



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## China's Shamanistic Music and Jushui Shamanistic Music: How Can Intangible Cultural Heritage Find a Path to Survival in Modern Society ?

He Qian-jin\*

International College, Krirk University, Bangkok, Thailand

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Jan 11, 2025	This paper explores the historical transmission of the ancient musical form Ju Shui Wu Yin from Chu culture and its adaptation in modern society. It first introduces the origin of Ju Shui Wu Yin, describing its unique musical traits and how it evolved, particularly its preservation in the Jing Mountain and Ju Shui River areas. The paper then analyzes the challenges in inheriting Ju Shui Wu Yin today, including cultural conflicts, geographical constraints, management issues, and lack of resources. Despite these challenges, recent efforts through government support, community engagement, academic research, and cultural tourism have led to partial restoration. Future research is suggested to explore its broader dissemination.
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<b>*Corresponding Author:</b>  63111132@student.krirk.ac.th	

### INTRODUCTION

Historical records note that 'The Chu people believed in spirits and loved sacrifices, during which they would sing, play music, and dance'. In Qi's court, the grand music of Da Lü was played, while in the state of Jing, the music of Wu Yin arose. Wu Yin refers to the music used by shamans during rituals of dance and worship. As an ancient musical form rooted in Chu culture, Wu Yin dates back to the pre-Qin era and was primarily used in shamanic and sacrificial ceremonies. Ju Shui Wu Yin (formerly known as Wu Yin) is a continuation and development of this musical form, particularly well-preserved in the heartlands of the Jing Mountain region, and is regarded as an important component of Chu cultural musical heritage.

Ju Shui Wu Yin is named after the deep 'wu wu' sound produced by a specially crafted long horn. It possesses a sombre, mysterious, and ethereal quality, reminiscent of the awe-inspiring sound made by a shaman blowing a horn to summon spirits. This music is an ensemble of wind and percussion instruments, including long horns, trumpets, war drums, gongs, and cymbals. In Hubei Province, Ju Shui Wu Yin still retains its rigorous form and its eerie yet magnificent style. The Wu Yin trumpet, being longer and thicker than a conventional trumpet, produces a more peculiar and low-pitched sound. Ju Shui Wu Yin is often performed during solemn ceremonies such as sacrificial rituals, funerals, and pilgrimages to sacred mountains. It creates a distinctive atmosphere of 'solemn grandeur and eerie darkness,' serving as a remnant of the ancient Wu Yin tradition from Chu culture.

Although Wu Yin possesses its own unique artistic form, it is now facing severe challenges in terms of inheritance and preservation. During the process of modernization in China, the anti-superstition movement and the widespread veneration of scientific knowledge have gradually eroded the space for folk beliefs to survive. Traditional religious cultures are steadily heading towards extinction.

The decline in the number of traditional practitioners, the waning interest of younger generations in traditional culture, and the pressure of cultural homogenization brought about by globalization are significant obstacles to the development of traditional religious music forms such as Wu Yin and Ju Shui Wu Yin. Therefore, researching the survival strategies of Wu Yin and Ju Shui Wu Yin in modern society represents an important exploration of how a nation can protect and preserve its intangible cultural heritage in the context of globalization. This paper focuses on the case of China, with the hope of providing insights for the protection of similar cultural heritage elsewhere.

### **1.1 Research Questions and Objectives**

One of the primary research questions of this study is to explore the historical transmission pathways of Wu Yin and Ju Shui Wu Yin. Due to the lack of verifiable sources, this study offers a relatively broad overview and can only present the general evolution of these musical forms across different historical periods, aiming to reveal their functions and status in ancient Chinese society. Another objective of this study is to analyse the adaptation and survival strategies of Wu Yin and Ju Shui Wu Yin in modern society. To achieve this, the research will focus on the various conditions under which these musical forms can preserve themselves in a modern cultural environment, as well as the role of modern technology and the establishment of social support mechanisms in achieving the goal of preservation and transmission. As the paper progresses, it will ultimately attempt to summarise the successful experiences of protecting similar cultural heritage in China, providing valuable lessons for other countries.

## **2.0 Main Body**

### **2.1 Musical Characteristics of Jushui Muiyin**

The auditory experience of Ju Shui Wu Yin can be described as both uniquely distinctive and remarkably harmonious. In common wind instruments, Wu Yin is referred to as Xiao Yin, an overtone of the base pitch. Here, Wu Yin is marked as '5' (a high note), and according to the musicians, it is a sound that is 'forced out.' This sound is clear, dark, and ethereal, resembling the wu wu sound of a shaman blowing a horn to summon spirits, evoking a sense of reverence in the listener. Due to the deviation of the base pitch (↑5), it exhibits an unstable quality, which extends to the Wu Yin an octave higher. The extensive use of Wu Yin throughout the piece further enhances its mysterious aura. Moreover, with the incorporation of grace notes and staccato, Ju Shui Wu Yin feels like drifting clouds, elusive and unpredictable, while also exuding an eerie, chilling presence.

Under the influence of this unconventional and peculiar musical aesthetic, Ju Shui Wu Yin has developed its own comprehensive musical system. While traditional wind instruments rely on finger pressure to produce notes, Ju Shui Wu Yin involves using the second joint of the fingers to feel the notes, with the melodies passed down orally through 'hum-singing.' Three major traditional techniques include stealthy breathing, swinging the horse gong, and swapping the thumb position. Stealthy breathing is a fundamental technique in wind instrument performance. Naturally, the longer the melody that can be played in a single breath, the more impressive and impactful it is, evoking strong emotions from the audience. Playing the large horn requires substantial inner strength. During joyful occasions, the horn produces a 'ha ha - ii' sound, evoking a sense of humor and warmth. In contrast, during mourning, the horn emits a 'ming ming - ii' tone, inducing deep sorrow and bringing listeners to tears. Swinging the horse gong, as the name suggests, involves the percussionist repeatedly tossing the gong into the air. During the performance, the gong spins like a fluttering butterfly, while the musician expertly catches it with precision. The longer the melody, the higher the gong is thrown, rising and falling in rapid succession, leaving the audience dazzled. In this technique, one musician plays the trumpet while the other feels the notes; both trumpets are played simultaneously, and the players exchange note positions. This is known as 'swapping the thumb position,' a technique of exceptional difficulty (FIGURE 1 HERE).



**Figure 1: A cultural bearer demonstrating the playing technique of Jushui Muyin**

Ju Shui Wu Yin emphasizes improvisation and collective performance. Without written scores and relying solely on oral transmission, it is difficult for non-experts to imitate. The melody of Ju Shui Wu Yin is divided into three parts: the first is the Opening Set, which serves as the introductory piece. After five to seven loud notes from the large horn, lively and joyous pieces like Paizi and three Yingke Tunes follow, accompanied by percussion instruments such as gongs and drums. This is a complete set, performed in a tight sequence without interruption. The second part is the Long Tune (also called Long Ban), which is the main section of the performance. Each piece stands independently, and typically more than fifteen pieces are performed. Pieces like Tianxia Tong, Huo Huo Si He, Daguan Tune, and Jiejie Gao have melodies that are ancient, dark, and mysteriously beautiful. During the performance, the musicians can repeat sections freely based on actual needs. Without any pause from the gongs and drums, the next tune is played shortly after the previous one finishes. The third part is the Yingke Tune, which is mainly used at the beginning and end of events. It consists of a series of relatively short pieces with compact preludes and closing phrases to maintain a consistent overall style. Additionally, there is a small amount of banquet music, mainly played during the opening of the feast. In this performance, in addition to two small suonas, a large horn is also included. Banquet music follows a complete set of procedures during the performance. There is a formal announcement by the master of ceremonies, followed by the 'ha ha' sound from the large horn, accompanied by the suona to create a festive atmosphere and enliven the occasion(Shi ,2000).

As a form of collective cultural activity, the performance of Ju Shui Wu Yin requires at least seven performers, where mutual coordination is crucial, and the participants must have an intuitive understanding of each other. First, there must be organic coordination between the percussion and wind instruments, ensuring high levels of synchronization. Even a slight misplacement of a gong sound or drumbeat would be noticeable. Next, the coordination between trumpets, as well as between trumpets and the large horn, must be perfectly aligned, as even the slightest deviation would result in noticeable disharmony. The instruments used in the performance are divided into two categories: percussion and wind instruments. Percussion instruments include war drums, side drums, horse gongs, Su gongs, small gongs, large cymbals, and small cymbals, all made of bronze, as well as wooden fish. The main wind instrument is the suona, which comes in two types. The first is the Wu Yin Suona, also known as the 'large trumpet,' which is the primary instrument in the performance. Made of bronze, it is about 60 cm long, with thicker walls than a typical suona, producing a deep and rich sound, ideal for conveying the mystical elements of the music. The second type is the small suona, also made of bronze, about 40 cm long, with thinner walls, producing a bright and high-pitched sound. Additionally, there is the large horn, which resembles the suona in shape. Its blowing tube is over 1.5 meters long, composed of two sections, and it has no mouthpiece.

In the discussion of the musical characteristics of Ju Shui Wu Yin, it becomes evident that Ju Shui Wu Yin is not merely a simple musical form, but one that is closely intertwined with the cultural activities of ordinary people. Thus, compared to other forms of music, its development and growth are more akin to dancing in step with the lives of ordinary people. In ancient times, it was used in various celebrations and sacrificial ceremonies, but as these rituals waned, it became confined to rural weddings and funerals(FIGURE 2 HERE).



**Figure 2: Collective Performance Scene of Jushui Muyein**

## 2.2 Origins of Wuyin: Shamanistic Traditions and Music in Chu Culture

The origin of Wu Yin can be traced back to the pre-Qin period when shamanistic traditions were prevalent in the state of Chu. As an important vassal state in the south, Chu's cultural system was heavily influenced by the Yin and Shang dynasties, with shamanic rituals and the belief in spirits being central elements of its culture.

In the early development of Chu culture, shamanistic activities were an important means for the Chu people to connect with nature and the gods. In ancient times, people's understanding of nature was very limited, and they believed that deities controlled the world. They hoped to communicate with the gods, convey human desires upwards, and transmit divine will downwards to seek protection and blessings. Thus, the practice of shamanism, which involved imagined supernatural powers, was highly revered. The Wu Feng refers to the cultural phenomenon in which shamans and sorcerers gained social prominence, embodying a widespread reverence for supernatural powers. 'When the Wu people attacked, the citizens of Chu were in great distress.' However, as the enemy approached the city, King Ling of Chu remained calm and undisturbed, refusing to engage in battle because he had not yet completed his prayers to the gods. The shamanistic traditions of Chu not only played a central role in religious rituals but also permeated all aspects of social life.

The music within the shamanistic traditions, known as Wu Yin, was an indispensable part of the Chu people's sacrificial rituals. In Chu, 'belief in spirits and frequent rituals were prevalent,' and 'their customs dictated worship of spirits, with music and songs used to entertain the gods.' The function of this music extended beyond mere entertainment; it also served as a medium for blessing, exorcism, and communication with the divine. This music was typically performed during sacrificial ceremonies, using instruments, singing, and dancing to express reverence for the gods of heaven and earth, as well as prayers for a prosperous life. This comprehensive form of artistic expression allowed Wu Yin to hold a significant position in Chu culture, and over time, it gradually evolved into a unique musical and cultural phenomenon(Song,2011).

2.2.1 Echoes of Chu Culture: The Preservation and Historical Transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin  
 Ju Shui Wu Yin originated in the Ju Shui River basin in Xiangyang, Hubei Province, one of the cradles of Chu culture. This region has long been a crossroads between Central Plains culture and Ba-Shu culture, boasting a rich historical and cultural heritage. Ju Shui Wu Yin is a unique musical form of this region, and its preservation is closely tied to the geographical environment of Jing Mountain and the Ju Shui River. 'The Han River and the Ju-Zhang River are the cherished lands of Chu,' as Jing Mountain and the Ju Shui River are both the birthplace and a key site for the spread of Chu culture. Baokang

County(Figure 3 HERE) is located in the heart of the Jing Mountain range in northwestern Hubei. The main ridge of Jing Mountain stretches from the southwest to the northeast, crossing the entire county, creating a landscape of steep peaks, deep valleys, dense forests, and interconnected rivers. The Ju Shui River originates from Jing Mountain, the main peak of Jing Mountain, flowing through towns such as Oudian, Xiema, Maliang, and Chongyang. It merges with the Zhang River in Xikou Town, Nanzhang County, forming the Ju-Zhang River, which then flows past Jingmen, through Dangyang, and into the Yangtze River. The deep valleys and intersecting rivers of Jing Mountain acted as natural barriers, protecting Ju Shui Wu Yin from external influences, allowing it to be preserved in a relatively isolated environment. On the other hand, the mountain inhabitants of Jing Mountain and Ju Shui River have upheld ancient traditions of shamanism and rituals, providing fertile ground for the survival of Wu Yin. Thus, the Wu Yin that has been passed down in Jing Mountain today can be considered an echo of the Chu sounds from over two thousand years ago(Fan ,2018).



**Figure 3: Topography and Landscape of Baokang County's Rural Area**

The historical transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin has gone through several stages, evolving from its original shamanistic music into a musical form with specific social functions. Over the course of history, Ju Shui Wu Yin was not only used in religious rituals but also gradually became integrated into the everyday life of the people, including weddings, funerals, and other social events.

During the pre-Qin period, the shamanistic culture of Chu flourished, and Wu Yin, as a key component of sacrificial rituals, was widely passed down and developed. As a specific form of Wu Yin, Ju Shui Wu Yin was further refined during this period. As the state of Chu expanded, the influence of Ju Shui Wu Yin also gradually grew, spreading to a wider region through the dissemination of Chu culture.

After the Han Dynasty, the further integration of Chu culture with Central Plains culture led to certain changes in Ju Shui Wu Yin. It gradually moved away from its purely religious and sacrificial function and began to blend into folk music and opera.

In the modern era, the survival environment of Ju Shui Wu Yin underwent significant changes due to the rapid social transformations in China. Whether it was the cultural critique of 'feudal superstition' or the impact of foreign cultures, the decline of Ju Shui Wu Yin became inevitable. Nevertheless, in certain regions where Chu culture remains, the tradition of Ju Shui Wu Yin has been preserved, and its traces can still be glimpsed in some important folk activities.

In recent decades, China has focused on the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, and Ju Shui Wu Yin, as a valuable cultural asset, has naturally attracted the attention of scholars and the wider society. Through collective efforts, the transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin has been further protected and developed. However, the level of protection and development remains insufficient. The question of how to find ways for Ju Shui Wu Yin to adapt and develop in modern society remains an urgent issue to be addressed.

**2.3 The Relationship Between Wu Yin and Ju Shui Wu Yin: Their Origins and Cultural Connections**  
The relationship between Wu Yin and Ju Shui Wu Yin, as well as their cultural connections, is a

complex and far-reaching topic that involves various aspects of ancient Chinese music culture, religious beliefs, and social customs. In terms of its name, Wu Yin carried connotations of promoting feudal superstition, so to avoid this, the name was changed to the homophone Wu Yin (or Wu Wu sound). Historically, Ju Shui Wu Yin is a continuation and development of Wu Yin within local culture. While the two differ in musical form and function, they share similarities in their religious roles of expressing reverence for nature and ancestor worship. According to relevant literature and research, the origins of Wu Yin and Ju Shui Wu Yin can be traced back to ancient times. The two are closely connected in terms of religious function, musical form, and cultural transmission.

The relationship between Wu Yin and Ju Shui Wu Yin is primarily reflected in their shared religious functions. As part of shamanistic activities, Wu Yin served both the purpose of communicating with the gods and entertaining people. As mentioned in the *Records of Music*: 'Music is born from sound, and its origin lies in the heart's response to external things.' As an art form, music not only evokes emotions but was also used by the ancients to communicate with deities. In this respect, Ju Shui Wu Yin continues the tradition of Wu Yin, playing an important role in local funeral and sacrificial ceremonies. In the shamanistic music troupes of the Jing Mountain region, Ju Shui Wu Yin is typically used in funerals to express mourning for the deceased and reverence for ancestors through music. This musical form not only retains the religious functions of Wu Yin but also preserves its original ritual structure, reflecting strong characteristics of Chu culture.

Secondly, there are also similarities between Wu Yin and Ju Shui Wu Yin in their musical structure. The musical structure of Wu Yin can be divided into three main parts: the head, the body, and the tail. Each part has its own unique arrangement and function, contributing to the overall expressiveness of the music. In the head section, the music begins with the 'opening' to create a lively and joyful atmosphere of welcoming. It then moves into the Paizi section, where fixed melodies or rhythms establish the musical foundation. This is followed by three gong and drum sections, each containing different rhythmic patterns such as 'Sanxing Dianzi,' 'Duochuizi,' and 'Yinchui,' which enhance the ritualistic feel through percussion. Between each gong and drum section, the Yingke Tune is interspersed, and the repetition and cyclical nature of this melody create smooth transitions and a sense of correspondence within the music. In the body section, the focus shifts to the Long Tune, characterized by long, flowing, and free melodies. This is followed by optional gong and drum sections, where performers can select different pieces based on the specific occasion, allowing the music to maintain both coherence and flexibility. In the tail section, the Yingke Tune returns to conclude the performance, creating a complete and cohesive structure. The musical form of Ju Shui Wu Yin follows a similar structure, typically beginning with a lively opening tune, transitioning into the main Long Tune section, and concluding with a farewell piece for sending off guests.

Although no concrete evidence has been found in the existing literature, it is difficult to deny the probable connection between Wu Yin and Ju Shui Wu Yin in terms of function, structure, and musical characteristics. It is conceivable that this connection is part of a continuous tradition, as Wu Yin, the origin of ancient Chu music culture, has been carried forward and evolved into Ju Shui Wu Yin through various forms of transmission. Thus, we can observe that the two share similarities not only in musical form and structure but also in their religious functions and cultural significance. We can say that Ju Shui Wu Yin, a unique musical form of the Chu region, is the 'offspring' that has inherited the cultural genes of Wu Yin. Even though the original form of Wu Yin no longer exists, its essential elements have been absorbed by Ju Shui Wu Yin over the centuries and have made their way into modern society.

In response to the endangered status of folk cultural arts, the Baokang County Party Committee and the Baokang County Government began protection and rescue efforts as early as the 1980s. In 2005, the county established the Baokang County Folk Culture and Art Protection and Rescue Center. The cultural department aimed to develop the 'Ju Shui Wu Yin' cultural industry to strengthen the vitality of Wu Yin. The implementation of the 'Double Protection Project' brought new life to the revival of Wu Yin. This ancient music will forever echo across the land of Jingchu.

## 2.4 Seeking a Path for Survival

### 2.4.1 Modern Social Changes and the Survival Pressure on Ju Shui Wu Yin

As previously mentioned, Ju Shui Wu Yin, an ancient musical form rooted in shamanistic culture, is deeply embedded in traditional Chinese folk culture. However, with the passage of time and the development and transformation of modern society, the transmission of this cultural treasure faces numerous challenges and difficulties. This paper will delve into the transmission challenges of Ju Shui Wu Yin in modern society by examining various aspects such as cultural conflicts, geographical factors, management issues, and shortages of funding and talent.

The transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin faces cultural conflicts and a heritage crisis as its primary challenges. Since the New Culture Movement in China, the concept of 'feudal superstition' has been somewhat misused. Shamanistic culture was viewed as a remnant of feudal society and subjected to harsh criticism and suppression. During this period, as societal views shifted, many elements of traditional culture, including Wu Yin, were gradually marginalized. As a representation of shamanistic culture, Ju Shui Wu Yin was long labeled as 'feudal superstition.' This labeling not only weakened the social recognition of Wu Yin but also made it difficult for this cultural form to gain acceptance among younger generations. As older artists gradually pass away or grow too weak, the oral transmission of Wu Yin becomes unsustainable, posing the risk of a break in its heritage. Over the past few decades, traditional beliefs have gradually been replaced by modern scientific views, leading to a vacuum in folk beliefs. This vacuum has caused Wu Yin, rooted in shamanistic culture, to lose its foundation for survival. At the same time, the rise of modern entertainment forms such as pop music and film has greatly impacted the dissemination and acceptance of Wu Yin. As younger generations pursue modernization and trends, their interest in traditional cultural forms, especially those viewed as 'superstitious' like Wu Yin, has gradually waned.

The transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin is also constrained by its strong regional limitations. Ju Shui Wu Yin originated in the Ju Shui River basin in Xiangyang, Hubei Province. This geographical location not only gives Ju Shui Wu Yin significant regional constraints but also creates many difficulties for its preservation and transmission efforts. It is evident that blocked land transportation has limited the spread of Ju Shui Wu Yin. Even with improvements in modern transportation, the regional characteristics of Ju Shui Wu Yin remain pronounced. This geographical isolation has made it difficult for the transmission of Wu Yin to expand beyond its local area, confining it to a few communities and villages. The geographical limitations have also directly impacted efforts to protect Wu Yin. Researchers, cultural preservationists, and practitioners are restricted by the geographical environment, resulting in limited coverage of transmission efforts, which makes it difficult for this cultural form to gain broader recognition and attention.

Geographical isolation is not the primary challenge faced by Ju Shui Wu Yin. In fact, the greatest challenge to the transmission of traditional music lies in human factors. The lack of a well-developed management system and outdated perceptions are significant issues in the transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin. As a local cultural heritage, Ju Shui Wu Yin has not received adequate attention or scientific planning in terms of management and preservation. The lack of professional management personnel has meant that, although the government has given some attention to the preservation of Ju Shui Wu Yin, the absence of systematic management and planning has resulted in delays in cultural development and ineffective preservation efforts. The inadequate management system has prevented Ju Shui Wu Yin from fully realizing its cultural potential, seriously affecting the preservation of this cultural heritage. This is not only a problem with management personnel but also an issue related to regional perceptions from a broader perspective. Due to the isolation of the Wushan region, people's thinking tends to be conservative, and they have not fully recognized the cultural value of Ju Shui Wu Yin. Local residents have a weak sense of preserving Ju Shui Wu Yin and have yet to recognize the rich folk resources embedded in this cultural form, let alone understand the potential economic and social benefits it could bring.

While management personnel have the will to preserve Ju Shui Wu Yin, they lack the necessary resources, and local residents lack awareness of its preservation. Additionally, the shortage of funding

and talent presents another significant barrier. Due to the relatively underdeveloped economic conditions in Baokang County, the government's financial support for preserving Ju Shui Wu Yin is objectively insufficient to meet its transmission needs. This lack of funding has slowed the progress of Ju Shui Wu Yin preservation efforts, with many plans unable to be effectively implemented. At the levels of cultural centers and grassroots practitioners, the issue of insufficient funding has become apparent, directly affecting the preservation and transmission efforts of Ju Shui Wu Yin. The lack of funding also creates the challenge of being unable to hire professional talent. Only with the involvement of professionals with backgrounds in musicology and folklore can the efforts to preserve Ju Shui Wu Yin be properly guided and not carried out blindly. However, for various reasons, the Jing Mountain region has very limited human resources in this area, making it difficult to systematize the discovery, organization, and research of Ju Shui Wu Yin, and the scientific and effective transmission of the culture cannot be ensured.

Of course, all the issues mentioned above focus on the challenges within the transmission process itself, but the complexity of what is being transmitted also adds to the difficulty. We must not overlook the fact that, as an ancient musical form, the complex playing techniques of Ju Shui Wu Yin present an inherent challenge to its transmission. Ju Shui Wu Yin requires highly demanding playing techniques, and its melodies are extremely complex in their expression. This complexity makes the learning and transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin exceedingly difficult. As the older artists gradually pass away, fewer people are able to master the playing techniques of Ju Shui Wu Yin, and many melodies are gradually being lost. In 1985, according to relevant artists, there were only around 100 Wu Yin melodies remaining. Even the highly skilled performer Wang Zuoyu could only play 50 of them, and by 2005, his son Wang Shujin could manage only 20. The once-flourishing Wu Yin of the Jingchu region has become as faint as a whisper, gradually declining, and the situation for Ju Shui Wu Yin is even worse. This rapid decline directly threatens the survival of Ju Shui Wu Yin. The transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin traditionally relies on oral teaching, which, while preserving the authenticity of the music, faces issues of inefficiency and limited dissemination. The fast-paced lifestyle of modern society makes it difficult for younger generations to devote enough time and effort to learning Wu Yin, making this transmission method unsustainable.

In conclusion, the transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin faces multiple challenges and difficulties in modern society. Wu Yin was once suppressed, and with many older artists passing away, there has been a break in its transmission. The strict rules and high level of difficulty in performance have caused the number of melodies to dwindle over time. Moreover, the rapid development of modern entertainment media has dealt a further blow to Wu Yin, squeezing the space for this ancient music to survive. From cultural conflicts and transmission crises, to regional limitations and an inadequate management system, and further to the shortage of funding and talent, the path of transmitting Ju Shui Wu Yin has been fraught with difficulties. In the face of these challenges, a concerted effort from all sectors of society is needed. This includes policy support, cultural promotion, financial investment, and talent cultivation to effectively preserve and transmit this valuable cultural heritage. Only in this way can Ju Shui Wu Yin continue to exist in modern society, serving as a cultural bridge between the past and the future.

#### **2.4.2 Multi-Stakeholder Involvement and Comprehensive Strategies**

As previously discussed, to address these challenges in transmission, we must rely on the collective efforts of all sectors of society. So how should we proceed? China's answer is multi-stakeholder involvement and comprehensive strategies, forming a systematic network for protection and transmission. The preservation of Ju Shui Wu Yin not only involves the conservation of its musical form but also the maintenance of related cultural practices, social memory, and community identity. No single entity can address the constantly changing social environment and challenges on its own. However, if we unite and combine the efforts of the government, society, academia, communities, and individuals, leveraging the strengths of each sector, we can form a cohesive force to achieve the effective preservation of Ju Shui Wu Yin.



The government, society, academia, communities, and individuals each play different but complementary roles in the preservation of cultural heritage. The government can formulate policies and provide financial support, while social organizations and businesses can promote awareness and commercial development. Academia can contribute through research and theoretical support, and communities and individuals are the actual practitioners of cultural transmission.

First, when discussing the government and the community, their roles in the preservation of Ju Shui Wu Yin are crucial, as they serve as the key drivers of the entire preservation effort. The government can formulate relevant policies and provide financial support, while the community can organize cultural activities and educational programs. As early as the 1980s, the Baokang County Party Committee and government began efforts to rescue and preserve Ju Shui Wu Yin. In 2005, Baokang County established the Folk Culture and Art Protection and Rescue Center, responsible for the systematic preservation of Ju Shui Wu Yin. Subsequently, with government support, Ju Shui Wu Yin was not only listed in the National Intangible Cultural Heritage registry, but it was also promoted through various initiatives such as establishing a Ju Shui Wu Yin exhibition hall and conducting programs like 'Heritage into Scenic Spots' and 'Heritage into Universities.' These efforts integrated Ju Shui Wu Yin into local cultural industry development, enhancing its vitality. With advances in modern recording techniques, the government has also emphasized the digital preservation of cultural heritage, using methods such as audio recording and musical notation to document the traditional melodies of Ju Shui Wu Yin for permanent preservation.

The community has played a central role in the transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin. Since the early Chu State in pre-Qin times, Ju Shui Wu Yin has been passed down through direct family lineage. In Baokang, there are two primary transmission groups, the most notable of which is the Wang Family Music Troupe from Zhaojiashan Village in Maliang Town. The Wang family's transmission began during the Jiaqing period of the Qing Dynasty and has continued for more than 200 years, spanning ten generations. In 2014, Wang Shuyin, the leader of the Wang Family Music Troupe, was recognized as a provincial-level representative inheritor, representing the ninth generation of the family, while his son Wang Chengcheng was designated as a Xiangyang City-level representative inheritor. In the 1990s, the Wang Family Music Troupe enjoyed a period of great success, performing across Baokang, Nanzhang, Yichang, and other regions. Currently, the Wang Family Music Troupe has many members, and when the village organizes transmission activities, three separate teams can perform simultaneously. The Wang family members not only perform Ju Shui Wu Yin during traditional festivals and life events like weddings and funerals, but they also engage in university exchanges, perform in scenic spots and theaters, and have been invited to participate in programs on CCTV and Hunan TV. They perform in hundreds of events annually, spreading and promoting this ancient musical art. Notably, the Wang family has also innovated in their methods of transmission. In addition to traditional oral teaching, they collaborate with university music faculty and students, organizing Ju Shui Wu Yin training programs, combining various transmission methods to support the preservation of this ancient musical form(Figure 4 HERE).



**Figure 4: Community Landscape**

In the transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin, apart from the two primary entities mentioned above, there are also key scholars who have completed foundational research, creating something from nothing.

Their work has triggered a ripple effect within the academic community. For example, Yang Shun, who graduated from Wuhan Conservatory of Music, completed the foundational research and knowledge accumulation on Ju Shui Wu Yin, ensuring that this delicate cultural heritage continues to be passed down. In the spring of 1985, during the national campaign to collect and compile folk songs, ballads, and stories, Yang Shun transcribed more than 20 recorded Ju Shui Wu Yin melodies into musical notation. He also consulted dozens of classical texts to gather written materials on Wu Yin. In 1989, he wrote a paper titled *Echoes of Chu Sound*, which was published in the journal *Chinese Music*, marking the first public introduction of Ju Shui Wu Yin. In 2003, the CCTV program *Travel Across China* produced a documentary on the discovery and exploration of Ju Shui Wu Yin, which aired on CCTV-4 and received widespread attention. That same year, Ju Shui Wu Yin was included as a research project by the Yangtze River Traditional Music Culture Research Center at Wuhan Conservatory of Music. Yang Shun was invited to participate and authored the book *Ju Shui Wu Yin* ((FIGURES 5-9 HERE)), which contains over 50,000 words and 52 melodies. From that point on, Ju Shui Wu Yin, which had previously been transmitted solely through oral tradition, was standardized into a form that could be replicated and widely disseminated. Since then, scholars have been able to systematically analyze and interpret the historical background, cultural significance, and artistic characteristics of Ju Shui Wu Yin. By collaborating with inheritors, musicians, and communities, scholars have sought to combine Ju Shui Wu Yin with modern musical forms, exploring how to preserve its traditional essence while ensuring its transmission and development in modern society, and creating new works with a contemporary feel.



Figure 5: Cover of Jushui Muiyin

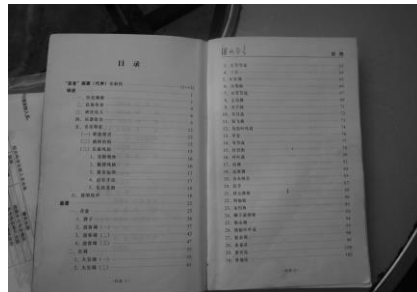


Figure 6: Table of Contents (Front Page) of Jushui Muiyin

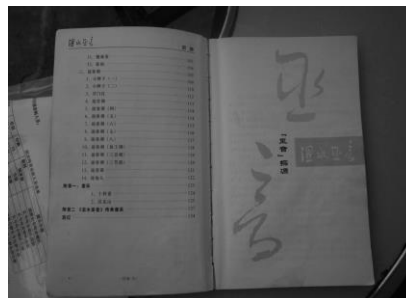


Figure 7: Table of Contents (Back Page) of Jushui Muiyin

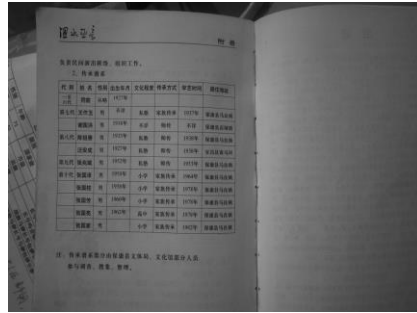


Figure 8: Lineage of Transmission Section in Jushui Muyin

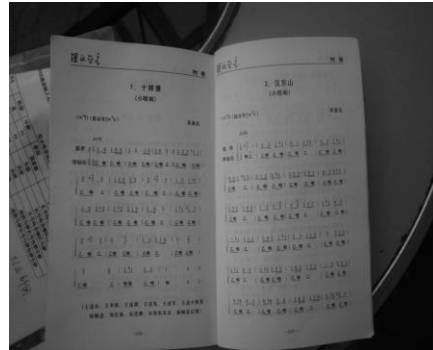


Figure 9: Musical Notation Section in Jushui Muyin

Of course, the efforts of individuals and businesses are also very important. Individuals represent the most fundamental unit in learning, transmitting, and promoting Ju Shui Wu Yin, while the involvement of businesses can provide financial support and resource assurance. The combined efforts of individuals and businesses provide a crucial social foundation and financial backing for the preservation and transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin.

### 3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### 3.1 Research Design and Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to analyze the current public acceptance of Ju Shui Wu Yin in modern society using a mixed research method. The study will focus on the following specific objectives:

- **Public Acceptance Analysis:** Assess the level of acceptance of Ju Shui Wu Yin among different social groups following recent preservation measures.
- **Factors Influencing Acceptance:** Investigate the main factors influencing public acceptance, including cultural identity, educational background, and access channels.
- **Future Transmission Pathways:** Based on the acceptance analysis, propose recommendations to further enhance social recognition and participation in Ju Shui Wu Yin.

#### 3.2 Qualitative Research Method

In recent years, academic research on Wu Yin and its related cultural phenomena has deepened, but how these studies can support the modern transmission of Wu Yin still requires systematic review and evaluation. The qualitative research section will employ a literature review to systematically analyze existing academic literature, government reports, cultural heritage protection documents, and studies in related fields, revealing the dissemination, transmission, and acceptance of Ju Shui Wu Yin in modern society.

### **3.2.1 Literature Classification and Main Perspectives**

#### **3.2.1.1 Historical and Cultural Background and Archaeological Research**

Tao Jing's *Study on the Witchcraft Wind in the Chu Culture* (2014) reveals the central role of witchcraft wind within Chu culture, emphasising its profound impact on religious ceremonies, social structures, and musical culture. Through an analysis of literature and archaeological data, Tao's research provides significant historical background for understanding the cultural foundation of witchcraft music.

Song Tingting's *Historical and Cultural Characteristics of the Pre-Qin Chu Sound* identifies 'Chu Sound' as a typical representation of Chu culture during the Pre-Qin period, reflecting the region's diversity and inclusiveness. Through an interpretation of Chu Ci and other Pre-Qin texts, she analyses Chu Sound's unique position in music history.

Jiang Linchang's *Study of the Witchcraft Wind Customs in Chu Ci* (1996a: 40–50) and *Exploring the Origins of the Witchcraft Wind Concept* (1996b: 132–139) systematically examine the widespread influence of witchcraft wind in Chu culture. By employing textual criticism, Jiang investigates the crucial role of witchcraft wind in religious life and social norms, providing a rich theoretical foundation for understanding the position of witchcraft music within the historical and cultural context.

#### **3.2.1.2 The Current Status and Inheritance of Witchcraft Music and Wuyin**

Jin Haoran and Xu Lu's *Investigation of the Current Status of Wuyin in Yuan'an, Hubei* (2022: 70–76) analyses the impact of modernisation on the inheritance of Wuyin in Yuan'an, Hubei. Through field research, they found that the younger generation's interest in traditional Wuyin is gradually declining and proposed suggestions for enhancing its recognition through cultural education and community activities. Fan Tirui's *A Preliminary Study and Reflection on the Ritual Music of Witchcraft Music in Baokang* (2018: 42–43) emphasises the importance of witchcraft music in religious ceremonies in the Baokang area and points out the challenges in its inheritance in modern society, such as decreasing participation and a shrinking group of practitioners. Zhu Yukui's *A Brief Discussion on Xiangfan Folk Wind and Percussion Music* (2004: 34–36) highlights that although Xiangfan folk wind and percussion music faces challenges due to modernisation, it still holds significant social functions in specific cultural contexts. She calls for enhanced protection and promotion, though she lacks an in-depth exploration of practical measures. Fu Haitao's *The Resounding Clear Tones of the Chu Region: Wushui Witchcraft Music and Wudang Taoist Music* (2004: 26–33) explores the relationship between Wushui witchcraft music and Wudang Taoist music, emphasising the importance of cultural exchange and cooperation in protecting these cultural heritages.

#### **3.2.1.3 The Origins of Witchcraft Music and Research on Music Culture**

Shi Xinmin's *Exploring the Origins of Witchcraft Music* (2000: 30–36) examines the origins of witchcraft music through textual criticism and historical analysis, highlighting its central role in ancient Chinese religious rituals. Shi Xinmin's *Wushui Witchcraft Music and Chu Music Culture* (2001: 37–41) further investigates the position of Wushui witchcraft music within Chu culture, advocating for stronger protection and more extensive research on this musical tradition. Huo Ran's *On the Cultural Connotations of Witchcraft Winds and Ritual Dance of the Yin and Shang Dynasties* (2004: 10–16) explores the significance of witchcraft wind as an essential part of Yin-Shang culture, and its profound influence on ancient music and dance traditions. Sun Guang and Yang Yuzhen's *Chu Ci and Witchcraft Winds* (2004: 103–105) analyses the impact of witchcraft winds on the literary form and content of Chu Ci, revealing how witchcraft winds shaped the artistic style of Chu Ci and reflected the religious beliefs of Chu culture.

#### **3.2.1.4 Cultural Tourism and the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Dong Jie and Ma Xiaoxiao's *Promoting the Protection and Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage through Cultural Tourism Development: A Case Study of Witchcraft Music* (2012: 79–81) explores how the development of cultural tourism can facilitate the protection and inheritance of witchcraft music. They suggest that moderate commercial development can enhance social awareness and the

economic value of witchcraft music, but caution against the over-commercialisation that could dilute its cultural essence.

### 3.2.1.5 Religious Rituals and the Origins of Music

Li Sui'e's *An Exploration of 'Kangshen' and the 'Jingchu Music'* (2006: 64–70) investigates the role of Kangshen in religious rituals in the Chu region through literary analysis and field research, highlighting its significance in Chu culture. Deng Guanghua's *The Witchcraft Music of the Nuo Altar and the 'Wuxi Theory' of the Origins of Music* (1990: 67–73) explores the possibility of witchcraft music being an early form of music. Through an analysis of the witchcraft music performed at Nuo altars, Deng suggests that the practice of wuxi using witchcraft music to pray and communicate with spirits during religious ceremonies may have contributed to the origins of music.

### 3.2.2 Methods of Argumentation in the Literature

These studies employ a variety of research methods to support their main arguments. Historical and archaeological research, such as the works of Tao Jing and Jiang Linchang, primarily rely on the examination of ancient documents and textual analysis. By interpreting historical texts and archaeological materials, these studies explore the role and influence of witchcraft winds and witchcraft music within the cultural context. Field studies and ethnographic research, such as those by Jin Haoran, Xu Lu, and Fan Tirui, are based on field surveys, interviews, and participatory observation. These methods provide first-hand data on the current status of witchcraft and Wuyin, analysing the challenges of their transmission in modern society. Musicological analysis, as employed by Fu Haitao and Shi Xinmin, focuses on the deconstruction of the musical structure and performance forms of witchcraft music, examining its cultural significance and religious function. Comparative cultural studies, such as those by Sun Guang, Yang Yuzhen, and Deng Guanghua, use cross-cultural comparisons of witchcraft music phenomena to demonstrate the uniqueness of witchcraft music in Chinese culture and its possible origins.

### 3.2.3 RESULTS

Although significant progress has been made in academic research on Ju Shui Wu Yin, there are still deficiencies in terms of specific transmission strategies and adaptability to modern society—this is where the necessity of this study lies. Future research should focus on practical strategies and consider the realities of modern society in order to develop more effective transmission pathways.

#### 3.3.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

##### 3.3.1.1 Basic Information of Respondents

The survey shows that the gender distribution is relatively balanced, with a nearly equal proportion of males and females, ensuring the representativeness of the data. The age distribution covers all age groups from under 18 to over 60, with the 31-45 and 46-60 age groups having the highest proportions.

In terms of education, respondents have a diverse range of educational backgrounds, from junior high school and below to postgraduate and above, with most concentrated in high school/vocational school and undergraduate levels. Occupations include students, white-collar workers, civil servants, freelancers, and retirees, reflecting a diverse social group.

##### 3.3.1.2 Awareness of Ju Shui Wu Yin and Access Channels

In terms of awareness, most respondents indicated that they had heard of Ju Shui Wu Yin and had some understanding of it (with a mean score of 4.35). This suggests that recent promotion and preservation efforts have increased public awareness to a certain extent. In terms of access channels, the internet and social media were the most common means of access (with a mean score of 3.65), followed by cultural events and performances (mean score of 3.51). This reflects the important role that modern communication methods play in raising the visibility of Ju Shui Wu Yin.

### 3.3.1.3 Analysis of Acceptance by Age and Education Level

There are slight differences in the acceptance of Ju Shui Wu Yin among different age and education groups. Overall, the 46-60 and 60+ age groups rated the cultural value and local cultural identity of Ju Shui Wu Yin more highly (with mean scores above 4.5). This may be related to their deeper emotional connection with traditional culture.

Respondents with higher education levels (undergraduate and above) were more inclined to recognize the significant cultural value of Ju Shui Wu Yin and support its preservation (mean score around 4.5). This suggests that education level may have a positive influence on cultural identity.

### 3.3.1.4 Appeal to Different Groups

Despite high awareness, the enthusiasm for participating in activities related to Ju Shui Wu Yin is relatively low (mean score of 2.66). This suggests that although the public recognizes and acknowledges the cultural value of Ju Shui Wu Yin, opportunities and willingness to participate still need to be improved. Most respondents expressed a willingness to support the preservation and transmission of Ju Shui Wu Yin (mean score of 4.45), especially by increasing cultural promotion and organizing cultural events to enhance its influence (mean scores of 4.58 and 4.49, respectively).

## 3.3.2 Correlation Analysis

### 3.3.2.1 Cultural Identity and Education Level

The correlation analysis shows that the relationship between cultural identity (enhanced local cultural identity through Ju Shui Wu Yin) and education level is weak. This suggests that cultural identity may be influenced more by other factors, such as personal experience or cultural background, rather than just education level. To further enhance cultural identity, it is advisable to strengthen the education and promotion of traditional culture across all education levels, especially by fostering experiential learning and interactive activities among younger groups to boost their sense of identity.

### 3.3.2.2 Access Channels and Acceptance

The analysis results show that cultural events and performances, as access channels, have a strong positive correlation with respondents' recognition of the cultural value of Ju Shui Wu Yin. This suggests that actual participation and experience in Ju Shui Wu Yin activities can effectively increase its social acceptance. Increasing the frequency and reach of cultural events, especially in areas such as cities and suburbs where traditional culture is less accessible, can further enhance the social awareness and acceptance of Ju Shui Wu Yin.

### 3.2.1.5 Religious Rituals and the Origins of Music

Li Su'e's 2006 study *A Preliminary Exploration of 'Carrying the Gods' and 'Jingchu Music and Songs'* examines the role of Carrying the Gods in religious rituals in the Chu region through literature analysis and fieldwork, highlighting its significance in Chu culture.

Deng Guanghua's 1990 study *'Nuotan Wu Yin' and the 'Wu Xi' Theory of the Origins of Music* explores the possibility of Wu Yin as an early form of music. Through the analysis of Nuotan Wu Yin, he suggests that the practice of Wu Xi—praying and communicating with spirits through Wu Yin during religious rituals—may have contributed to the origins of music.

## 4.0 Future Research Directions

Our current research is relatively preliminary, and future studies can further refine the analysis of acceptance differences among various professions and regional groups, as well as explore more social factors that influence cultural identity. If possible, we may also conduct longitudinal studies to track changes in different groups' attitudes toward Ju Shui Wu Yin. In this way, we can evaluate the long-term effects of promotion and preservation efforts, which would greatly benefit the development of more effective cultural protection strategies.

#### **4.1 Research Limitations and Future Outlook**

Although our intention was to be as thorough as possible, we must acknowledge that this study has certain limitations. The first limitation concerns sample representativeness. Due to the diversity of the research subjects and the complexity of the study groups, the sample may not fully capture all social groups' attitudes toward Ju Shui Wu Yin. This could result in the research findings not fully reflecting the overall societal acceptance.

Secondly, the response rate of the survey is another issue of concern. Certain groups may have a lower interest in traditional culture, which could result in a lower survey response rate, thereby affecting the representativeness of the data.

Future research can build upon overcoming these limitations and, using the analytical framework developed for Ju Shui Wu Yin, further explore the acceptance and transmission models of traditional music forms in different regions and cultural contexts, with the aim of extending the findings from individual cases to broader applications.

#### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

After going through this entire research process, we can arrive at a tentative conclusion. This conclusion has both positive and negative aspects. On the positive side, the acceptance of Ju Shui Wu Yin in modern society has improved compared to previous times, particularly in terms of its cultural value and local cultural identity, which have gained higher recognition. This is the result of combined efforts from the government, businesses, and other stakeholders.

However, on the negative side, we cannot ignore that there are still many areas that need improvement, especially in terms of increasing actual participation and reaching a broader audience. To achieve this, it is essential to increase cultural activities and educational programs and to promote Ju Shui Wu Yin in various schools and communities. Only through interactive and more targeted experiential activities can we attract greater participation from younger people.

Furthermore, the traditional offline promotion methods are limited in their reach, so it is necessary to leverage the viral promotion advantages of the internet and social media platforms to make Ju Shui Wu Yin more popular among younger audiences.

#### **6.0 DISCUSSION**

The exploration of China's shamanic music, particularly Jushui Shamanistic Music, as an intangible cultural heritage, reveals a complex interplay between tradition and modernity. This study has shed light on the historical significance and contemporary challenges of preserving Jushui Wu Yin, a musical form deeply rooted in the ancient Chu culture. The discussion that follows aims to synthesize the findings and consider their implications for the future of such cultural heritages.

Firstly, the study underscores the unique musical characteristics of Jushui Wu Yin, which distinguish it from other forms of traditional music. Its ethereal and mysterious quality, the result of its shamanic origins, provides a rich auditory experience that is both distinct and harmonious. However, this uniqueness also presents a preservation challenge, as the complex techniques and the absence of written scores make it difficult to transmit this music to future generations. The reliance on oral tradition and the need for intuitive understanding among performers highlight the vulnerability of Jushui Wu Yin to the loss of its practitioners.

Secondly, the geographical and cultural isolation that has helped preserve Jushui Wu Yin has also limited its exposure and acceptance in the broader cultural sphere. The study's findings on public awareness and acceptance suggest that while there is a growing recognition of Jushui Wu Yin's cultural value, there is a need for more proactive measures to engage the public, particularly the younger generation, in its appreciation and continuation.

The correlation analysis revealed that cultural identity and education level have a weak link, indicating that the transmission of cultural heritage like Jushui Wu Yin cannot be solely dependent on educational attainment. Instead, it requires a multifaceted approach that includes community

involvement, cultural events, and interactive experiences that can foster a deeper connection with the tradition.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of multi-stakeholder involvement in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. The government's role in policy formulation and financial support is crucial, as is the community's role in organizing cultural activities and educational programs. The involvement of academia in research and theoretical support is essential for providing a solid foundation for preservation efforts, while individuals and businesses contribute to the social foundation and financial backing necessary for the survival of Jushui Wu Yin.

In conclusion, the discussion emphasizes the need for a comprehensive and adaptive strategy that leverages modern technology and social media to increase the visibility and popularity of Jushui Wu Yin. It also calls for a more inclusive approach to cultural preservation that involves various sectors of society in the effort to safeguard and transmit this valuable cultural heritage. The future of Jushui Wu Yin, and indeed of other intangible cultural heritages, lies in our ability to find a balance between preserving the authenticity of the tradition and adapting it to the realities of modern society.

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Figure 1: A cultural bearer demonstrating the playing technique of Jushui Muyin

Figure 2: Collective Performance Scene of Jushui Muyin

Figure 3: Topography and Landscape of Baokang County's Rural Area

Figure 4: Community Landscape

Figure 5: Cover of Jushui Muyin

Figure 6: Table of Contents (Front Page) of Jushui Muyin

Figure 7: Table of Contents (Back Page) of Jushui Muyin

Figure 8: Lineage of Transmission Section in Jushui Muyin

Figure 9: Musical Notation Section in Jushui Muyin

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i This passage is from Chu Ci, Volume Two (《楚辞卷第二·九歌章句第二》), Chapter Two of Jiu Ge with

Commentary, compiled by Liu Xiang during the Western Han Dynasty. It is a classic text from ancient China's Western Han period.

ii This passage is from Xu Bai Yi Shi (《续百一诗其一》), No. 1, written by Yang Shen during the Ming

Dynasty. It is a classic text from China's Ming period.