

Transmission of Guqin Knowledge and Literacy by Changchao Lu

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ABSTRACT

Chinese music has played a significant role in the lives of the Chinese people for generations, being passed down from one generation to the next. Particularly, Changchao Lu's Guqin teaching holds valuable academic insights. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the transmission of Guqin knowledge and literacy by Changchao Lu. The researchers used qualitative approaches, specifically interviews and observations. The study's findings illustrate that Changchao Lu's Guqin playing style exhibits attributes of tranquility, minimalism, strength, and adaptability. The instructor's pedagogical approach integrates conventional and progressive elements, placing significant emphasis on a comprehensive and balanced educational experience. He established the College of Chinese Arts, which aimed to amalgamate conventional and contemporary Guqin education. The institution prioritized several aspects, such as theoretical knowledge, performing skills, pedagogy, and even the craft of instrument-making. The use of online technologies, the promotion of collaborative learning, and the implementation of a student-centered approach all improve the educational experience. Changchao Lu's activities encompass the integration of Guqin, a traditional Chinese musical instrument, into rural schools, the promotion of cultural understanding, and the active engagement of local education officials. In addition, he engages in collaborative efforts with local governmental bodies to rejuvenate rural culture by means of Guqin, therefore nurturing artistic potential and establishing connections between Guqin art and local industry.

Key words: transmission, Guqin, Guqin knowledge, literacy, Changchao Lu

INTRODUCTION

The Guqin holds the distinction of being the oldest indigenous musical instrument in China. It serves as a cultural emblem of Chinese traditional music and is revered as a precious artifact of the country's rich cultural heritage. Moreover, it stands as a testament to the creative prowess and intellectual acumen of past civilizations (Liu, 2022; Ye et al., 2023). The Guqin, sometimes referred to as Yao qin, Yu qin, and Qixian qin, possesses a historical lineage spanning a minimum of 3,000 years and is classified within the silk category of the eight tones. The Guqin possesses a broad vocal range, characterized by a profound tone and sustained resonance. During the Song Dynasty, Chen Yang expressed in the Book of Music that the pianist has a position of mastery in the realm of music. Since ancient times, people have cherished the extensive and intricate art of Guqin. The subject matter encompasses not only the qin instrument itself but also other components of ancient Chinese art, including the qin zhi, qin xian, qin pu, qin qu, qin shi, qin ge, qin she, and qin pai (Gaywood, 1996).

The Guqin music culture, regarded as a fundamental aspect of Chinese traditional culture, encompasses a wide range of cultural domains, including ancient Chinese philosophy,

history, literature, science, religion, etiquette, and art. This amalgamation gives rise to a comprehensive and profound Guqin culture. The cultural significance of Guqin music has a prominent position within the realm of ancient Chinese culture (Wang et al., 2023; Hou & Seekhunlio, 2023). The significance of conserving intangible cultural works has been heightened due to the adoption of a convention by UNESCO in 2003 to conserve intangible cultural treasures. China became a member of this agreement in August 2004. As of December 2020, the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List had incorporated a cumulative count of 42 Chinese artifacts. The preservation of intangible cultural legacy as a means to attain sustainable cultural development is a focal point in cultural conservation and development efforts across multiple nations. The commitment to safeguarding such assets is further reinforced with each passing year (Kurin, 2004).

The preservation of traditional roots should be prioritized in the face of cultural modernization. The preservation and promotion of traditional cultural practices, such as the transmission of Guqin knowledge and the promotion of literacy, have the potential to serve as a source of inspiration for contemporary design, meet the demands of consumers,

safeguard cultural heritage, and enhance cultural confidence, thus contributing to sustainable development in modern contexts. The emergence of several new designs rooted in tradition has prompted a need for more research on the role of sound, such as that found in the Guqin, in fostering contemporary cultural sustainability (Tu et al., 2023; Qin, 2020). The Guqin music culture, regarded as a fundamental aspect of Chinese traditional culture, encompasses several cultural domains, including ancient Chinese philosophy, history, literature, science, religion, etiquette, and art. Consequently, it has given rise to a comprehensive and profound Guqin culture. The cultural significance of Guqin music in ancient Chinese society is of utmost importance (Caifeng, 2016; Zou et al., 2022; Zhou & Chuangprakhon, 2023).

Changchao Lu, an esteemed practitioner of Guqin, serves as the director of the Guqin Professional Committee within the Fujian Chinese Excellent Traditional Culture Promotion Association, as well as the director of the Guqin Art Research Center. He is a highly regarded qin player, a rarity within the province of Fujian. The individual dedicated their entire life to the Guqin, emphasizing not only performance but also the pedagogy, art theory study, development, production, and restoration of the Guqin. He has successfully cultivated several exceptional talents in the field of Guqin and has significantly contributed to the preservation and advancement of Guqin's legacy. The interplay between his artistic output and personal qualities is evident throughout his career in Guqin.

In conclusion, Changchao Lu's Guqin playing is to improve the promotion and transmission of Fujian Guqin culture and for intangible cultural asset conservation, integrate new music technology, and maximize Guqin professional instruction to overcome the gap in Guqin culture distribution. This endeavor seeks to enhance awareness of Guqin art and pave a new route for the development of traditional music. The purpose is to bring Guqin art to the international arena, exposing the enchanting appeal of Chinese traditional music culture and maintaining its relevance in modern times via effective transmission and preservation.

Research Question

- How does Changchao Lu transmit Guqin knowledge and literacy?

LITERATURE REVIEW

General Knowledge about Guqin

The Guqin, a traditional plucked musical instrument originating from China, was formerly referred to as the Qin during ancient periods. In contemporary society, the instrument differentiates itself from others, resulting in the adoption of several designations such as Guqin, Yaoqin, Yuqin, and Qixian Qin. The term "Qin," which has a prominent position among the four traditional arts of qin, chess, calligraphy, and painting, specifically denotes the Guqin instrument. The inclusion of Guqin in UNESCO's second group of Representatives of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity took place on November 17, 2003 (Liu, 2022).

The Guqin, a venerable musical instrument of Chinese origin, has a rich historical lineage spanning more than two and a half millennia, tracing its origins to the Spring and Autumn Periods as well as the Warring States Period. Prominent intellectuals like Laozi, Confucius, and Zhuangzi acknowledged the value of the solo instrument. The maturation of Guqin music culture occurred throughout the Qin Dynasty and the Northern and Southern Dynasties, characterized by the prominence of influential individuals such as Sima Xiangru and Zhao Ding. The integration of Taoist principles into Guqin music, particularly by Ji Kang, had a significant role in the cultural life of the literati. This fusion of Confucianism and Taoism became a vital component of their artistic expression. The time of flourishing in Guqin music culture extended from the Sui and Tang Dynasties to the Qing Dynasty, facilitating a continual pursuit of knowledge and theoretical developments that facilitated its dissemination. Various dynasties have exerted their impact on the development of Guqin music, leading to the refinement of notation systems. During the latter period of the Qing Dynasty, China saw notable transformations, resulting in a shift towards a societal structure characterized by elements of both colonialism and feudalism. Consequently, this societal shift had a detrimental impact on the Guqin music culture, leading to its demise. However, the Guqin continues to serve as a significant emblem of Eastern culture and continues to engross the curiosity of individuals from Western societies (Yung, 1987; Ding & Gerhard, 2004; Cai & Tai, 2018).

Distinct Artistic Characteristics of Guqin Music

The distinguishing feature of Guqin music is its own creative features. The composition has a straightforward and unadorned melodic structure that draws inspiration from traditional Chinese concepts of harmony and coordination, resulting in a transcendent and harmonious character. The elongated and flat construction of the instrument results in a sonorous and harmonious tone quality, characterized by a tonal range primarily focused on the middle and lower pitch ranges. This compelling auditory experience appealed to the intellectual elite of ancient times. The rhythm of Guqin music exhibits a notable degree of flexibility and freedom, allowing it to seamlessly align with the player's respiration and emotional state. These characteristic places a strong emphasis on fluidity and the conveyance of emotions, thus replicating the historical aspirations of the ancient literati in their quest for spiritual aesthetics. Drawing inspiration from Zen philosophy, this creative expression encompasses attributes such as clarity, subtlety, lightness, and distance. It encourages individuals to separate themselves from materialistic tendencies and embrace utilitarian artistic principles. The act of playing the Guqin is seen as a method for comprehending Zen philosophy, fostering ethical virtues, and nurturing mental and physical well-being. This practice is in accordance with the principles of Zen and provides a comprehensive approach to life and aesthetic elegance (Leman et al., 2009; Fung, 2019; Wu & Boonsrianun, 2023).

Research Theory

The present study employed an anthropology theoretical framework as its research approach. Researchers thoroughly investigated the problem through the use of field investigations, which included meticulous analysis and observation of Changchao Lu's Guqin performance and transmission techniques. The utilization of this approach led to the collection of original research data (Barrett, 1984; Ellen, 2010). Furthermore, the study is grounded in the theoretical framework of musicology, an academic subject including several facets of music, such as the historical evolution of musical compositions and the examination of human musical customs. This comprises a broad spectrum of musical manifestations that traverse several historical periods, embracing a multitude of cultural, national, ethnic, and personal activities related to music. These activities involve a range of elements, including the cultivation of creativity in performance and the acquisition of musical knowledge (Burkholder, 1993; Williams, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

The researchers employed field research methodologies and drew upon principles from the field of musicology to gather the data in the following manner:

1. The qualitative research approach was employed for data collection purposes. The process entailed actively participating in dialogues with participants and posing open-ended inquiries to explore their experiences, emotions, and actions, as well as their own interpretations of these phenomena.
2. Interviews served as a crucial means of obtaining primary data. Before commencing the interview process, the researchers diligently constructed a set of questions for the purpose of consultation, ensuring that the respondents were adequately prepared and at ease. The utilization of this methodology resulted in a decrease in pressure experienced by the respondents, promoted unrestricted and open talks, and nurtured a positive and cooperative relationship between the researchers and interviewees. Consequently, this facilitated the gathering of significant and firsthand insights into the realm of Guqin.
3. The analysis of musical compositions that exemplify Guqin music underwent a comprehensive examination employing the principles and procedures of musicology. The researchers utilized this study to extract the distinctive tactics and approaches utilized by Changchao Lu in his Guqin performances.
4. The use of observation was of utmost importance in the execution of this research study. The study involved the meticulous observation of Guqin performances, behaviors, and procedures in order to gather relevant information. The researchers employed the participatory observation approach, actively immersing themselves in Changchao Lu's Guqin performances, teaching sessions, and research activities. Through the use of video recordings to supplement their data-gathering process, this methodology made it easier to gain insights through a combination of spoken communication and firsthand observation.
5. Open-ended questionnaires were employed as a supplementary method in accordance with the qualitative research tradition to collect non-numerical data. The surveys were not submitted to statistical analysis, yet they played a crucial role in obtaining qualitative insights and viewpoints.
6. This study's data analysis includes a thorough examination of Changchao Lu's unique Guqin playing technique, transmission mechanisms, and insights gained from field investigations and conversations with him. The goal is to get a thorough knowledge of his contributions to Guqin art and its distribution, as well as to highlight major discoveries that may be used to promote and preserve this traditional cultural legacy.

RESULTS

Changchao Lu's Guqin Playing Style

Changchao lu's calm and smooth guqin playing style

His Min Pai style is characterized by a calm and steady demeanor. His performance of "Liu Shui," in which he maintains a constant speed, demonstrates how his music's cadence is remarkably steady.

Changchao lu's elegant and simple guqin playing style

Changchao Lu's performances stress simplicity and honesty, capturing the character of old light music. He uses square fingers and fingering methods such as "Yin, Nao, Chuo, and Zhu" to create a balanced and graceful tone.

Changchao lu's powerful and transparent guqin playing style

His Guqin pronunciation is powerful and full, with a concentration on clear and loud tones. He stresses good right-hand technique, such as striking the strings with the front of the nail. He also emphasizes the significance of proper left-hand finger pressure for brilliant but mellifluous melody.

Changchao lu's round and smooth guqin playing style

Changchao Lu uses seven distinct approaches in "Liu Shui" to mimic the surging waves of rushing water. These techniques use a variety of fingerings and methodologies, including "Da da yuan," "Zhuan tuan," and "Qi xian da chuo." To represent the nature of the Guqin, these movements are done with flexibility and grace.

These creative features of Changchao Lu's playing style represent his significant artistic achievements. He emphasizes the necessity of creative growth in Guqin performance, as well as keeping a serene temperament and a simple and tranquil approach. His teaching techniques emphasize skill as well as character development, emphasizing the integration of music, speech, poetry, and heart to give a comprehensive understanding of the Guqin and its cultural relevance.

Changchao Lu's dedication to art extends to other activities, including calligraphy, flute playing, and horticulture, demonstrating a well-rounded and cultural life philosophy.

A thorough understanding of diverse techniques is required in the area of Guqin playing in order to generate the dispersed tones, clear overtones, and delicate sliding tones that distinguish this sophisticated art form. Changchao Lu emphasizes two key ideas for beginners: "An Yin Ta Shi" and "Qu Yin Gang Jian" (Table 1).

Transforming Guqin Education Innovation in Teaching and Learning by Changchao Lu

Changchao Lu has made major contributions to the promotion and development of Guqin art education. He founded the College of Chinese Arts and pioneered novel techniques for teaching and mastering the Guqin. Some of his significant projects include:

1. Establishment of the College of Chinese Arts
Changchao Lu established the College of Chinese Arts in 2018, which offers a degree in performing arts (Guqin art). This program has been successfully enrolled for five years in a row, with roughly 90 students each year.
2. The integration of traditional and modern education involves the amalgamation of traditional cultural values with contemporary educational practices, emphasizing the harmonization of cultural and skills-based instruction. The objective is to cultivate individuals who possess the ability to safeguard and advance Chinese traditional culture while also fostering innovation for the future.
3. The training goals of the Guqin performance focus on educating graduates on essential Guqin theory, performance capabilities, teaching abilities, and even Guqin manufacturing procedures. Graduates are equipped for positions in professional art organizations, cultural communication, performing arts firms, cultural centers, and other fields.
4. The curriculum development encompasses a range of components, including public basic classes, professional basic courses, professional core courses, professional progression courses, and

comprehensive practice linkages. The subject matter encompasses a broad spectrum of topics, including Chinese music theory, techniques for playing the Guqin, and the development of musical programs.

5. The utilization of internet technologies
Changchao Lu devised a multimedia web technology aimed at augmenting the availability of instructional hours for Guqin, hence expanding access to this traditional Chinese musical instrument. This innovation facilitates enhanced teacher-student engagement and instructional guidance, both inside and outside the confines of the educational setting.
6. The student-centered approach is a pedagogical strategy that prioritizes the needs, interests, and abilities of individual students in the learning process. Changchao Lu employed a pedagogical approach characterized by student-led instruction, wherein students were encouraged to actively engage in theoretical learning and artistic appreciation. This methodology facilitates the assessment and comprehension of Guqin music by students, fostering the cultivation of autonomous critical thinking and active engagement.
7. Earning cooperative learning in the classroom enhances the educational atmosphere. Grouping students based on their learning conditions and developing talks around certain themes promotes active participation and peer learning.
8. Changchao Lu improves teaching materials while emphasizing traditional repertoire. He also incorporates contemporary elements and encourages students to be innovative. This strategy enables students to connect with their instruments and create new music.

Changchao Lu's educational efforts have had a significant influence on Guqin education, providing a rich learning environment that mixes tradition with innovation and encourages students to become well-rounded practitioners and ambassadors of Chinese culture.

The Integration of Guqin Art into Aesthetic Education in Rural Primary and Secondary Schools

Changchao Lu, an accomplished practitioner of Guqin art, has made notable efforts to incorporate Guqin art into the realm of aesthetic instruction in rural primary and secondary schools. The primary objective of this effort is to facilitate the rebirth of culture in rural regions and cultivate a profound sense of admiration for intangible cultural assets among youngsters residing in these places. Changchao Lu facilitates frequent practice team visits to rural villages, therefore establishing a cultural platform that enables rural youngsters to engage with and appreciate the richness of intangible culture. This initiative serves to cultivate their affinity for Chinese traditional culture (Figures 1-2).

Moreover, this initiative contributes to the transfer of Guqin knowledge and literacy by enhancing children's understanding of Chinese traditional culture and fostering a

Table 1. Guqin playing techniques overview by Changchao Lu

Technique	Description
"An Yin Ta Shi"	Emphasizes precision in left-hand string pressing and pitch accuracy. Utilizes the "Ta Shi" technique, applying significant pressure to create resonant, weighted tones.
"Qu Yin Gang Jian"	Focuses on strength and precision in the right hand. Strives for a robust, clear tone, akin to striking stone or metal. Requires a balance between power and finesse in playing.
Left Hand Techniques	Key to conveying artistic expression. "Yin Nao" and "Chuo Zhu" are essential elements. These techniques serve as core expressions of artistic interpretation.

better understanding of the art of Guqin. Furthermore, it fosters a sense of individual and collective identity, instilling a deep sense of pride in one's cultural history, promoting the fundamental elements of Chinese traditional culture throughout the nation, and making a significant contribution to the promotion and rehabilitation of rural areas.

The participation of local education officials has been critical in this endeavor. Guqin training objectives have been matched with standards and criteria, and Guqin art content has been included in music textbooks, strengthening the transfer of Guqin knowledge and literacy. The subtle incorporation of Guqin culture allows students to absorb its essence while also gaining a greater grasp of the fundamental ideas and values inherent in Chinese culture, boosting cultural literacy. Engagement with Guqin art not only improves the younger generation's cultural literacy but also supports the development of future talents, laying the framework for the progress and promotion of local Guqin cultural ecosystems.

Furthermore, students actively participate in rural activities, integrating theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom with practical experiences in real-world settings. The use of this pragmatic strategy serves to augment the ideological and practical consciousness of young Chinese university students, stimulating their engagement in endeavors aimed at revitalizing rural areas (Figure 3).



Figure 1. Guqin teaching room
Source: Yajun Chen



Figure 2. Aesthetic education practice activities
Source: Yajun Chen

Reviving Rural Culture Changchao Lu's Guqin Initiatives

Changchao Lu pioneered a collaborative technique for promoting the transfer of rural Guqin knowledge and literacy while fostering the potential for Guqin performance in rural regions. He looked deeply into the rich legacy of Fujian Guqin culture, using the university's academic and research capabilities, and participated in innovative endeavors to bring this heritage to life in many artistic forms. This initiative is vital to the restoration of rural culture and aims to safeguard the cultural foundation on which Guqin art is built (Figure 4).

The collaborative approach between schools and local governments focuses on using both sides' skills to build an effective and sustainable talent development system that supports the transmission of Guqin knowledge and literacy. This includes establishing training facilities, research institutions, and cooperation platforms, as well as promoting talent exchange and providing practical experiences to rural college students. For example, Fujian Art Vocational College's Guqin art research center collaborates with the local government in Pingnan County, Ningde, to organize public Guqin learning activities, place professional students



Figure 3. Changchao Lu teaches outside school
Source: Yajun Chen



Figure 4. Changchao Lu's team took part in the Shuangxi Town Tourism and cultural festival in Fujian, China



Figure 5. Using Guqin to promote the Local Tourism Industry

Source: Yajun Chen

in local schools, and support the exploration of traditional intangible cultural heritage, all of which contribute to the promotion of Guqin culture.

Furthermore, including Guqin art in cultural industrialization guarantees that it becomes an inherent part of daily life, increasing Guqin knowledge and literacy transfer. This effort aims to take beautiful arts like Guqin beyond the classroom and into the greater public. It aspires to create people capable of preserving and promoting China's rich cultural heritage, contributing to the unique literature and art of the "Min Pai" region, and increasing the development of Guqin culture.

Local students are also sent to colleges and universities for intensive training in Guqin art, boosting the transmission of Guqin knowledge and literacy and strengthening the cultural vitality of the local Guqin scene. Collaborative efforts in Guqin production and related areas, such as the creation of research and development workshops, help to build a comprehensive Guqin art industry chain. This, in turn, aids rural rehabilitation by linking Guqin art to local economic activity and encouraging sustainable development while also promoting Guqin culture (Figure 5).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The discussion and conclusion about the transmission of Guqin knowledge and literacy by Changchao Lu have a tremendous influence on both preservation and, as follows:

Changchao Lu's attempt to include Guqin education in primary and secondary schools is admirable. This method not only teaches young pupils about this old art form, but it also improves their grasp of Chinese culture. Guqin incorporation into textbooks is a novel approach to making this cultural legacy more accessible to pupils. This is consistent with the findings of research by Minjing Yu et al. (2021), which emphasizes the vulnerability of Guqin and its culture in modern society. According to their research, which included 1,006 Chinese individuals from throughout the world, Guqin is largely unfamiliar and difficult to obtain. They created two

interactive systems to address this problem: VirGuqin and MRGuqin. The introduction of VirGuqin, a low-cost motion tracking technology, in a museum increased interest in learning Guqin by 89% among 308 participants. 16 participants tried MRGuqin, a mixed reality learning environment, which enabled them to study Guqin more effectively and obtain higher results than traditional approaches. This research highlights the importance of technology in sustaining this endangered art form.

Changchao Lu's efforts are also consistent with the findings of Wing-Wah Law and Wai-Chung Ho (2011), who investigated how the interaction of societal changes, social harmony, and historical memory impacts music teaching in Chinese schools. Their historical overview and documentary analysis track the history of music education in China across time, as well as the government's participation in these dynamics. According to the report, the Chinese government uses music and music education as a nation-building instrument to deepen memory politics. It specifically alters the nation's past for political ends, instilling individuals with state-prescribed beliefs in order to legitimize its rule. The conflicting goals of (1) blending Confucianism and nationalism in functional education to promote social harmony and preserve national myths and (2) fostering popular and world music alongside traditional Chinese music through multicultural teaching strategies in music classes pose challenges for school education. The dilemma remains of how to find a balance in school music teaching between concepts of social harmony, musical cultures, and nationalism in the context of present Chinese education policy, teacher training, and China's internationally oriented economy.

Changchao Lu's endeavors extend beyond his proficiency in Guqin performance, as he actively advocates for the advancement of reading among the younger generation in China. Through the inclusion of pupils in cultural events and the promotion of critical thinking, he actively contributes to their comprehensive intellectual growth. This approach is in accordance with the overarching objectives of education, which seek to cultivate individuals with a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage. The viewpoint expressed aligns with a recent scholarly investigation conducted by Jirajarapat and Yinghua (2023) pertaining to the dissemination of Guqin musical instrument knowledge literacy inside Guizhou Province, China. The findings of their study demonstrate that Guizhou, characterized by its heterogeneous population, is undergoing a process of modernization in the realm of Guqin art, whereby it is being adapted to provide an artistic expression that effectively connects with a broader audience. This presents opportunities for creativity, such as the exploration of ensembles that integrate Guqin, Guzheng, Dizi, and other ethnic instruments, the organization of diverse Guqin performances and art festivals, and the facilitation of cultural and creative interactions. It is anticipated that the prominence of Guqin music will be commemorated at a growing multitude of festivals in the forthcoming years.

In conclusion, the diligent endeavors of Changchao Lu in the dissemination of Guqin knowledge and the promotion of literacy carry significant and wide-ranging ramifications.

The individual's pedagogical approaches, incorporation of Guqin education into academic establishments, and efforts to engage with rural populations exemplify a paradigm for the preservation and dissemination of traditional Chinese cultural legacy.

Through the act of bridging the divide between history and modernity, Changchao Lu not only engages in the preservation of a historically significant art form but also facilitates the empowerment of future generations, enabling them to cultivate an appreciation for and perpetuate the enduring heritage of Guqin. The significance of cultural preservation within our ever-changing global landscape is emphasized by his work, which acts as a source of motivation for cultural custodians around the globe. Changchao Lu's efforts transcend the realm of Guqin music as they embrace a wider scope of activities focused on the preservation of cultural heritage and the development of reading. The individual's endeavors effectively cultivate a sense of cultural appreciation, build a strong sense of identity, and have the capacity to allow cross-cultural interchange on a worldwide scale. Consequently, his work serves as a persuasive illustration of the preservation and promotion of traditional, innovative forms.

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