation system of Chinese Buddhist music and analyze its formation and application.

### **The Origin and Background of Mahāyāna Buddhism and the Cause Analysis of Musical Precepts**

#### **The Origin(s) of Mahāyāna Buddhism**

The origin of Mahāyāna has always been a topic of debate. The various hypotheses put forward by scholars have certain bases. Although our historical resources are increasingly abundant, there are still not enough to support a clear statement on the origin of Mahāyāna. Nonetheless, the most apparent ideas from the controversies and assumptions are that Mahāyāna Bodhisattva gradually took shape in the centuries before Christ, and Mahayana Buddhists aspire to liberate themselves from suffering and lead others towards salvation and enlightenment. Can discussing the various hypotheses bring us new thinking about the origin of Mahāyāna? Can exploring the origin of Mahāyāna provide new insights into the factors that brought about the development of Mahāyāna under the background of the times? These are the questions we need to discuss.

Suppose one says the defining characteristic of Mahāyāna Buddhism concerns pursuing the bodhisattva path. This stance does not offer a rich understanding because its meaning is unclear in concrete terms, apart from the fact that Mahāyāna sutrās have much to say about bodhisattvas. Hence, we first try to study the external environmental reasons, hoping to find the driving force of the origins of Mahāyāna Buddhism. We analyzed and traced the source back to 185 BCE to the answer. In that year, the Shunga Empire replaced the

Mauryan Empire; the Shunga Empire only lasted for about one century, then it split into some small countries, including areas in north India. During this short century, Buddhism experienced a difficult period after it prospered for more than half a century in India. The dangers to Buddhism in this period stemmed from the first king of the Shunga Empire called Puṣyamitra Śuṅga (普沙密多羅). He was hostile to the Buddha-Dharma, burned Buddhist scriptures, ruined Stūpas, destroyed monasteries, and persecuted the Bhikṣu-saṅgha. For instance, in the border country, Kāśmīra, 500 monasteries were destroyed<sup>1</sup>. Archaeological findings show that Puṣyamitra Śuṅga's son, Agnimitra, rebuilt the Sanchi Stūpa, but this act did not hide his father's vandalism of Buddhist shrines and artifacts<sup>2</sup>.

Following the external environmental factors, Buddhists became aware of the crisis of the loss of the Dharma; it heightened with the idea of the destruction of the True Dharma (saddharma-vipralopa). The Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra has an expression,

And moreover, Subhūti, in the future time period in the final time, in the final epoch, in the last 500 years, at the time when the destruction of True Doctrine is happening. There will be Bodhisattvas, great beings who will be possessed of virtues, possessed of the precepts, possessed of wisdom<sup>3</sup>.

The fear of losing the Dharma increased with the almost devastating blow of burning scriptures and the destruction of the Buddhist resorts. It was hard not to shake the faith of new believers as this situation resembled the destruction of a new religion that had flourished in India for just half a century. The community of worshippers began raising questions like: After the Buddha's Nirvana—in the period of no Buddha—who will lead the current Arahants? Although the Arahants at that time made a good test of the authenticity of the Buddha-Dharma, they did not have the Buddha's ability to differentiate and teach, nor the Buddha's supernatural powers and thirty-two characteristics. Buddha was an Arahant whose unique features eventually elevated him to a distinct level. It is also worth mentioning that the Bhagavā, a world teacher, towers above all the other Arahants, and the Tathāgata is the originator, knower, and expounder of the path.

In the era of no Buddha, when rulers tortured monks and Buddhism suffered attacks and lacked the leadership of a world teacher—the Arahants lacked the Buddha's ability to differentiate and teach—new believers experienced difficulties gaining religious confidence. During this period, Buddhism stagnated. These worries propelled the teaching and pursuit of becoming a Buddha. The Arahant Way could not meet the conditions and needs of Buddhism at that time. Therefore, it was logical for the Sangha to separate into groups that adhered to the original guidance, such as the Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths, and groups that analyzed the reasons for the Buddha's followers attaining Buddhahood and sought new development ideas in the scriptures. The latter was very likely because it was the first time in history the world had no Buddha following Buddha's achievement of Nirvana. Worshippers were inspired by this experience and developed confidence in the firm pursuit of the way to Buddhahood. Imagine that there is no Dharma as a guide in a Buddha-free setting. With his power, the Buddha changed the environment at that time and made the Sangha grow gradually. For the members of the Sangha impacted by reality, this was tantamount to the only way of redemption for the then world and future Dharma inheritance. Only by exploring the road to becoming a

<sup>1</sup> T27, no. 1545, 655b20-24 《阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論》：「如昔有一婆羅門王，名補沙友，憎嫉佛法，焚燒經典，壞宰堵波，破僧伽藍，害苾芻眾，於迦濕彌羅國一邊境中，破五百僧伽藍，沉於餘處。」

<sup>2</sup> Several documents vividly recorded this period; see Mahāvibhāṣā: “There was a Brahmin king, called Puṣyamitra”.

<sup>3</sup> T7, no. 220, p980c8-10. CF.XZ: 「然復，善現！有菩薩訶薩於當來世，後時、後分、後五百歲，法將滅時分轉時，具足尸羅、具德、具慧。」

Buddha and cultivating new preparatory Buddhas can they ease their worries about the interruption or confusion of the Dharma transmission in the future and the world at that time.

Exploring the Buddha's path to enlightenment requires returning to the Buddha and his pre-Buddha period for answers. Records show that shortly after Buddha's enlightenment, the Buddha would say to people who asked who he was: "I am the Arahant in the world; I am the supreme teacher"<sup>4</sup>. The word "Arahant" was current before the Buddha appeared on the Indian religious scene. The term is derived from the verb *arahati*, meaning "to be worthy", and thus signifies a person worthy of veneration and offerings. In the Nikāyas, records show that the Buddha referred to himself as "Bodhisatta" (in Pali) before his enlightenment. The Buddha's use of popular vocabulary indicates the influence of Indian cultural background before and during his time. The Buddha's education required the use of popular vocabulary at that time; if we want to study the way of Buddhahood, the influence of cultural background cannot be ignored. In fact, the Buddha applied and gave new interpretations to many of the concepts of Hinduism at that time.

For example, there is a description of the polytheistic world in the R̥gveda, one of the four Vedas, that can be a basis for the later Upanishads, which have a preliminary concept of reincarnation. The circle of rebirth is known as *saṃsāra* because the *saṃsāra* is full of suffering; hence, the ultimate goal of the Upaniṣad practice is the simple goal of having a better rebirth. The R̥gveda also introduced a vague concept of karma, stressing the natural impact of the act of sacrifice. The world is the result of sacrifice in the supreme existence; the act of sacrifice is the only correct action in the reincarnation system, and the process of this act gives rise to the concept of karma. The Upanishads note that karma is a moral behavior with causal effects that need to be inherited by the concept of the next life. Thus, the idea is that only a person who has good moral behavior in the previous life can be born into a noble family. This setting has helped to stabilize the class rule of Brahmins because the development of this life is predestined in the previous life, and nothing can be changed. The Buddha's enlightenment fundamentally changed the context; he gave a new interpretation of *saṃsāra* and karma by teaching the doctrines of impermanence (*anitya*), non-self (*anatman*), and the liberation from *saṃsāra*. Buddhism's idea of equality of all beings based on impermanence and selflessness fundamentally denies Brahman's caste system.

In studying the Mahāyāna Bodhisattva's path (the road to becoming a Buddha), the transformation of the Buddha's original environment and cultural experiences becomes the focus while analyzing the external background reasons. He gave new definitions to the vocabulary in the original ideology and culture, causing significant impacts. The Bodhisattva way of Mahayana Buddhism is practiced with equal compassion for all living beings, and sacrifices are a virtue recognized by Brahmins. Among the six paramitas of the Bodhisattva way, keeping precepts, forbearance, and generosity imply the spirit of sacrifice. Hence, it can be said that the process of removing the dross and sublimating the original culture of the Buddha during his growth period is the process of externalizing the critical information on the way to Buddhahood.

In this way, we return to the R̥gveda again to explore the Buddha's impact on the text's fundamental characteristics. Veda means knowledge; the early Vedic literature was described as *śruti*, meaning hearing. The name stemmed from the belief that a divine source conveyed the sacred knowledge of the Veda to the great sages by hearing, who, in turn, transmitted the knowledge by mouth from generation to generation in India. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that Buddhism does not acknowledge the Veda as *śruti* but emphasizes

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<sup>4</sup> MN 26/I 171.

empirical knowledge. Another important Brahminist concept in the Rigveda is ātman (self or soul), a phrase transmuted from the verb “breath” (Brahma van), and because the breath was considered the root of life, thus, can be understood as a soul. Brahman is a neutral noun referring to the supreme unchanging reality of the universe; when it is a masculine noun, it refers to the deified god who represents the Brahman. One could attain liberation (mokṣa) from the saṃsāra only through the actual realization of the unity of ātman and Brahman.

Singing is the act of breathing and expressing Brahmin thoughts; singing forms are precisely what the Brahmin classics promote. The Rigveda is an ancient Indian songbook containing 1,028 philosophical sacred songs. Its content includes a discussion of causality and world understanding, concepts of time and space, aesthetics and sexuality, some simple hymns of charity, and early Indian medical literature. It has a certain level of art and not primitive, simple singing. The early Indians loved songs and dances, improving the effectiveness of Brahmanical missionary activities. Buddhism developed in an environment where Indian religious activities advocated hymns, songs, and oral scriptures and did not abandon the emphasis on “sound”. Mahayana Buddhism attaches great importance to “sound” as a practical means for achieving samādhi (meditative undistracted concentration). In India, the tradition of music preaching Buddhist deeds has always existed. Buddhist music was introduced to China through the Silk Road. The Tang Dynasty had “lay people” in Chinese monasteries who specialized in Buddhist music activities. However, Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism have precepts that prohibit music different from the music practices recorded in Buddhism for a long time. Analyzing the context of the Indian culture where Buddhism evolved shows that it is not contradictory that Buddhism strictly regulates certain musical activities—just as the Buddha did not recognize the concept of “reincarnation” (an idea that exists in Brahmanism), though Buddhism has this concept with distinct explanation.

Buddhism has music activities to make it easier for sentient beings to accept the Dharma. Nonetheless, there is still the problem of environmental transformation in the existing context. Buddhism has a record 《根本萨婆多部律摄》 written by the Indian master Shengyou. It is a commentary on the Prātimokṣasūtra<sup>5</sup> (the “Precept Book” and “Precept Classic” commonly used in Chinese translations). 《根本萨婆多部律摄》 (第九卷云): “若作婆罗门诵书节段音韵, 而读诵者, 得越法罪, 又云若作吟咏之声而授法者, 得恶作罪”。然而以不如法之声吟讽声诵经有一种情况则并不触犯; 《根本萨婆多部律摄》 (第九卷亦云): “若说法时或为赞叹于隐屏处作吟讽声诵经, 非犯”。 “If someone uses the Brahman cultural way for chanting the Sutras, it is transgression, and if someone uses chanting or special voice to teach the Dharma, one commits a wrong deed”. However, there is a situation in which chanting the Sutra is allowed: “If someone, while teaching the Sutra in praise of the Dharma, uses the special reading voice and chants the Sutra behind a screen (that hides the chanter), then it is allowed”.

In the Dai cultural circle, which still retains the tradition of chanting in Southern Theravada Buddhism, there are also folk tales of the conflict between Buddhism and local culture (Qu, 2019), where the chanting of local culture requires a fan to cover the face. The localization needs of Buddhist missions paved the way for this tradition to be accepted and passed on by local Buddhism. If we grasp it in the context of the 《根本萨婆多部律摄》 (Mūlasarvāstivāda saṃgraha), it is not difficult to find that Brahmanism and the foreign cultural

<sup>5</sup> Prātimokṣasūtra 《波罗提木叉》, the most ancient scripture in primitive Buddhism, the great sutra of the Sangha (Samgha), an important part of Vinayanitaka, the ancient Tibetan documents unearthed from the Dunhuang Jingjing Cave P. t. 903.

influence it represents are the main reasons for Buddhism's opposition to chanting. Voice is the expression of people's emotions and is one of the original ways of expressing human desires. Thus, it is sinful to chant or use a special voice to read the scriptures when teaching the Dharma. However, the absence of a performance form, or when the singing is done behind a screen (to hide the chanter), indicates that the intention is not to attract attention and show off. People's use of chanting to express only devout religious feelings and praise for the Dharma is the mindfulness and pure expression of Buddhism's wholesome principles, which is why Buddhist chanting is so closely related to Buddhist temples, and lay life.

Some scholars believe that Mahayana has a tradition of advocating copying scriptures, arguing the Śrāvakas' role declined in some records only when the writing tradition of Mahāyāna Buddhism emerged. Gregory Schopen (1979) suggested that early Mahāyāna sūtras should have been written, copied, and worshipped in shrines by some monastics. There are many records in Mahayana that written scriptures were worshipped; in the extant earliest Prajñāpāramitā text, there is a mention that a Prajñāpāramitā scripture was worshipped in the Gandhavati (眾香城) city. According to the history of its translation into Chinese, it is considered that the Prajñāpāramitā literature expanded from 8,000 lines (śloka) before Lokakṣema's time (trans. 2nd century CE) to 25,000 lines and finally becoming a 200,000-line text divided into 16 assemblies in Xuanzang's time (trans. 7th century CE). It was titled "Da Bo Re Bo Luo Mi Duo Jing" 《大般若波羅蜜多經》, which also carries the name Mahāprajñāpāramitā. In Xuanzang's translation of the 16 assemblies, not all the texts are preserved in the Tibetan Kangyur. But it is not simply expanding an earlier text. Some short texts might also be a later development contributing to the Prajñāpāramitā literature. In the text translated by Xuanzang, there are many clear descriptions of the scriptures, from hearing to writing: "先世乐听甚深般若波罗蜜多。闻已受持读诵思惟精勤修习。复能书写众宝妆饰。又以种种上妙花鬘涂散等香衣服瓔珞宝幢幡盖伎乐灯明。供养恭敬尊重赞叹"<sup>6</sup>. (The ancestors were happy to hear the profound Mahāprajñāpāramitā. After hearing and understanding it, they were able to write, read, contemplate, and practice it diligently. They were able to write and adorn the Sutra with all kinds of jewels, wonderful flowers and garlands, incense, and other fragrances, clothing, and banners, streamers, and lights. The people offered respect and admiration). "闻是般若波罗蜜多深生信解。复能书写读诵受持思惟修习"<sup>7</sup>. (Listening to the Mahāprajñāpāramitā sutra arise, one has deep faith and understanding. Then, one can train the mind by writing, reading, and chanting it). In the author's opinion, this is a reminder of the Mahayana tradition of listening and speaking; transcription through writing support is auxiliary means of later dissemination.

Reciting oral traditions in Mahayana Buddhism is also emphasized in the main Mahayana scripture. The Infinite Life Sutra, "The Immeasurable Life and Wisdom Sutra" (Skt. Aparimitāyus-jñāna-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra) is, in fact, a dhāraṇī-sutra. It centers on the deity Aparimitāyus and expounds on the benefits associated with the recitation of his dhāraṇī. In the Tibetan and Chinese traditions, Aparimitāyus is equivalent to Buddha Amitāyus. In another sense, the invocation of countless Buddhas may be seen to empower the reader who recites "with one mind and a single intention" the 108 syllables of Aparimitāyus' dhāraṇī. There are many advantages associated with the recitation of Aparimitāyus' dhāraṇī. Those who hear the dhāraṇī, recite, write, or worship it in any form will reap the benefits of long life and gain protection from enemies and untimely death. There are also undeniable soteriological incentives attached to its recitation. For example, one can purify negative deeds

<sup>6</sup> (唐) 玄奘譯：《大般若波羅蜜多經·初分众喻品》，第四十四之一。

<sup>7</sup> (唐) 玄奘譯：《大般若波羅蜜多經·初分众喻品》，第四十四之一。

and, most importantly, attain birth in Sukhāvāṭī. The alleged benefits of this dhāraṇī may have served as a cause for popularizing Pure Land doctrines among illiterate Tibetans, who could not read the Buddhist sutras (Halkias, 2012). During the Buddha's life, the general reading level in India was not high. Even after it prospered, Buddhism, which stresses the equality of all living beings, pursued the teaching of the Dharma to the less educated groups. For the process of becoming a Buddha, whether it is from the perspective of restoring the Buddha's path or the motive for promotion and application, compared with boring text reading, oral hearing seems to be a more realistic origin feature.

The Infinite Life Sutra also supports the genesis of Mahāyāna, known as the forest origin. Paul Harrison (1995, p. 65) pointed out that the early Mahāyāna sūtras noticeably mention various new equipoises or meditative concentrations (samādhi); many Mahāyāna sūtras give evidence of an ascetic attempt to return to the original inspiration of Buddhism, i.e., the search for Buddhahood or awakened cognition. In this vein, Florin Deleanu (2005) argued that the various samādhis, usually connected with ascetic practice, were performed to gain mystical and supernatural attainments exclusive to the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas. The pursuit of Buddhahood or awakening cognition makes the forest site where Buddha meditated a critical practice area for attaining the Infinite Life Sutra. The text describes this point as the Buddha of Infinite Light surrounded by a large number of tall trees forming a huge virgin forest field: “又無量壽佛，其道場樹，高四百万里。其本周围，五千由旬，枝葉四布，二十萬里”<sup>8</sup>.

The Infinite Life Sutra also expresses the sound tendency in Mahayana Pure Land thought, advocating natural sound, “即時四方，自然風起，吹七寶樹，出五音聲，無量妙華，隨風四散，自然供養，如是不絕”<sup>9</sup>. The Buddha said that many music in the world was inferior to the natural sounds produced by the wind blowing the Infinite Life National Treasure Tree, “佛告阿難：世間帝王，有百千音樂，自轉輪聖王乃至第六天上，伎樂音聲，展轉相勝，千億萬倍，第六天上萬種樂音，不如無量壽國，諸七寶樹，一種音聲，千億倍也，亦有自然，萬種伎樂”<sup>10</sup>. Likewise, the natural sound of the wind blowing the treasure tree also has efficacy decipherable as in the pure environment of the forest without the interference of mundane sounds. The mind is pure, and by tempering the natural environment, tolerance will naturally increase, “微風徐動，吹諸寶樹，演出無量，妙法音聲，其聲流布，遍諸佛國。聞其音者，得深法忍，往不退轉，至成佛道，耳根清徹，不遭苦患”<sup>11</sup>. In the Mahaprajnaparamita Sutra, the sounds produced by nature and man are also recorded, including the concept of the potential transformation of the mundane environment, “城垣楼阁及诸宝树。覆以金网连以宝绳。悬以金铃缀以宝铎。微风吹动发和雅音。譬如善奏五支诸乐”<sup>12</sup>.

In addition, some people believe that Mahayana Buddhism originated from the laity because many Mahāyāna sūtras addressed the śrāvaka bhikṣus as “son/daughter of good family” (kulaputra/kuladuhitṛ 善男子善女人). The term frequently noted in the Mahāyāna scriptures is not found in the Āgamas/Nikāyas. The meaning of the “son/daughter of good family” might not necessarily be a layman/laywoman but could mean the one who follows the Mahāyāna teaching. Another possibility is that it refers to Brahmins and could also indicate the “Mahāyāna family” or even, more likely, “the Śākya family”. However, in many Mahāyāna sūtras, a householder Bodhisattva is encouraged to become a monastic.

<sup>8</sup> (唐) 慧淨譯：《無量壽經》，第 46。

<sup>9</sup> (唐) 慧淨譯：《無量壽經》，第 69。

<sup>10</sup> (唐) 慧淨譯：《無量壽經》，第 48。

<sup>11</sup> (唐) 慧淨譯：《無量壽經》，第 47。

<sup>12</sup> (唐) 玄奘譯：《大般若波羅蜜多經》，第三百一十一。

In the Anathapindikovada Sutta: Instructions to Anathapindika<sup>13</sup>, there seems to be support for the theory of the origin of the laity in the Sariputta's conversation with Anathapindika. After Anathapindika fell ill, the Sariputta taught him something he had never heard before, and he asked the Sariputta to teach it to the lay people:

I am not sinking, nor am I foundering. For a long time, I have attended to the teacher and the monks who inspire my heart, but never before have I heard a talk on the Dhamma like this. This sort of talk on the Dhamma, householder, is not given to lay people clad in white. This sort of talk on the Dhamma is given to those gone forth. In that case, Ven. Sariputta, please let this sort of talk on the Dhamma be given to lay people clad in white.

There are clan members with little dust in their eyes looking back at the story of Anathapindika. It is not difficult to see that his selfless giving and the loss and recovery of money align with the Bodhisattva way of Mahayana Buddhism. Then not long after they left, Anathapindika, the householder, died and reappeared in the Tusita heaven. Before he died, Anathapindika heard and realized the Buddha-Dharma that he had never heard of before, and he was reborn after death. These are all in line with the Bodhisattva. In his verse, he emphasized "investigating the Dhamma appropriately" by imbibing action, clear knowledge, mental qualities, and virtues of the highest way of life via which mortals are purified, not through clan or wealth. "Thus, the wise, seeing their own benefit, investigating the Dhamma appropriately, should purify themselves right there. As for Sariputta: any monk who has gone beyond, at best can only equal him in discernment, virtue & calm". Anathapindika made an important contribution to the development of Buddhism. With his support, Buddhism flourished. Suppose Buddha had taught him to give up worldly life and become a monk, Buddhism may have fallen into a more difficult situation considering the links of worldliness to the development of Buddhism.

The external environment also requires the existence of lay people. The author conjectures that the teachings of Mahayana Buddhism have always existed in the potential context of Buddhist teachings and Buddha's experiences. Still, in the later period, Mahayana Buddhism experienced the process of refining and summarizing Buddhist teachings from the scriptures to face-to-face contact to teach the Dhamma, just like the Abhidharma process was obtained. This may be the result of joint efforts within the Sangha and the lay community, and it is a necessary stage for the development of Buddhism.

In the preceding discussion on the origin of Buddhism, the problem of the transformation of the current environment often arose. It is worth further studying to obtain the inspiration beneficial to developing modern Buddhism and improving the environment from how the Buddha transformed the bad environment at that time.

### **The Conflict and Integration of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism and the Formation of the Body and Mind Practice System of the Chinese Buddhist Music**

#### **The "Filial Piety" and "Music" in the Conflict Between the Buddhism and Confucianism in the Northern and Southern Dynasties**

Chinese traditional cultures include three pillars: Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Confucianism and Daoism are traditional cultures; Buddhism is the only foreign religion. After Buddhism was introduced, China experienced the process of conflicts, absorptions, and interpenetration between Buddhism and the other

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<sup>13</sup> MN 143 PTS: M iii 258 translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu © 2003.

two cultural pillars because it influenced and challenged original Chinese philosophy and moral life. Filial piety and music use their unique functions to play a special role in the debate between Confucianism and Buddhism.

The Chinese Buddhism period began with the early introduction of Indian and Central Asian Buddhism from Western Han through the Three Kingdoms to the end of Eastern Jin (mid-first century CE to c. 317 CE). At the beginning of this period, Buddhism, as a new foreign religion, received the typical treatment as any other foreign culture. Some foreigners from the West brought the religion to China and translated many Buddhism texts into the local language for study; those intellectuals were also influenced by the Chinese cultural background and local metaphysical learning at that time. They thought the Buddhist texts of the Prajnaparamita texts were similar to the local metaphysical education, piquing their curiosity and research interest to explore more. During this period, Buddhism had no significant influence on the construction of the country and the moral life of people; instead, its impact was high among the elite. From Eastern Jin to the Northern and Southern Dynasties (317-589 CE), Buddhism in China developed rapidly because of the support of the ruling class and gentry families.

As Buddhism flourished, the ruling class took the religion seriously. For instance, the rulers of the Northern and Southern Dynasties used Buddhism as a tool to help them rule their kingdoms. Buddhist clergies also supported them with philosophical and religious discussions. The influence of Buddhism in China became connected with the construction of the country and the people's daily moral life. This growth of Buddhism also significantly impacted and challenged the prevailing Confucian ethical code. This situation paved the way for conflicts between Buddhism and Confucianism in the Northern and Southern Dynasties.

The Chinese traditional culture, Confucianism, stresses family life and social responsibility. As one of the essential traditional cultures in China, Confucianism became the dominant ideology in Chinese society in the Western Han Dynasty (206 BCE-8 CE) and remained so until the end of imperial China. The foundational Confucianism thought is the doctrine of the "Three Fundamental Bonds and Five Constant Virtues". Through these teachings' focus on the relationship between family, society, and the nation, central morality and filial piety finally expanded into a complete system of governance. Hence, when Buddhist monks shaved their heads, practiced celibacy, and left their homes and families to take refuge in Buddhist monasteries in search of individual liberation through moral perfection, these practices were debated as incompatible with the Confucian tradition of filial piety as found in the *Xiao Jing*. For example, *Xiao Jing* recorded, "The body, hair, and complexion are inherited from parents, therefore do not dare to destroy and to do harm. This is the beginning of filial piety". ("身體髮膚，受之父母，不敢毀傷，孝之始也"). Considering this opposite view to Buddhism, Buddhist Master Hui Yuan quotes from *Xiao Jing* to use the Buddhist way to express the filial piety of Confucianism: "To establish oneself and to tread the Way so that one's name (fame) will be remembered, repaying parents with this achievement. This is the end of filial piety". ("立身行道，揚名於後世，以顯父母，孝之終也"). Hui Yuan also uses the wisdom from Buddhism to discuss another topic between Buddhism and Confucianism: "The controversy about the autonomy of the Sangha". This topic is connected with the background of the formation of Buddhism because Buddhism comes from India. Its religious and policy systems are distinct from Confucianism's since it stressed that working for spiritual welfare is nobler than working for material welfare; thus, even the most potent people should express the most respect when they meet the monk.

In China, the monarchy was formed before Confucianism was established. Confucian ethical code also sustained and strengthened the feudal system, and the emperor was the most critical and highest-ranked person

in society. Master Hui Yuan argued that Buddhism and Confucianism are both the external and internal ways, combined to influence the country's development. Hui Yuan wrote to the ruler Huan Xuan:

As is outlined in the Buddhist scriptures, there are two classes of Buddhists: the laymen who propagate the doctrine while dwelling in the world and the clergy who cultivated the way after having left the household.

Those who dwell in the world observe the rites [of the society] in serving their superiors and are respectful toward their elder relatives; the righteous duties of loyalty to the sovereign and filial piety are made clear in the Confucian canonical texts and the instructions about the [exalted position of the ruler] with three great ones are manifested in the writings of the Sage. In this, they agree with what is ordained in the royal regulations as exactly as the two halves of a tally...

But the monk who has left the household is a stranger dwelling outside the world; his deeds are cut off from those of other beings... He is one whose principles run counter to those of the world and whose way is opposed to common practices... Having altered the common practice, they cannot share the rites imposed by secular codes; dwelling in seclusion, they must make their deeds sublime. Only in this way they are able to save the world from deep stream... Therefore, within the family, they deviate from the veneration due to natural relationships and yet do not swerve from filial piety; outside the family they refrain from reverence in serving the ruler and yet do not lose their respect towards him<sup>14</sup>.

In the *Xiao Jing*, filial piety in the narrow sense is filial piety to parents, while, in the broad sense, it connotes loyalty between monarchs and subordinates. Buddhism contributed to the state by playing a harmonious role in social functioning. Emperor Wudi of Liang used different ways to support Buddhism in the South. He issued an edict letting all Buddhist clergy abstain from eating meat in 511. The edict was entitled "Abstaining from Meat and Wine" (斷酒肉文). Before this order, Hui Yuan and his disciples already practiced vegetarianism in Lushan; existing record described, "Before the (Mahāyāna) Nirvāṇa Sūtra was introduced, in about ten years, the well-known monks at Lushan already practiced vegetarianism". 《廣弘明集》卷26: "昔涅槃未啟，十數年間，廬阜名僧已有蔬食者矣，豈非乘心闡踐，自與理合者哉"<sup>15</sup>. The practice was mainly influenced by the Confucian thought of filial piety and compassion. According to Confucian filial piety, when a person's parents died, this individual had to practice vegetarianism, abstaining from eating meat and good cloth to show their filial piety.

Emperor Wudi also used music to harmonize the conflict between Buddhism and Confucianism. He combined Buddhist music with the Ya music system as the base for forming Chinese Buddhist music. The Ya music system is one of the most important systems from the Confucian ethical code. In the Chinese tradition, the Ya music system was not only the priority of the new dynasty after the change of dynasty, but also, in a certain period, it represented the official culture. Change to Ya music system every time reflected the cultural landscape of the entire era and the status of its literature and art in the superstructure. The Confucian ethical code concentrated on rules, music, and rites; music culture is an indispensable part of Confucian culture. Emperor Wudi made "QingShang" the formal Ya music system, allowing the Buddhist chanting to adopt its notation and vocal style. The art of music has no differences in ethnicity, religion, writing, and culture, and it is one of the best forms of cultural exchange. The Buddhist ideas transmitted from India and the Confucian ideas native to China are blended into the Chinese Buddhist music system. Emperor Wudi laid the foundation for the Chinese Buddhist music system. The specific notation of the Chinese Buddhist music system can still be found in many temples in China, especially in "Yu" mountain chanting temples in the Shandong Province of China. In this vein, the Chinese Buddhist music system significantly influenced the Japanese Buddhist system.

<sup>14</sup> [南朝]僧祐：《弘明集》，〈答桓太尉書〉，卷十二。

<sup>15</sup> [唐]道宣：《廣弘明集》，卷26。

Another vital person used music to harmonize the conflict between Buddhism and Confucianism. In the Qi era, King Jingling 竟陵王 (蕭子良 460-494 字雲英) invited famous monks who excelled in vocal Buddhist chanting to study and create new Chinese Buddhist music at the palace. Existing records dated to February 19, 489, offer opportunities to imagine the whole process of this meeting for Chinese Buddhist music, “永明七年二月十九日，司徒竟陵文宣王夢于佛前咏‘維摩’一契，因發聲而寤，即起，至佛堂前，還如夢中法，更詠‘古維摩’一契，便覺音韻流好，有工恒日。明旦，即集京師善聲沙門僧辯等次第作聲，辯‘古味摩’一契，‘瑞應七言偈’一契，最是命家之作”<sup>16</sup>. He also invited the discipline master to give talks on the Vinaya of the Sarvāsivāda, with the desire to connect the disciplinary rules of the Buddhist monasteries with the Confucian teachings on righteousness.

The conflict between Buddhism and Confucianism runs through filial piety and is fused into Buddhist music. Filial piety and music together promoted the formation of a system of Chinese Buddhism music, and this system had a profound impact on the Buddhist music system in Japan. The inclusiveness and diversity of Chinese culture have reflected and developed in the process of debate between Buddhism and Confucianism. Diverse cultures are integrated and innovated in exchanges and collisions, and this historical process is vividly reflected in the debate between Buddhism and Confucianism.

### The Musical Expression of the Thought of “Same Origin” in Laozi Huahu Jing

The contradiction between Taoism and Buddhism broke out due to the appearance of *Laozi huahu jing*. However, when jumping out of the homologous argument of “created by Laozi” with religious competition, the commonality of Buddhism and Taoism was expressed through music.

According to Sengyou’s Catalogue of the Tripitaka 《出三藏記集》，Bo Fazu (帛法祖) lectured at Chang’an, teaching Buddhist and non-Buddhist cultures. More than a thousand people came to learn from him. At that time, Wang Fu (王浮), a Daoist monk, debated with Bo Fazu on the superiority of the Daoist religion. But Bo Fazu defeated the Daoist every time. The reason was that there was no systematic teaching in Daoism at the time. Wang Fu wrote the famous *Laozi huahu jing* 《老子化胡經》 (Laozi’s Conversion of the Barbarians) to defame Buddhism as an act of revenge, igniting the conflict between Buddhism and Daoism. This became a major event in the Jin Dynasty. The content of the text is as follows: “When Laozi was born in the palace of Laojun, nine dragons poured water to bath him. He could walk right after birth, and a lotus flower sprung up when he walked on the ground. Then he said he was the only one in the world, pointing to the sky with his left hand and to the earth with his right hand. Then Laozi went to the Hanguan 函谷關, the west gate of China, and told the official there the *Daode jing* 《道德經》. Afterward, he crossed the desert and went to the West. Then his spirit entered Maya’s womb, and thus, the prince Siddhartha was born in India”. This description shows that the story was copied from Buddhist scriptures. After Bo Fazu’s death, those ethnic groups got a portion of his ashes and built stupas in his honor because his influence extended to the far west amongst the ethnic groups.

The story of Laozi converting the Barbarians was not first created by Wang Fu. The Han historical book *Houhanshu* 《後漢書》 already mentioned it, noting that Laozi went to the West and became the Buddha: “老子化胡的故事最初起于東漢。漢桓帝時，襄楷上書提到：或言老子入夷狄為浮屠，浮屠不三宿桑下，不欲久生恩愛，精之至也。天神遺以好女，浮屠曰：此但革囊盛血，遂不盼之。其守一如此，乃能成道”<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> [唐]道世：《法苑珠林》，〈嘔贊〉，音樂部，第三十四。

<sup>17</sup> [南朝•宋]范曄：《後漢書》第4冊1082頁，中華書局，1965年。

These stories show that Daoism felt the pressure from Buddhism as a religious rival. On the other hand, the stories of Buddhism and Taoism coming from Laozi also offer the possibility of mutually integrating Buddhist and Taoist concepts. Only on the premise of remarkably similar concepts can there be fake stories of the same origin.

During the Jin Dynasty [晉 (265-420)], Daoism gradually formed itself as a religion by learning from Buddhism and organizing its followers, scriptures, and rituals. Owing to the metaphysical learning, 玄學 and Buddhist prajna studies aligned, reducing many conflicts between Buddhism and Daoism. However, at the same time, at the beginning of Qi [齊 (479-502)], Daoists forged many texts based on the Daoist classic *Laozi kaitian jing* 《老子開天經》 (Classic of Laozi Opening Heaven) or *Laozi huahu jing* 《老子化胡經》. Buddhists forged texts such as the *Qingjing faxing jing* 《清淨法行經》 (Sutra to Propagate the Clear and Pure Law) as the true interpretation of the Daoist classic *Qingjingjing* 《清淨經》. Buddhists saw Laozi only as a disciple of the Buddha side-by-side with his foremost disciple, Mahakasyapa (摩訶迦葉). The most influential work at this time was written by a Daoist priest Gu Huan (顧歡) entitled *Yixialun* 《夷夏論》<sup>18</sup> (On Barbarian and Chinese), which caused much debate. Part of the *Yixialun* is found in the History of Southern Qi. Gu Huan said that although Daoism and Buddhism were from the same origin as Laozi converted the Buddha, Buddhism was a foreign religion with certain practices that contradicted Chinese custom and tradition, including the different and strange clothes and practices such as shaving their heads, burning of their bodies after death. Hence, it was not suitable for the Chinese people. Such discussions support the argument of homology while emphasizing the differences in manifestations but fail to discuss Buddhism and Taoism on an equal footing.

When we go back to the actual historical background of the growth of Buddhism, the argument that the source of Buddhism is Laozi becomes even less convincing. In the era when Buddhism was born, India was heavily influenced by Brahmanism. Brahman classic, the four Vedas, and Upaniṣad played a specific role in promoting the development of Buddhism. Upanishads have a concept of a reincarnation circle of rebirth, known as saṃsāra; the saṃsāra is full of suffering; the ultimate goal of the Upaniṣad practice is to get liberation (mokṣa) from the saṃsāra through the true realization of the unity of ātman and Brahman. Besides, the concept of the Four Great Elements (mahābhūta)—earth, water, fire, and air—also appeared for the first time in the early Upaniṣads. The Rīgveda also introduced a vague concept of karma, emphasizing the act of sacrifice as the only correct act in the reincarnation system. The Upanishads note that karma is a moral behavior with a causal effect. The concept makes the object of karma in the present life immutable, supporting the Brahmins' class rule because the class is fixed and the karma of the previous life leads to birth, and the class system cannot change. Buddhism's idea of equality of all beings based on impermanence and selflessness fundamentally denies Brahman's caste system. It is discernible that Buddhism is the result of the development and breakthrough based on its local culture.

Nonetheless, Brahmanism in India has certain similarities with Taoism. For example, one of the vital Brahminist concepts in the Rīgveda is ātman (self or soul), a phrase transmuted from the verb "breath" (Brahma van), and because the breath was considered the root of life, thus, it can be understood as a soul. This concept is similar to Taoism's understanding of people. Taoism believes that people are composed of three parts: form, qi, and spirit. Qi, the medium between form and spirit, plays a crucial role in the entire Taoist practice system. Literally, qi means air. Combined with Daoism's view of the understanding of humans, qi can also be

<sup>18</sup> [南朝]蕭子顯：《南齊書》，卷五十四，顧歡傳。

understood as the basic needs of the human body to function, and it can be understood as the concept of breathing. The belief in the unity of heaven and man in Taoism is manifested in the control and fusion of qi shaped by spirit at the level of practice. It seems like the true realization of the unity of ātman and Brahman in the Brahmanism teaching, but with different goals. Liberation (mokṣa) from the saṃsāra is Brahmanism's final goal, and Taoism pursues immortality; "immortality" has become a manifestation of the unity of heaven and man.

There are many types of immortals. In cultivating Taoism and becoming immortal, tempering the body is critical as it relies on "qi" to transform. Buddhism kept the concept of the Four Great Elements (mahābhūta) that first appeared in the early Upaniṣads. In Buddhism, each person is composed of the five aggregates. In the strictest sense, the cords of sensuality are "name-and-matter" (nāma-rūpa). "Nāma" is equivalent to "consciousness" in a broad sense, i.e., all spiritual phenomena, like the "mind"; "rūpa" is matter, i.e., the human body. From the perspective of the four major elements, tangible structures such as skin, flesh, and bones belong to the earth; liquid substances such as essence, blood, saliva, etc. belong to the water; body temperature and heating belong to the fire; and breathing movements belong to the wind. Thus, Buddhism sees human beings are the unity of body and mind. In this case, a "person" is Conditional Aggregation without essence, i.e., there is no "self" and no need for material as an intermediary to transform the physical body, but the interaction of body and mind. Different from Taoist concepts of "form, qi, and spirit", Buddhism stresses that human beings are "name-and-matter" (nāma-rūpa), and the concept of "qi" is included in "matter" and appears as the "wind"—one of the four major elements.

It is evident that Buddhism also attaches great importance to the role of physical health in practice. In the Buddhist view, when we experience a pleasurable bodily feeling, we also feel a pleasant mental feeling. Similarly, when we experience an unpleasant bodily feeling, we also feel an unpleasant mental feeling. Revulsion follows any unpleasant feeling. It is the first displeasing physical sensation towards suffering. Thus, on such occasions, "the worldly person feels a twofold feeling: bodily and mental" [S.IV.208 (36.6)]. The worldly person converts physical pain into mental pain and experiences it doubly. The cultivation of the body in Buddhism has developed the different form from the Taoist concept of "qi" in China. This Buddhistized body and mind training system is expressed in the form of Shaolin kungfu and Buddhist chanting.

Emperor Wudi 梁武帝 (464-549 Liang Dynasty) was the first to consider Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism to have similar origins and advocated for the syncretism of the three religions. Likewise, he integrated Buddhist music into the Confucian Ya music system, which was influenced by Taoist culture and regulated the body through the communication and integration of music and nature. The notion that the Daoist view of music—"大音希声" (da yin xi sheng)—is weakening the form of expression of music to pay attention to the ideological realm is consistent with the reason Buddhism has musical precepts but advocates the merits of chanting and praise. Through the non-verbal form of music, the diffusive effect of concept is weakened. Practicing non-attachment to concepts and forms while purifying the mind raises confidence in the Dharma through praise. All adventitious defilements should also be taken as caused by our use—or even "abuse"—of language because language cannot correctly reflect reality. Thus, realizing the pure nature of thought amounts to construing the essence of Dharma, namely, understanding that all Dharmas are unproduced. This is why

chanting recorded in the Buddhist precepts<sup>19</sup> based on pure thoughts chanting for the Dharma is allowed and why Buddhist chanting is an important part of daily life in monasteries.

Nāgārjuna's work, the *Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā-śāstra* 《十住毗婆沙論》<sup>20</sup>, translated by Kumārajīva, states as follows: “佛悉瞻見.....音深不散，柔軟悅耳。從臍而出咽喉、舌根、鼻頰、上齦、齒唇，氣激發成音句，柔軟悅耳。如大密雲雷聲隱震，如大海中猛風激浪，如大梵天音聲，引導可度眾生。離眉眼唇，可呵語法”。 It describes how to use the breath to make sounds from the navel (similar to the position of the breath confrontation point in vocal singing) and records such sounds' merits. Interestingly, the large number of records about Nāgārjuna's works and the inconsistency in time and place has created the assumption of Nāgārjuna's immortality and longevity. According to Tāranatha's Tibetan records, Nāgārjuna lived for as long as 600 years. Those records of how to use breath for voice (Buddhist chanting) and its huge merits, coupled with Nagarjuna's longevity assumption, are easily reminiscent of the Taoist practice of the body through the concept of qi. Also, there are many records about the effect of natural wind and trees making natural sounds in the “Infinite Life Sutra” translated by Xuanzang. The Sutra contains records of the good merits of this kind of natural music, and it shows Buddhism respects this kind of music. This is consistent with Taoism's concept of music in harmony with nature to adjust the body. The Infinite Life Sutra also conveys the same sound tendency as Taoism in Mahayana Pure Land thought, advocating natural sound<sup>21</sup>. It is worth reiterating that the contradiction between Buddhism and Taoism broke out in *Laozi huahu jing* 《老子化胡經》 and was merged into music.

### **Analysis of the Application and Practice of Body and Mind in Chinese Buddhist Music Cultivation System**

#### **Cross-Examination Between Scientific Research and the Mind-Body System in Chinese Buddhist Chanting Practices**

As stated earlier, Lynn Holding discussed the challenges with the transference of voice technique from teacher to student through the development of motor skill acquisition, noting three elements: teacher's view, student's view, and voice. Linking the analysis with the Buddhist chanting practice expands the teaching process to four elements: teacher's view, student's view, Buddhist knowledge (meditation), and voice. As a body system of Buddhism, the vocal part of Chinese Buddhist chanting practice is similar to the kung fu practice in Shaolin Temple. Chanting aims to train the body and mind, making the body healthier to help the mind work. Some examples of

such practices, including mindfulness meditation, Vipassana, Yoga, Tai Chi, and Quadrato Motor Training, have been reported to positively impact wellbeing. They can be considered emotional and attentional regulatory activities, which, by inducing a state of greater inner silence, allow the development of increased self-awareness. Inner silence can, therefore,

<sup>19</sup> (印度)勝友：《根本薩婆多部律攝》，which wrote by Indian master Shengyou, it is a commentary on the Pratimokṣasūtra, 《根本薩婆多部律攝》第九卷云：“若作婆羅門誦書節段音韻，而讀誦者，得越法罪，又云若作吟咏之聲而說法者，得惡作罪”。《根本薩婆多部律攝》第九卷亦云：“若說法時或為贊嘆于隱屏處作吟諷聲誦經，非犯。” Pratimokṣasūtra 《波羅提木叉》(the “Precept Book” and “Precept Classic” commonly used in Chinese translations), the most ancient scripture in primitive Buddhism; the great sutra of the Sangha (Samgha); an important part of Vinayanitaka, the ancient Tibetan documents unearthed from the Dunhuang Jingjing Cave P. t. 903.

<sup>20</sup> (印度)龍樹菩薩造，(姚秦)鳩摩羅什譯：《十住毗婆沙論》。

<sup>21</sup> (唐)慧淨譯：《無量壽經》第 69 頁，第 47 至 48 頁。“即時四方，自然風起，吹七寶樹，出五音聲，無量妙華，隨風四散，自然供養，如是不絕”。

be a powerful tool to counteract the negative effects of overabundant environmental noise, thanks to its ability to relieve stress-related symptoms. Since all these positive outcomes rely on physiological and biochemical activities, the molecular and epigenetic mechanisms influenced by different mindful practices have recently been investigated. (Venditti et al., 2020)

Meditation has also been the focus of several research undertakings. “Meditation does influence emotion processing, regardless of whether the practice focuses on cognition (*ānāpānasati*) or emotion (*mettā*)” (Lee et al., 2012). Recent research on the brain has shown the positive influences of practicing Buddhist chanting.

Compared to non-religious chanting and no-chanting, higher brain activity was observed in several brain regions when participants performed religious chanting while viewing fearful images. These functional and structural results suggest that religious chanting helps to form a positive schema to counterbalance negative emotions. (Gao et al., 2020)

These kinds of results show that Buddhist chanting positively affects the brain activities of human beings. The singing part of chanting connects to motor skill acquisition. While combining Buddhist chanting with music therapy and vocal inside body physical sport has been stressed today, it is noteworthy that this form already existed for thousands of years. Many historical documents record its amazing positive function, revealing the true function of the Buddhist chanting. Many Buddhist documents described how to use the body during the chanting practice and the voice feature of Buddhist chanting, 《十住毗婆沙论》云：“佛悉瞻见……音深不散，柔软悦耳。从脐而出咽喉、舌根、鼻颚、上颚、齿唇，气激发成音句，柔软悦耳。如大密云雷声隐震，如大海中猛风激浪，如大梵天音声，引导可度众生。离眉眼唇，可呵语法”。 Their description is very detailed; the use of scientific vocal skills is easily discernible. Breathing, throating (vocal cord), resonant cavity are three fundamental singing aids. This follows the scientific vocal way that uses knowledge from biology, physics, and anatomy to manage the breathing, throating, and above head resonating (associated facial muscles) to protect our vocal cords and the right way to train the body muscles and mind. Chinese Buddhist chanting has heritages spanning thousands of years, but it did not record for voice in some periods. While we cannot listen to the original way of Chinese chanting, many Chinese documents help create a connection to those songs. Nonetheless, Chinese Buddhist chanting will lose its main function if Chinese Buddhism only concentrated on the surface ritual and did not have the right way to sing and practice.

Some people think the melody of Chinese Buddhist chanting has several elements like the traditional Chinese opera; in this case, the singing skill for Buddhist chanting also connects with it. Since Wei, Jin, and the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the Chinese have created their Buddhist chanting system, with melody and singing combined with the court music system. Although the melody has changed over time, the voice style still does not connect with traditional Chinese opera. The reason is not only because the music differs from the chanting style but also because no vocal skill exists without being influenced by the language.

Traditional opera singing almost has its unique language feature and uses a particular skill to deal with that. The skill involves using the mouth more because of the influence of the local language over time. Buddhist chanting, in the beginning, adopted Sanskrit to sing; by understanding the pronunciation, it is discernible that the language was more flexible to the oral cavity. For example, in Sanskrit, some of the words have four different positions in the mouth, including na, ña, ṇa, ṅa, sa, and śa, and it was challenging to use Chinese to express some of the pronunciation. This means that the original Sanskrit chanting clearly focused on the process of using the cavity. Chinese Buddhist chanting uses their changed languages, Huayan letters, combining Chinese and Siddham. The rules to change the form are presented below (see Figure 1):

华严字母汉语注音及构成表 (六) 三合

次序	第1、2助主音 字母亦可作主音		第1、2助从音				亦可作 影子主音	第1、2助从音 (亦可作从音)						第1、2助主音 亦可作主音	
24	曷(曷)	(1)	杭	恒	洪	胡	毫	孩	曷(曷衣切)	翳(曷因切)	寒	官(曷因切)	含	候	曷
	HAO	●	HANG	HENG	HONG	HU	HAO	HAI	HI	HIN	HAN	HUN	HAN	HOU	HAO
	罗(劳)	(2)	郎	楞	龙	卢	劳	来	来	林	兰	林	兰	娄	罗
	LAO	○	LANG	LENG	LONG	LU	LAO	LAI	LI	LIN	LAN	LEN	LAN	LOU	LAO
	多(刀)	○	当	登	东	都	刀	呆	低	颠(丁)	单	颠(丁)	单	兜	多
	DAO		DANG	DENG	DONG	DU	DAO	DAI	DI	DIN	DAN	DIN	DAN	DOU	DAO
	主音字母		从音				影子主音	从音						主音	

“三合”共1个字母

Figure 1. Chinese translation of phonetic annotation and its composition of Huayan letters.

Notes. “多【dao】+夬【ang】=当【dong】，多【dao】+鞞【eng】=登【deng】，多【dao】+翁【wong】=东【dong】，多【dao】+乌【wu】=都【du】，多【dao】+爇【a】=刀【dao】，多【dao】+哀【ai】=呆【dai】，多【dao】+医【yi】=低【di】，多【dao】+因【yin】=颠【din】，多【dao】+安【an】=单【dan】，多【dao】+音【yin】=丁【din】，多【dao】+谳【an】=耽【dan】，多【dao】+讴【ou】=兜【dou】” (Fu, 2013).

We can find that there was more emphasis on the vowel and the pronunciation, which is very close to the Chinese pronunciation of the modern era. When singing the lyrics, the focus is to sing as clearly as possible to ensure the audiences are awake and undistractedly concentrating. It also has value for the people chanting since the chanting vocal way helps in self-training. In this vein, there is an emphasis on using one singing skill to enable it to work. The Chinese vocalist can attain this skill by having enough practical experience based on scientific vocal skills like bel canto or using special Chinese traditional opera skills to deal with the different styles of the local Chinese languages. It is different from the traditional operatic style. Compared with the popular singing style, the voice requires more penetration, a stronger breathing foundation, and a high positioned cavity to keep it more suitable to train the body and mind.

It has been shown that an internal locus of attention, that is, mechanical directives, depresses both immediate and long-term learning. External locus of attention involves eliciting a desired vocal response by asking the student to focus on the desired result of a movement, not the movement itself. (Helding, 2008)

Since the goal of the vocal part of the Chinese Buddhist chanting is that the practice is to train the body in line with Buddhist knowledge to help with meditation; the vocal goal is not to use the voice in service to express the desired result. Because of the different purposes, the teaching concentrates more on the internal locus; depending on the mechanical directives, the meditation combines with the voice subsystems (respirator, vibrator, resonator, articulator, and psychological systems) for singing. That does not mean the Buddhist chanting does not need an objective ear from the teacher. On the contrary, the teacher’s function in Buddhist chanting focuses on the melody heritage and the unique step of training the body combined with meditation.

Chinese traditional culture and music have influenced Chinese Buddhist chanting due to the historical and environmental context. It has changed over time, adopting the Chinese court music system with the music therapy function called tune treatment (see Figure 2). There are several examples to describe the scientific

explanation of existing music therapy.

The “resonance theory” (Zhang, 2000, p. 151). This suggests that music is a series of resonant combinations of different properties that generate specific physical energy, which, when transmitted to the body, causes the inherent vibrational frequencies (heart rate, heart rhythm, inhalation, blood pressure, pulse, etc.) and physiological structures (human tissue cells) to resonate harmoniously. The “limbic system theory” (Agell, 2002, p. 54) suggests that music can regulate somato-motor psychological functions through the limbic system, promoting physical and mental health. The “brainstem reticular formation theory” suggests that music stimulates the brainstem to stimulate the body. This theory suggests that musical stimulation increases or decreases the activity level of the central nervous system through the reticular formation and influences specific and non-specific projection systems, mental processes, visceral and endocrine functions, arousal, and attention through the reticular formation. Music has a beneficial effect on the body by harmonizing the reticular formation of the brainstem with the functions of the various cortical parts of the brain. (Liang, Li, & Li, 2010)

《悉曇三密鈔》卷上

五音	角	徵	宮	商	羽
五處	牙	齒	喉	顎	唇
五時	春	夏	土用	秋	冬
五方	東	南	中	西	北
五行十干	甲乙木	丙丁火	己土	庚辛金	壬癸水
五味	酸	苦	甘	辛	鹹
五色	青	赤	黃	白	黑
五藏	肝	心	脾	肺	腎
五根	眼	舌	身	鼻	耳
五氣	嚙	噓	唧	呵	吹呼
五聲	喚	語	歌	哭	吟
五受	捨	喜	樂	苦	憂
五常	仁	禮	信	義	智
五戒	不殺	不淫	不妄	不盜	不飲
九識	第八阿賴耶識	第七末那識	第九菴摩羅識	第六意識	前五識
五智	大圓鏡智	平等性智	法界體性智	妙觀察智	成所作智
五大	空(不空) 地(無畏)	火(不空) 火(無畏)	地(不空) 空(無畏)	風(不空) 水(無畏)	水(不空) 風(無畏)
五佛五尊	阿闍、發心	資生、修行	大日、方便	彌陀、菩提	釋迦、涅槃
五形	圓(不空)	三角	方(不空)	半月(不空)	圓(不空)
	方(無畏)		圓(無畏)	圓(無畏)	半月(無畏)
五句(略)					

Figure 2. Phonetics theory of Siddham.

Advances in music therapy, meditation, and vocal research give the Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practice system enough theoretical support to facilitate the construction of the discipline in the modern era. It is noteworthy that although Buddhist chanting classes already exist in many Buddhist temples in China, most stop at the ritual teaching. When music therapy connects with Buddhist knowledge, the vocal and music part connects with meditation. The challenge for this aspect is very complex.

The aim is to define a space within which we can explore what these Buddhist and other Asian bodies of thought might be talking about so as to enrich and extend Western scientific understandings, rather than simply reducing them in order to fit in with what we think we already know. (Samuel, 2014)

More research is needed to understand how to make the system more mature (i.e., reducing inherent issues), clearly outline the benefits of body and mind in Chinese Buddhist chanting practices, and connect the body and mind system with music therapy and vocal teaching to benefit society.

**The Connection Between Chinese Buddhist Chanting Mind and Body Practice System and Psychotherapy and Buddhist-Based Interventions—The Challenges and Opportunities of Mindfulness-Based Interventions and Buddhist-Based Interventions in Contemporary Contexts**

Today, Buddhist meditation is practiced in a secularized culture as a pragmatic and valuable approach to reducing stress from the busy social life and adjusting to mindfulness to meet new challenges emanating from fast-paced daily life. Western clinical medicine and psychology have brought Buddhist meditation to a new stage, expanding it outside the Buddhist doctrine to use this function combined with other disciplines to benefit humans. They concentrate on meditation to save a person from timely pain rather than to pursue the transcendence of life reincarnation. In recent years, many more psychological therapies have developed with Buddhist knowledge to establish increasingly varied meditation therapy used for clinical treatment-based interventions. Examples include Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and Cognitively-Based Compassion Training (CBCT). They are all generally named Mindfulness-Based Interventions (MBIs). Based on the meditation practice, Buddhist meditation therapy offers effective help. Yet, many people miss the benefits because of their busy life. Sometimes, when they try to meditate after the day's work, they quickly fall asleep, and practice meditation without making time to exercise the body. Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practice systems deal with this kind of problem through dynamic and static ways.

Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practice system has existed in China since the Wei-Jin and North-South periods. This practice combines with the Chinese court music system, with a history spanning thousands of years. Although the traditional court music system is already demised because of historical reason, the Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practice system still exists in the temple and the practice of the layman life.

*Sati* makes the apprehended object stand forth vividly and distinctly before the mind. When the object being cognized pertains to the past—when it is apprehended as something that was formerly done, perceived, or spoken—its vivid presentation takes the form of memory. When the object is a bodily process like in-and-out breathing or the act of walking back and forth, or when it is a mental event like a feeling or thought, its vivid presentation takes the form of lucid awareness of the present. (Bodhi, 2011)

Bodhi discussed the meaning of mindfulness from the Suttas. The results clearly show that mindfulness, called “sati” in the Sutta, could be practiced on the subject and object sides. From the subject side, it takes the form of memory; from the object side, it takes the form of lucid awareness of the present. In the Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practice system, the object and subject sides are clearly shown during the practice process. This includes the Buddhist chanting vocal practice side for body practice, through training the body (inside physical exercise and outside muscle practice), e.g., “horse-riding posture”. Posture practice is important, and by maintaining such positions a little bit, one can use the object side to observe the breathing

inside the body as one of the steps of the body practice part of the Chinese Buddhist chanting body and mind practice system. During this kind of body practice steps, the object side which practices the sati takes the form of lucid awareness of the present.

From the Buddhist vocal chanting part, the process of learning the chanting should connect to the development of motor skill area. This area is a branch of cognitive science. Through the development of motor skill, the vocal practice for chanting does not only use muscle memory but also involves the accumulation of experiential phenomena. The singing process also is a way to practice concentrating. There are numerous Chinese Buddhist chanting practices with simple melody and lyrics, even after combining Sanskrit pronunciation with Chinese expression. Also, they have added the Huayan letters as the lyrics of the Chinese Buddhist chanting. There is no meaning on the surface of each of the Huayan letters. However, concentrating on singing the lyrics and using the inside voice subsystems (respirator, vibrator, resonator, articulator, and psychological systems) to sing Chinese music therapy's simple melody takes the form of direct contemplation of the body, feelings, mind, and experiential phenomena that arouse mindfulness. This vocal body practice is part of the Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practice system. It involves developing the motor skills of vocal chanting learning and inserting them into a different context through Buddhist meditation.

Compassion cultivation meditation is an aspect of the mind practice part of the Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practice system. Recent research explains the benefit we can acquire from compassion cultivation, "These findings suggest that compassion cultivation training affects cognitive and emotional factors that support psychological flexible and adaptive functioning". Psychological flexibility is a fundamental basis of our social life, and it can be concluded to include four elements of a person. These are "(1) adapts to actuating situational demands, (2) reconquers mental resources, (3) shifts perspective, and (4) balances competing desires, needs and life domains (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010)" (Jazaieri et al., 2014).

Chinese Buddhist vocal chanting mind and body practice system and Buddhist music are mostly a complement to the Dharma and appreciation of the Buddha for saving people from suffering to finding liberation. This kind of complement and appreciation is a powerful way of compassion and should be based on a strong feeling of self-compassion. People with a deep sense of self-compassion will have compassion for other people's suffering. This kind of compassion therapy is already being applied in many programs, just like the Mindful-Self Compassion (MSC) (Neff & Germer, 2012)<sup>22</sup>. "Compassion training builds and extends from the basis of mindful awareness and is thought to influence mindfulness skills by enhancing the motivation to develop present moment mindful awareness" (Jazaieri et al., 2014). Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practices integrate compassion training and mindfulness through combined dynamic and static approaches.

At the same time, I wanted it to articulate the dharma that underlies the curriculum, but without ever using the word "Dharma" or invoking Buddhist thought or authority, since, for obvious reasons, we do not teach MBSR in that way. My intention and hope was that the book might embody to whatever degree possible the dharma essence of the Buddha's teachings put into action and made accessible to mainstream Americans facing stress, pain, and illness. (Kabat-Zinn, 2011).

In contemporary contexts, with mindfulness-based and Buddhist-based interventions, the challenge of using the Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practice system's dynamic and static approaches combined

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<sup>22</sup> Kristin Neff, PhD, is co-founder of CMSC and co-developer of MSC. She is Associate Professor in the Educational Psychology Dept at the University of Texas at Austin. Christopher Germer, PhD, is a co-developer of the MSC program and a co-founder of the Center for MSC.

with music therapy and unrestricted religious beliefs to benefit the broader interests of people in need remains challenging and offers opportunities. Hence, it is necessary to refer to programs such as MBSR for further research.

### **From Welfare to Wellbeing—The Development of Buddhist Music Discipline and Human Wellbeing Under the Background of Market Economy in China**

Buddhist economics has discussed moral development and sustainable economic growth in market economies.

Zsolnai (2011) believes that the main goal of economic activities should not be profit-making but providing the right livelihood for those who are involved. If economic activities can meet the challenges of ecology, future generations, and society, profit may or may not follow, but the richness of human beings and the quality of life can be attained. (Ng, 2020, p. 62)

In the market economy, where interest groups influence the standard of the value of art, this situation is not conducive to improving art quality. Aesthetic education and human moral development influence each other and act on the sustainable development of the economy. The development and reform of Buddhist music and its disciplinary extension fields bring the challenges and opportunities for improving human wellbeing to the forefront in the new era.

It is worth reiterating that professional competitions or performances cannot be completely separated from interest groups. The value of art cannot have an identical standard. The score ranking of the slightest difference is based on the performance weighed by the interest groups. The enrollment and scoring system of professional art colleges and universities is often based on the size of teachers' benefit and the sufficient resources of art professionals to achieve resource fit. This fit is usually with an unfairly extreme resource gap, and the potential moral factors of the external ecological environment are not conducive to developing artistic talents and improving artistic quality. The goal of interest groups based on sufficient professional talents and resources constitutes a causal relationship that leads to the lack of high-quality artistic talents, and high-quality artistic works. For instance, an ever-increasing number of popular singers have identical voice patterns, and this impacts the appreciation of other voice patterns. This affects the development of the human spiritual world and inner energy. The lack of right aesthetic education in human development is not conducive to cultivating good moral character; it is also a potential crisis from the surplus of artistic talent resources in the art education market and the decline of the art industry chain. There is a surplus of artistic talents and a shortage in the job market. The competition for limited resources prevents the healthy development of moral life from obtaining favorable guarantees. In the Buddhist view, the cultivation of secular art is the cultivation of craving, "It is not wealth that stands in the way of liberation but the attachment to wealth; not the enjoyment of pleasurable things but the craving for them" (Schumacher, 1999).

The teachers in the ivory tower are very likely to have a potential moral crisis due to the mismatch between the meager salary and their increasing desire. Art is the spiritual food of humankind. Metaphysically, when it cannot have a benign guarantee nor the right development and is a hotbed of social problems. Artistic ethics has recently received heightened attention in mainland China. The corruption of celebrities' artistic ethics has a direct and serious impact on the development of the spiritual world and the moral behavior of young people. Under this complex art development environment, the innovation of the discipline of Buddhist music and the practice of clinical medicine can simultaneously have an expanded impact on the market for

talents and provide beneficial effects for the development of art and the artistic ecological environment of art education. Buddhist music disciplines of education in the new period should not only learn for the chanting and the rituals. The parts belonging to traditional Buddhist music should have continued heritage and protection. Also, the development of the Buddhist music discipline in the new period is important and needed because of its practical value for the sentient being living in this period. The new development and construction of the discipline of Buddhist music have assisted in improving the aesthetic education system, especially in the cultivation of artistic ethics and diversification of art education. The developmental direction of the Buddhist music discipline in the new era entails allowing its progress without the restrictions of religious beliefs that still benefit people in different areas. The moral training effect of adding the elements of Buddhist mindfulness training to music education is predictable.

The innovation of the training model of Buddhist music disciplines provides the possibility for the diversified aesthetics and artistic creation of the human spiritual world. It is not only for human acoustic art to explore the possibilities of unlimited development but also provide conditions for stimulating and generally improving the cultivation of human spirituality and inner spiritual driving force. Conforming to an important perspective to evaluate human wellbeing is the concept of capabilities proposed by Sen (1993). In this view, capability can be interpreted as substantive freedom that people enjoy because it reflects a person's freedom to achieve valuable functionality. There are several ways of combining and exploring the new education way of Buddhist music to expand the market and bring the right moral development. It can allow more people to use their values and explore their potential artistic talent. Also, it enables individuals to use their inner energy to achieve a more mature and broader range of aesthetic education to lead the demand by a larger art market to promote a benign human, spiritual, and moral development cycle. This benign development ensures the complete evaluation of human wellbeing through the realization of multiple dimensions, rather than just a single economic dimension of an imperfect evaluation.

One conclusion Pryor (1991) draws from this understanding is the trade-off between monastics and the laity or a complementarity between the nibbanic and the kammic strands of Buddhism. For Nibbana to be achieved by some, the others must exist as well.

Zadek (1997) asserted that these relationships evolve over time and do not necessarily reflect “a mechanical enforcement of a set of guiding principles taught in the canonical texts”. In fact, they reflect how Buddhist principles understand and practice in real life to allow for and be accustomed to “the needs of livelihood, institutional imperatives, and actions oriented towards inner transformation” (Ng, 2020, p. 40).

This kind of orientation towards inner transformation expressing actions in the new era of Buddhist music reforms can be discussed through several aspects. The research methods and systems of Buddhist economics have brought foundations and examples for the research of Buddhist music. The Chinese Buddhist chanting mind and body practice system to work as a profound music therapy method has been in existence for many years. Its results stem from the Sinicization of Buddhism, and can only be of greatest value when we view the mind and body practice system as a whole. The court system of court music since the Wei, Jin, and Northern and Southern Dynasties has long demised. However, the Buddhist mind-body practices still exist in the practice life of temples and are common beliefs in China; just like the Shaolin Temple, the practice of kungfu benefits the body and helps in meditation. However, it has not been popularized and used, and the design of Buddhist music courses has not been adopted as it should be. It remains at the level of classroom design that combines

song learning and ritual practice with an understanding of Buddhist doctrine. This way, it benefits the temple practice life but does not impact the bigger range of people in society. Even the benefit to temple life is limited because of the lack of vocal knowledge, and the body practice is basic and focuses on learning melody or lyrics and rituals. This implies that the chanting practice system still cannot show its objective function as the practice of exercising the body and mind. But when it uses the Buddhist mindfulness elements, the fourth noble truth and the eight noble paths as elements are combined with Chinese traditional culture.

The chanting practice system works in music therapy, benefiting a wider range of people and reaching a bigger market. It improves worldly people's understanding of Buddhist chanting and extends musical knowledge through the practice system in music therapy. This revolves back to the issues of the benefits of art education, the art market, and the relationship between monks and worldly people. The Buddhist songs by Master Hongyi and the Pu'an Mantra by Master Pu'an Yinsu contributed considerable measures to the field of Buddhism and art. In modern times, there are still many monks and artists engaged in the creation and exploration of Buddhist songs and cannot enhance understanding, support, and contribute to the two fields without receiving due respect and sometimes, even being attacked on the moral level. The monks have a lot of resistance to the music way for philosophical creation, and the artistic creation of Buddhist songs is considered a utilitarian behavior that uses the sacredness of Buddhism. In an uncondusive environment that inhibits Buddhist music from thriving, monks and art practitioners, who focus on Buddhist music can easily lose inner energy for creativity and research in the long term; thus, it is a waste of resources for both. The popularization of Buddhist music knowledge, the innovation, exploration of Buddhist music teaching to the vast application areas will make it work in fields such as music therapy or art education. The relationship between the monk and the lay people creates new mutual benefits in the interaction of the development of Buddhist music. It obtains new developments in art education, art market, clinical medicine, music therapy, human psychology and moral development, human Buddhist practice, Buddhist practice life, Buddhist research, and many more.

As defined by the famous Brundtland Commission Report of 1987, sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. To achieve this result, each generation should bequeath to its successor at least as much wealth per capita as it itself inherited. "Wealth is defined as the value of an economy's entire productive base, comprising man-made capital, natural capital, knowledge, skills, and institutions. Economic development should be viewed as growth in wealth per capita, not growth in gross domestic product per capita". The development and reform of Buddhist music and its extensive disciplinary fields in a new era present challenges and opportunities for improving human wellbeing. How to conduct the innovative design and apply the educational method of Buddhist music without being restricted by religious beliefs to enhance its benefits for sustainable economic development is pertinent and requires further research. Such a venture ensures that more people can benefit from the function of the Chinese Buddhist chanting practice system and the influence of art education.

### **Conclusions**

One's latent sense of self is gradually solidified and strengthened by the increasing proliferation of concepts in the form of language as expression, which leads to greed, anger, and delusion-driven thoughts. Chinese Buddhist chanting weakens the conceptual diffusion function of language through the non-verbal form of music and forms appropriate and wholesome attention to the world of experience through training. It also

communicates the power of compassion through sound, involving art, education, and the stimulation of potential human spirituality and creativity. In the view of Western positive psychology: “Psychology is not just the study of weakness and damage, it is also the study of strength and virtue. Treatment is not just fixing what is broken, it is nurturing what is best within ourselves” (Seligman, 2011, p. 2). Thus, positive psychology aims to amplify and foster “human strength and virtue” and to discuss ways and means to make “normal people stronger and more productive” or “high human potential actual” (Seligman, 2011, p. 2).

Chinese Buddhist music conforms to the above positive psychology theories, laying the foundation for cross-cultural communication and dissemination. Currently, most research on Buddhist chanting is conducted by discussing Buddhist chanting and meditation separately. Although the correlation between meditation training and Buddhist chanting is mentioned, Buddhist chanting and meditation are not fully used as a whole training system, which only limits Buddhist music. The lack of the promotion of Chinese Buddhist music also makes it impossible to give full play to its efficacy. Chinese Buddhist music is a manifestation of the collision and integration of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. The multi-level application of the mind and body practice system of Chinese Buddhist chanting has transformed human inner potential spirituality and creativity and the external social environment. These conditions seem to have the possibility of stimulating the phenomenon of the “axial age” introduced by Karl Jaspers. These issues require further practice and exploration.

Compared with the matured religious music education system in the West, religious music in the East is still in the stage of discipline construction despite its unique charm and connotation that gives people a spiritual call. This slow pace is due to Eastern religions’ historical, social, and internal factors. Modern civilization has long faced climate problems, resource depletion, nuclear weapons, multicultural conflicts, etc. Today, after the prevalence of Covid-19, the intensification of these crises makes the psychological needs of modern people an urgent priority that must be resolved. Buddhism, as the main religion of the East, focuses on moral cultivation and spiritual formation, which can nourish the mind of contemporary people and give them spiritual inspiration. The concept of Buddhist moral life places Buddhism in a unique role in the ecological economy of modern civilization, the conservation of natural resources, multicultural conflicts, and other issues. It is also very valuable in providing research and information on inevitable topics of disease, death, and loneliness in the pandemic.

The establishment of the discipline of Buddhist music has been gaining traction in China in recent years, where Buddhist music has a lengthy historical background and a unique system that has had a wide impact on East Asian culture. Using Chinese Buddhist music as a case study, it has been the purpose of this study to discuss how this system works to bring healing and spirituality to people when the Buddhist concepts are implemented in the teaching system of Buddhist music disciplines and the application ways of it in the modern life. It explored how this special integrated approach to music education produces changes in the lives of modern people by achieving the cultivation of virtues while simultaneously enabling better spiritual development and stimulating the higher potential of human beings when Buddhist elements are integrated into music education. The paper also analyzed how the practice of the discipline of Buddhist music helps practitioners to better explore human potential and spirituality by filling in neglected areas of the practice life. The last themes this study discussed pertained to whether the discipline of Buddhist music touches the “new” or “deep” latitudes of religion and spirituality to seek “ecological transformation” or “ecological civilization”.

China's Buddhist music physical and mental training system is the result of the conflict and integration of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, and the product of the localization of Buddhism caused by historical environmental changes. The system's function aligns with Western positive psychology's yearning to stimulate potential human productivity. Chinese Buddhist music's physical and mental training system exists in an open and inclusive form of expression, which lays the foundation for intercultural and interdisciplinary exchanges. More importantly, researching this system as a sample can facilitate innovative thinking about "transcendence and integration" in different areas, and has the possibility of sparking a new era similar to Jaspers' "axial age" phenomenon, depending on our practice and application.

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