

Study on the Relationship Among Different Forms of Flutes and Tang Poetry

Ningbo Zhou^{1,*}

¹ Mianyang Teachers' College, Mianyang, Sichuan 621000, China

*Corresponding author. Email: 1046290187@qq.com

ABSTRACT

The flute is closely related to the development of music in the Tang Dynasty. Judging from the poems of the entire Tang Dynasty, the flute is quite popular throughout the Tang Dynasty. In daily life, the flute is widely played, which contributes to the form of always being chanted in the appreciation of poetry, which forms a virtuous circle. This article introduces the types of flutes appearing in Tang poems in terms of types, materials, and shape characteristics, and expounds a literary poetic relationship between flutes of different shapes and Tang poems.

Keywords: Tang poetry, Musical instrument, Form.

1. INTRODUCTION

Jade is a special material, and its culture also symbolizes the historical charm of China for more than 7,000 years. As a special form of existence in China, it fills the entire history. The Chinese also love jade exclusively, so there is also a saying about respecting jade, loving jade, admiring jade, appreciating jade, and playing jade. "Xunzi · Faxing" records the dialogue between Confucius and Zi Gong.

Zi Gong asked Confucius: "What is the reason why a gentleman cherishes precious jade and despise jade-like stone? Is it because there are few precious jade but many minshi?" Confucius said: "This jade is used by a gentleman to compare character: It is gentle, moisturized and shiny, like benevolence; it is hard and textured, like wisdom; it is strong and unyielding, like righteousness; It has edges and corners and does not cut people, it is like behavior; it does not bend even if it is broken, it is like courage; Its spots and defects are exposed, like honesty; knocking on it makes the voice clearer and louder, and stops abruptly, like the beauty of words. Therefore, even if the jade-like stone has a colorful pattern, it is not as white and bright as jade."

Jade, it is moist and gentle, hard and organized, strong and unyielding, sharp but not hurtful, and rather unyielding. It never conceals its shortcomings, hitting it, the sound is clear and melodious, but it can stop properly. Because of the historical tradition and humanistic spirit, when gentlemen meet jade, they will treat it gentle and elegant, humble and easy-going, and when compatriots treat jade, there will be different feelings. Jade is a treasure in stone, and with the influence of culture, it has naturally become a material for making flutes. In this way, entrusting music and emotions to the jade flute gives more expressiveness. ("Figure 1")

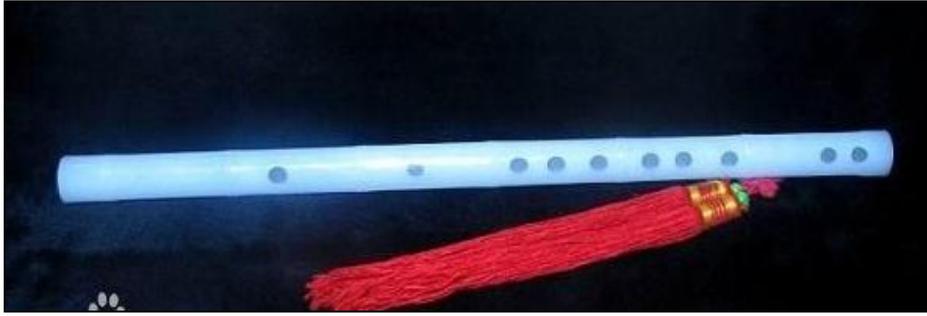


Figure 1 Jade flute.

The ancients paid attention to elegance and artistic conception. In terms of timbre, although jade is inferior to bamboo, it has a slightly higher status in the hearts of the people. The jade flute has also become a treasure for many literati. Poets in the Tang Dynasty produced many verses about jade flutes, such as in Li Bai's "Hearing a Flute on a Special Night in Luoyang", there are: "谁家玉笛暗飞声，散入春风满洛城。此夜曲中闻折柳，何人不起故园情。(From whose house comes the voice of flute of jade unseen? It fills the town of Luoyang, spread by wind of spring. Tonight I hear the farewell song of Willow Green. To whom the tune will not nostalgic feeling bring?)"¹ Li Bai's poem is about listening to the flute, the sound of the flute is moving, and the night is quiet. The poet's hearing and imagination filled the city of Luoyang. It seemed that other voices disappeared. And it seemed that all the people in the city were listening attentively. The poet expressed his longing for his hometown through the sound of the flute, making the poetry more touching. Li Bai contributed immensely to the recitation of jade flute poems in the Tang Dynasty.

The jade flute is the same as the bamboo flute in terms of shape and system, it is played horizontally and has six holes. However, due to the material, it is slightly inferior to bamboo in pitch. Although jade is popular among the public, the reason why most of bamboo is used to make flutes is that it is restricted by the productivity level at that time. The productivity level is low and the production tools are relatively simple. In the end, people chose bamboo that is simple to make and has better effects in all aspects. The inner wall of jade is thick and it is not easy to make holes. Therefore, the error will increase during the production process, and the increase of the error will reduce the accuracy of the sound a lot. Moreover, the vibration frequency of jade is higher than that of bamboo,

which is difficult for the player to control well, and the timbre is not as clear and pleasant as bamboo. Secondly, jade is a valuable item, and it is inconvenient for ordinary people to use it due to economic reasons.

2. DRAGON FLUTE

Nowadays, talking about the dragon flute, most people speak the Japanese dragon flute, which is the transverse flute imported by the Tang Dynasty during the Nara period or close to the Nara period, and later remoulded by imitating the Tibetan flute. In terms of classicality, it is used in the Zuofang Music (Tang Music) of gagaku or Hisasue.

As "Figure 2" shows, it has seven holes, and no membrane holes. It is about forty centimeters long and has an inner diameter of about one centimeter. Except for the mouthpiece and each finger hole, the surface of the bamboo tube of the dragon flute is all wrapped in cherry tree bark or rattan bark, and then coated with lacquer to fix it. The end near the head of the mouthpiece is sealed with a cork and covered with a red brocade. The head end and the mouthpiece are sealed with wax. In order to balance the weight of the left and right ends of the mouthpiece, and the lead is put in the wax. When playing, the fingers do not completely cover the finger holes. Instead, the players need to use the technique of playing with a half-hole cover, and they can change the pitch by lifting their finger slightly. The Japanese dragon flute is a traditional horizontally blown woodwind instrument, made of bamboo. The dragon flute was introduced to Japan through the Silk Road. It may have evolved from the flute in Europe, and together with the nohkan and the shinobue, they are considered to be the prototypes and ancestors of all transverse flutes in other Japanese musical instruments.

1. (Qing Dynasty) Peng Dingqiu, Complete Poetry of the Tang, Vol.125 [M]. Zhonghua Book Company, 1960, p571.



Figure 2 Dragon flute.

The dragon flute of the Tang Dynasty, influenced by the traditional Chinese dragon culture, was formed by carving the appearance of a dragon on the flute. Since this type of flute was made by musicians in the Tang Dynasty, it will be discussed in this chapter. According to Ma Rong's "Flute Oode": "龙鸣水中不见已，截竹吹之声相似。(The dragon screams in the water but does not show the dragon body, and the sound of the Qiang people cutting bamboo and blowing is similar to the dragon's chanting.)" It can be seen that the sound of the flute is similar to the sound of the dragon. Later Tang people also called it the dragon flute because of such sustenance. Of course, the birth of the dragon flute has an inseparable relationship with the dragon, which is a legendary animal.

The dragon legend and dragon culture are one of the most representative cultural symbols of the Chinese nation. It is often used to symbolize auspiciousness and is one of the four sacred beasts; the dragon is the totem of the Chinese nation and the symbol of the unity of the Chinese nation; it also symbolizes the supreme power and unquestionable dominance. Chinese are even more proud of the descendants of the Yan Emperor and Yellow Emperor and the descendants of the dragon. People will hold some festive activities such as dragon and lion dances and dragon boat races every Chinese New Year, praying for the prosperity of the weather, the prosperity of the country and the people, and the good food and clothing.

Speaking of the dragon flute, it is similar to the jade flute, with more emotion and image. There were also poems about the relationship between flute and dragon's chanting in the Tang Dynasty, such as Wang Wei's "Long Tou Yin":

"长安少年游侠客，夜上戍楼看太白。陇头明月迥临关，陇上行人夜吹笛。关西老将不胜愁，驻马听之双泪流。身经大小百余战，麾下偏裨万户侯。苏武才为典属

国，节旄空尽海西头。(The Great Wall boy is a knight who committed suicide, boarding the tower at night to see Taibai's military spirit. The bright moon on Long Mountain shines high on the border, and pedestrians on Long play Qiang flute at night. The veteran from the western pass region was full of sorrow, and he stops his horse, and couldn't help crying when listening to the flute. The veteran has experienced more than a hundred battles, large and small, and his subordinates have all been sealed as princes of ten thousand families. After returning to the Han Dynasty, Su Wu was only worshipped as an official of Dianshu, which is so grievous that the flag fall to the west end of Beihai."²

This poem reflects the hardships of life in frontier fortresses in Tang Dynasty. The poet uses the flute to express his sad thoughts, and the bright moon echoes with the flute player, adding to the desolate atmosphere. Li Bai's "Wuchang Night Drinking Nostalgia with Song Zhongcheng" is also related to dragon flute: "清景南楼夜，风流在武昌。庾公爱秋月，乘兴坐胡床。龙笛吟寒水，天河落晓霜。龙笛吟寒水，天河落晓霜。(The night in the south building is so refreshing, and the romantic people have gathered in Wuchang. Master Song Zhongcheng loved to admire the autumn moon just like Yuliang Gong in ancient times, and sat on the Hu bed with joy. The sound of the jade flute is like flowing water and Qingchan; the silver frost all over the ground is slowly descending from the Milky Way. I'm still in the mood, I really miss Yuliang's chicness, let's have a toast and drink up the wine!)" The sound of the dragon flute is like flowing water, and the silver frost all over the ground is slowly descending from the Milky Way. The scene depicted in the poem through the flute expresses Li

2. (Qing Dynasty) Peng Dingqiu, Complete Poetry of the Tang, Vol.283 [M]. Zhonghua Book Company, 1960, p1456.

Bai's deep friendship with Song Zhibi, so Song Ruosi is also quite respectful.

3. REED PIPE

Reed pipe is the double reed direct blow bamboo wind instrument. ("Figure 3") Because the whistle is made of reed, so it is called as reed pipe. The name reed pipe is the Chinese name. The Bai people have no native appellation on the reed pipe.



Figure 3 Reed pipe.

Today, it is only spread in a small amount among the Bai people in the county of Jianchuan, Jinhua, and Shibaoshan in Yunnan. Bai nationality reed pipes are mostly made by musicians themselves, with fine shapes. The pipe body is made of ordinary thin bamboo, and the two ends are covered with copper leather snares. The whole body is black painted, with seven holes on the surface and one hole on the back. The range of performance is from d in the first small letter group to b in the second small letter group. Its timbre is rough and bright, and it has a strong rustic flavor. This instrument is good at playing sad, slow music. The playing method is relatively simple, basically only playing legato. But it needs to pay more attention to the control of timbre and breath, and pay more attention to avoid making harsh sounds. The reason why the author got this discussion is because there are many poems about reed pipe in Tang poems. Such as "Listening to the Monk Blowing the Reed Pipe" by the famous female poet Xue Tao: "晓蝉呜咽暮莺愁，言语殷勤十指头。罢阅梵书聊一弄，散随金磬泥清秋。(Dawn's sobbing cicadas or sad orioles at night. Such earnest speech is of ten digits born. Just play when you have read the Sanskrit tome: It will join gold bells to mix with autumn.)" The poem describes the deep and quiet tone of a monk blowing the reed pipe, creating a peaceful and long-distance Zen state. It can be seen that reed tubes are also mostly found in temples. The first sentence uses a metaphor to write the sadness of the music, which reflects the deep feelings of the monk when playing; the second

sentence praises the monk's flexible fingers, which shows that he is diligent in practice and rich in music content. The monks play the reed pipe for fun in their spare time studying Buddhist classics. Although the sound is sad, it does not contradict the clear tone of the metal bell. All sounds are made from the heart, and the monk has a pure heart, and he plays any music without distracting thoughts. In this way, the whole poetic mood is out of the ordinary, and the Zen sound is fresh and fragrant.

There are many poems about Lu Guan in the Tang Dynasty, such as Cen Sen's "Reed Pipe Song from General Pei's Residence":

"辽东九月芦叶断，辽东小儿采芦管。可怜新管清且悲，一曲风飘海头满。海树萧索天雨霜，管声寥亮月苍苍。白狼河北堪愁恨，玄兔城南皆断肠。辽东将军长安宅，美人芦管会佳客。弄调啾啾胜洞箫，发声窈窕欺横笛。夜半高堂客未回，祇将芦管送君杯。夜半高堂客未回，祇将芦管送君杯。诸客爱之听未足，高卷珠帘列红烛。诸客爱之听未足，高卷珠帘列红烛。(In the eastern part of Liaoning, the reed leaves will be broken in September, and children in the eastern part of Liaoning will make reed pipes. The sound of the newly-made reed pipe is so clear and beautiful, and a piece of music floats all over the sea with the wind. The trees on the seashore were withered and the sky was frosted, and the sound of the reed pipes was loud and the moonlight was blue; Border soldiers of Bailang River are the sad and sorrow, and all the people who leave the village in the south of Xuantu City are heartbroken. The guests gathered in the house of General Liaodong in

Chang'an, let the beautiful woman hold the reed pipe to blow the music. The tune of the reed is better than the flute, and the sound of the tune is so far away that it beats the flute. In the middle of the night, the guests in the lobby said that they only blew the sound of reed pipes to persuade each other. The delicate voice alarmed the willows on the side of the road, and fell back to the garden like plum blossoms. The guests in the seat like to watch and glance and do not want to leave, and the red candles are inserted through the high rolling bead curtain and then the banquet is restarted; General Liaodong refused to give up when he was drunk and danced, and ordered the beauty to hold up the reed tube and play another song.)"

It can be seen that the reed pipes in the Tang Dynasty are not as they are now, but are made from the root canals of reeds and collected in September each year. The newly collected reed tubes are not yet able to produce the best timbre, so the sound is even sadder. In this poem, the protagonist described by the poet, General Pei, loves the reed pipe more than the vertical bamboo flute and the transverse flute, and many listeners also linger in the music. This shows the popularity of the reed pipe in the Tang Dynasty.

The poet Li Yi also has a good poem about the reed pipe: "回乐烽前沙似雪，受降城外月如霜。不知何处吹芦管，一夜征人尽望乡。(The sandy land before Huilefeng is white as snow, and the moonlight outside the city is like late autumn hoarfrost. The desolate reed tube was blown from nowhere, and the soldiers who provoked the conquest were missing their hometown all night.)"³ In this poem, it can be seen that the reed pipe not only exists in temples and the homes of officials and eunuchs, it is also a good carrier for soldiers on the battlefield to place their emotions on them. Because of its low cost and easy access to materials, it is more suitable for people who are far away to express their longing for their relatives in their homeland.

4. QIANG FLUTE

Qiang is the ethnic name of the Qiang people in ancient China. They lived on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and its fringe a long time ago. Qiang flute originated and became popular here. Eastern Han Dynasty Ma Rong "Flute Ode": "近世双笛从羌起，羌人伐竹未级已经。龙吟水中不见已经，截竹吹之声相似……。 (In modern times, the double flute emerged

from the Qiang people, and the Qiang people's felling of bamboo failed to stop. The dragon screams in the water but does not show the dragon body, and the sound of the Qiang people cutting bamboo and blowing is similar to the dragon's chanting...)" Its shape: "故本四孔。(It has four holes)" From this, it can be seen that the Qiang flute is made of bamboo and has four holes. In the Han Dynasty, it has spread in Qinghai, Sichuan and other places.

Qiang flute: As shown in the "Figure 4", the double pipes are connected side by side with a thread wound together. The life span is 13-19 cm, the diameter of the nozzle is about 2 cm, and the upper end of the flute is equipped with a 4 cm long bamboo mouthpiece. The front of the mouthpiece is flattened by the knife, and a thin slice at about 3 cm from the upper end to serve as a reed is cut by a knife. Qiang flute is a rare instrument containing reeds in China, and it is more common in Sichuan Aba, Beichuan Qiang Autonomous County and other areas. According to the heirs of the intangible cultural heritage of the Qiang flute in Aba, Sichuan: The earliest Qiang flute was made from bird leg bones or lamb leg bones. It has two uses, either as a wind instrument or as a riding whip for horse riding. So it is also called "horse whip" or "blowing whip". The Qiang flute, now popular in the Qiang area of the upper reaches of the Minjiang River in Sichuan, is a double-pipe vertical flute arranged in a six-tone scale. The tube body is cut from oily bamboo, which is a special product in the upper reaches of the Minjiang River. The shape is like a square chopstick. Two bamboo tubes with the same tube diameter and length are selected, and the outer skin of the bamboo is cut off to form a square column. The three places are tied with thin threads at the head, middle, and tail. Due to the different hole sizes of the Qiang flute, the pitch and intonation of each flute are slightly different. The sound of the Qiang flute is crisp, high-pitched and bright, with a sense of sadness and resentment. The commonly used method of performing the Qiang flute is to ventilate the cheeks, which is the cyclic ventilation method people now use in the bamboo flute.

3. (Qing Dynasty) Peng Dingqiu, Complete Poetry of the Tang, Vol.199 [M]. Zhonghua Book Company, 1960, p949.



Figure 4 Qiang flute.

Qiang flute became popular very early in China, and Ma Rong of the Eastern Han Dynasty wrote about "the modern double flute from Qiang" in "Flute Ode". By the Tang Dynasty, there were many poems describing Qiang flute. The Tang Dynasty frontier poet Cen Sen's "Singing in White Snow Sending the Wu Panguan Return to Chang'an" has a description of Qiang flute: "瀚海阑干百丈冰，愁云惨淡万里凝。中军置酒饮归客，胡琴琵琶与羌笛。(The boundless desert is covered with thick ice, and the sky is full of bleak clouds. In the head coach's tent, wine was placed for the returnees, and the Huqin, Pipa, and Qiang flute ensemble were added to the excitement.)"⁴ The poet uses romantic and exaggerated techniques to depict the overall image of the snow in the world, which also shows the enthusiasm and grandeur of the farewell. A banquet was set up in the commander in chief's army, singing and dancing, and drinking happily. The banquet lasted until dusk. The Yellow River flowing far away and the lonely city among the ten thousand deserted mountains together form a desolate artistic conception, and the sad sound of the Qiang flute is endless in the wilderness and distant mountains, like a cry like a song. When the sound of the Qiang flute came with the familiar melody of "Liangzhou Ci", the flute sound was full of sadness, lingering in the lonely mountains and plains. It was the sergeant on the border playing the farewell song. Qiang flute only loves frontier fortress poems, and most of the frontier fortress poems in our country have an inseparable relationship with Qiang flute. The poets used the Qiang flute to express the miserable and unattended days of the frontier fortress, and at the same time reflected their longing for their families. Compared with the lavish sound of silk, bamboo and orchestra, the sound of Qiang flute should be a bit harsh and desolate. But it is not like the kind of self-pity and sigh of the erhu, the sound of the erhu is a sad and miserable sentiment and helplessness, just like the

bumpy life experience and experience of the blind A Bing; Qiang flute's sound is bleak and deep, or with some hoarseness and choking, but it does not have the sadness of the erhu. Qiang flute, like the men in the border village, hobbled but stubbornly faced the millennia of wind and sand, even if the spring breeze didn't come, they would have no regrets.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the above, different forms of flute appear sooner or later, and the connotations of the images shown are also different, including farewell imagery, homesickness imagery, sadness imagery, love imagery, and war imagery. They are not only used as a medium of expression in Tang poetry, but as a means of expressing various artistic conceptions in Tang poetry, thus making Tang poetry more expressive. Even though the Tang poems have only a few words, they can make people feel the jaw-dropping sight and emotions.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper is independently completed by Ningbo Zhou.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ren Bantang, Tang Music Poem [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Classics Publishing House, 1982. (in Chinese)
- [2] Wu Xiangzhou, A Study on the Relationship Between the Creation of Tang Poems and the Transmission of Songs [M]. Beijing: Peking University Press, 2000. (in Chinese)
- [3] Zhu Qingquan, Historical Study on the Ancient Chinese Flute Family Instruments [D]. Zhengzhou: Henan University, 2004. (in Chinese)

4. (Qing Dynasty) Peng Dingqiu, Complete Poetry of the Tang, Vol.199 [M]. Zhonghua Book Company, 1960, p949.

- [4] Luo Zongtao, Chinese Poetry Studies [M]. Taipei: Central Supply Agency of Cultural Relics, 1985: 334. (in Chinese)
- [5] Wang Qing, Research on Ancient Dizi [D]. Wuhan: Wuhan Conservatory of Music, 2006. (in Chinese)
- [6] Mao Yungang, On the Dizi Art in the Sui and Tang Dynasties [J]. Movie Review, 2008. 06. 08. (in Chinese)