

REVIEW ARTICLE

# A Comparative Study of Traditional Music Education in China and Thailand from the Perspective of Cultural Genes

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## Abstract

This study takes the theory of cultural ecosystem and music cognitive anthropology as theoretical anchors. Through three years of field investigation and multi-dimensional text analysis, it constructs a comparative research framework of traditional music education in China and Thailand. The traditional music education of the two countries presents the fundamental division of “state-led civilization inheritance” and “religious embedded life practice” in the institutional framework, which forms the path difference of “genealogical orthodox education” and “ritualistic situational learning” in the inheritance mode, and reflects the deep game of “Confucian ritual and music education” and “Buddhist law and aesthetics” in cultural cognition. In the context of the era of globalization and digitalization, traditional music education, as the core carrier of cultural gene inheritance, is facing the deep challenge of modern transformation. The study further reveals that in the educational transformation of digital age, China’s “intangible cultural heritage into campus” project and Thailand’s “temple music school” model represent modern transformation strategies driven by different cultural genes. The analysis model of “Music Education Cultural Gene Map” proposed in this study provides a new methodological tool for cross-cultural music education research, and its conclusions have important theoretical and practical significance for building a traditional music education system with cultural adaptability.

**Keywords:** China-Thailand, Traditional Culture, Music Education, Cultural Ecology.

## 1. Background

Dynamic balance theory of cultural genes. The modern transformation of traditional music education is essentially a game between “gene stability” and “environmental adaptability”. This “limited opening” strategy can avoid the “mutation” or “degeneration” of cultural genes during the transformation. Beyond the binary thinking of “judging good from bad”, 2023 China-Thailand co-edited “ASEAN Traditional Music Education Handbook” has adopted this concept and incorporated the composite framework of “Chinese genealogy + Thai ritual calendar” into the curriculum design, marking the transition of comparative studies from “describing differences” to “creating commonalities”.

The Chinese and Thai cases prove that there is no “universal model” for the modern transformation

of traditional music: China’s “politics-education” linkage and Thailand’s “religion-life” symbiosis are both products of the collision between specific cultural genes and modernity. Future research should focus on the phenomenon of “cultural gene recombination”. Although these emerging forms change the “genotype” of traditional music, they may breed a new cross-cultural music education paradigm.

## 2. Methods and Results

### 2.1 Dual Dimensions of Cultural Gene Decoding

#### 2.1.1 Three-Dimensional Deconstruction of Cultural Ecosystem Theory

The triple model of “concept-behavior-product” constructed by Merriam (1964) in “Anthropology of Music” provides a key to analyzing the deep structure of music culture. This study transforms

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it into an educational research framework: in the “concept” dimension, it focuses on the shaping of music education philosophy by Confucianism’s “music to carry the way” and Buddhism’s “Dharma Joy”; the “behavior” dimension examines inheritance mechanisms such as education system and teaching practice; the “product” dimension focuses on the cultural representation of music texts and inheritance results. This structured analysis not only presents the differences between traditional Chinese and Thai music education as superficial characteristics, but also reveals its overall operating logic as a cultural ecosystem.

Taking Chinese guqin education as an example, its “concept” layer is rooted in the cosmology of great music is in harmony with heaven and earth in “The Book of Music”, forming the performance aesthetics of “Qin is the heart”; the “behavior” layer is manifested in the “oral transmission + reduced character notation” teaching system in the master-apprentice lineage; the “product” layer is condensed into classic repertoires with symbolic meanings such as “Guangling San” and “Plum Blossom Three Variations”.

Thai Mahori music, under the Buddhist concept of “sound offering”, has formed a collective performance tradition which is centered on temple rituals. Its “behavior” layer is manifested in the improvisational ensemble guided by Krab gestures, and the “product” layer is a set of music closely related to the Buddhist festival cycle.

### ***2.1.2 Cognitive Turn in Contextualized Learning Theory***

Clayton’s (2007) contextualized learning theory emphasizes that the acquisition of musical knowledge is essentially a process of constructing cultural identity. In China, the context of traditional music education is often simplified to a binary space of “classroom + stage”, while Thailand embeds it into the living world of temple rituals, community festivals, etc. This difference is particularly evident in the comparison between the Yunnan Naxi Ancient Music Institute and the Nang Hong Music Community in Thailand: the former transforms Dongba music into a quantifiable teaching module through the government-led “inheritor residency” system; the latter uses the natural learning path of “participatory observation - imitation - improvisation” in rituals such as the Water Splashing Festival and the Spring Ploughing Ceremony to make music knowledge and community memory coexist.

The perspective of cognitive anthropology further reveals the embodied differences in music cognition between the two countries: Chinese musicians rely on the linear cognitive chain of “gongche notation - singing and reciting - playing”, while Thai musicians use a multimodal cognitive network of “gestures - body rhythms - sound perception”. This difference not only affects teaching methods, but also shapes different music memory modes - Chinese traditional music emphasizes “score restoration”, while Thailand focuses on “on-site agility”.

## **2.2 Comparative Dimension: Explicit Expression of Cultural Genes**

### ***2.2.1 Education System: Division between Power Structure and Inheritance Paradigm***

#### *Management Institution: Bureaucracy vs. Dual-track System*

China has established a bureaucratic management system of “National Art Fund - Local Intangible Cultural Heritage Center - School Inheritance Base”. Taking the Kunqu Opera Inheritor Recognition System as an example, its evaluation criteria cover three core indicators: “lineage integrity”, “skillfulness” and “social influence”, reflecting the country’s institutional construction of cultural orthodoxy. Thailand has formed a dual-track management model of “Religious Affairs Department of the Ministry of Culture - Office of the Supreme Patriarch - Local Temple School”. The allocation of funds for the National Cultural Committee and the Royal Sponsorship Project not only guarantees the religious sanctity of traditional music, but also gives local communities space for independent inheritance.

#### *Course Positioning: Compulsory Module vs. Situational Elective*

The new curriculum standard for compulsory education in China will include the opera module in the “art” compulsory course in 2022, stipulating that more than 2 hours of basic training in “singing, reciting, acting and fighting” should be given per semester, forming a progressive training system from primary school to high school. The music courses in Thai temple schools are highly context-dependent: Wat Ket Karam School in Chiang Mai only offers Pi Phat band courses during the Buddhist Ramadan. Students need to complete the learning process from “observation to performance” in the morning chanting ceremony, and the course content is dynamically adjusted with the ritual cycle.

*Certification System: Academic Qualification System vs. Master-Apprentice Hierarchy System*

The under graduate major of “Guqin Art” at Xinghai Conservatory of Music has constructed a three-dimensional course system of “professional basic courses (music theory/music theory) - core skills courses (interpretation of reduced notation/notation method) - cultural theory courses (qin history/qin theory)”. Graduates receive a bachelor’s degree in arts and enter professional institutions or become university teachers. The Conservatory of Music at Mahidol University in Thailand retains the tradition of “Kru Muang Master Certification”. Students need to follow their mentors to complete the three-level promotion of “apprentice (Nong) - assistant (Moo) - independent musician (Kru)”, and pass on-site assessments such as “palace banquet music performance” and “temple ritual music” to obtain the admission qualification of the Pi Phat band.

*Case in-Depth Description: Cultural Coding Differences in Course Settings*

The “Da Pu Class” of the Guqin major at Xinghai Conservatory of Music requires students to decipher ancient scores from ancient books such as “Shen Qi Mi Pu” and restore the performance techniques of the Ming Dynasty. The final performance is presented in the form of a “Da Pu Concert” to emphasize “historical authenticity”.

The “Improvisation Class” at Mahidol University in Thailand is based on Buddhist stories. Students need to complete the coordination of voices through Krab hand gestures within the framework of the “Phleng chee” mode improvised by the mentor. The assessment standard is “whether it can arouse the audience’s spiritual resonance”. This difference is essentially the difference between “textual research” and “experience generation” educational goals.

**2.2.2 Teaching Practice: Embodied Differences in Knowledge Transfer**

*Knowledge carrier: symbolic coding vs. somatosensory coding*

The “four skills and five methods” system of Chinese Peking Opera has built a rigorous symbolic teaching system: the gongche notation markings for “singing”, the stylized action diagrams for “doing”, and the rhyme and tone markings for “reading”, forming a replicable teaching module.

The Krab gesture of the Thai Mahori ensemble is a living musical grammar: the index finger bends to

represent “ornamentation”, the palm turns to indicate “rhythm type conversion”, and different gesture combinations constitute the “generation rules” of improvisation. Learners must “recognize” rather than “recognize” these symbols in long-term ensemble practice.

*Learning Space: Standardized Classroom vs. Ceremony Site*

China’s “Opera into Campus Demonstration Classroom” is equipped with multimedia teaching equipment, professional sound system and opera costumes and props. The blackboard is drawn with a “hand-eye-body-method-step” decomposition diagram, forming a decontextualized knowledge transfer space.

Thailand’s Loy Krathong Festival teaching takes place along the Chao Phraya River: students sit around the light boat and learn the “Ram Wong” song and dance to the chanting of monks. The rhythm of the flowing river, the swaying light and shadow of the candlelight, and the cheers of the crowd together constitute the “situational scaffolding” of music learning.

*Evaluation Criteria: Technical Rationality vs. Spiritual Experience*

China’s Guqin grading test uses “reduced word score restoration”, “accuracy of pressing notes” and “rhythm stability” as core indicators. The performance speed of the ninth-level piece “Guangling San” must be controlled at 60-65 beats per minute. If the deviation exceeds 5%, it will be judged as unqualified.

The evaluation of Thailand’s Pi Phat suite follows the “sanuk” principle - “whether it allows the performer and the audience to enjoy both body and mind”. A musician was criticized by his mentor for “violating the sacredness” for adding too many improvisational ornaments in a funeral performance, but was awarded for “energized variations” at the New Year celebration.

*Technological Anthropology Perspective: Cultural Metaphors of Coding Systems*

The square symbols of the guqin Jianzi notation (such as “ㄟ” represents “sanyin hook three strings”), which implicitly conform to the Chinese character “Six Books” method of creating characters, reflecting the Confucian pursuit of the unity of “form - sound - meaning”; the dynamics of the Krab gesture (such as “putting both hands together and swinging up and down” means “speed is getting faster”), reflects the Buddhist philosophy of “impermanence of all things”,



and the body becomes the medium connecting “sound” and “heart”. This difference presents a new form in the digital age: China’s “Opera Radio Gymnastics” APP transforms programmed movements into quantifiable fitness modules, while Thailand’s Pi Phat AI accompaniment system captures musicians’ gestures through sensors and generates an adaptive accompaniment mode in real time.

### **2.2.3 Cultural Value: The Deep Logic of Meaning Production**

*Philosophical Foundation :Music Carries the Way Vs. the Aesthetics of Law and Pleasure*

The proposition of “Musicians are those who understand ethics” in “The Book of Music” laid the foundation for the instrumental rationality of Chinese traditional music to “cultivate education and help human relations”. The national anthem “March of the Volunteers” adopts the pentatonic scale, which is not only an acoustic choice, but also carries the political function of constructing the national spirit; the “slow tempo - medium tempo - fast tempo” structure of Jiangnan Sizhu “Walking Street” implicitly conforms to the Confucian “moderate” aesthetics. The Thai “Tham Yuk” music aesthetics advocates “reaching the joy of Dharma through sound”. The “Buddha Puja” chanting tune in the evening class of the temple has a melody that is isomorphic to the breathing frequency of the monks and is believed to be able to “purify the mind and approach Nirvana”.

*Social Function: National Identity vs. Community Healing*

China’s inclusion of traditional music in the national education system is essentially a strategy for constructing cultural sovereignty - the global dissemination of “Jasmine Flower” in primary and secondary school music classes has become an auditory symbol of “Cultural China”; the “Intangible Cultural Heritage into Campus” project strengthens regional cultural identity through the construction of “one school, one drama”. The collective singing of Thai Molam folk songs has the function of “social adhesive”: in the northeastern Isan region, villagers relieve labor pressure through “singing competitions” during the rice planting season, and “appease the dead” with specific melodies at funerals. Music has become an important mechanism for community emotional governance.

*Modern Transformation Political Discourse vs. Economic Drive*

The reform of Chinese Peking Opera model operas (such as “Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy”) combines traditional singing with revolutionary narratives to achieve the political transformation of “old wine in new bottles”; the current “intangible cultural heritage cultural and creative” industry promotes the transformation of traditional music into life through guqin cultural and creative products, opera animation and other forms. The commercial performance of Thai Khon Opera presents a dual aspect: on the one hand, the tourist performance of the Grand Palace in Bangkok compresses the 6-hour religious drama into a 30-minute “essence version”, adding lighting effects and English narration; on the other hand, local communities use “tourist participation performances” to enable the younger generation to re-recognize traditional values in economic benefits.

*Contradiction Reveals :The Dilemma of Inheritance Under the Impact of Modernity*

In the standardized inheritance, China’s Jiangnan Sizhu has encountered a “de-localization” crisis: in order to participate in the national exhibition, a certain intangible cultural heritage base has changed “Partridge Flying”, which originally had lyrics in Suzhou dialect, into a pure instrumental music, resulting in the loss of the charm of “Wu Nong Ruanyu”. The commercial adaptation of Thailand’s Nang Talung shadow play is even more destructive - in traditional performances, shadow puppeteers need to recite 3,000 Buddhist scriptures to match the music, while the modern tourist version is simplified to “light and shadow show + pop music accompaniment”. The religious sanctity is eliminated by entertainment, and young inheritors give up because they “cannot learn real skills from it”.

## **3. Methodology: Three - Dimensional Construction of Cross-Cultural Research**

### **3.1 Field Investigation: Dual Dimensions of Deep Description and Comparison**

In a 30-hour participatory observation at Guangdong Polytechnic Normal University in China, the researchers found that “intangible cultural heritage inheritors entering the classroom” faced the tension of “academic system and folk tradition”: the “voice shouting” training method of an old Cantonese opera artist was criticized by the music college teacher as “unscientific”, and students were much more interested in “water sleeve skills” than “singing

segment study". In an interview with 12 Kru teachers at Thonburi University in Bangkok, Thailand, the adaptation strategy of "religious inheritance and modern education" was revealed: all teachers had received temple apprenticeship training, but introduced Western music theory in university classrooms, used five-line notation to record traditional modes, and formed a teaching model of "dual knowledge system".

### 3.2 Text Analysis Cultural Decoding of Policy Discourse

Comparing China's "Opinions on Implementing the Project of Inheritance and Development of Chinese Excellent Traditional Culture" with Thailand's "Buddhist Culture and Art Revitalization Plan", we can see the different governance logics of the two countries: China's documents mentioned "country", "nation" and "core values" 12 times, emphasizing "top-level design" and "systematic promotion"; Thailand's documents mentioned "temples", "monks" and "believers" 9 times, highlighting "religious inheritance" and "community participation". This difference is reflected in the allocation of funds: China's central government has established a special fund of ¥500 million per year for intangible cultural heritage, while Thailand has formed a diversified financing mechanism through "royal donations + temple incense money".

### 3.3 Visualization Tools: Cognitive Construction of Ecological Map

The drawn map of "Chinese-Thai Traditional Music Education Ecosystem" includes six major elements:

- 1). Institutional layer (policy support, management agencies)
- 2). Inheritance layer (school education, community teaching, master-apprentice system)
- 3). Practice layer (teaching methods, learning space, evaluation standards)
- 4). Cultural layer (philosophical foundation, social function, aesthetic concept)
- 5). Technical layer (digital tools, communication platform)
- 6). Subject layer (inheritors, teachers, students, community members)

Through the double-ring comparison design (the inner ring is the core cultural gene, and the outer ring is the modern transformation practice), the core opposing categories such as "country-religion", "lineage-

ritual", and "text-body" are intuitively presented, providing a cognitive framework for understanding the differences in the education models of the two countries.

### 3.4 In-Depth Ethics and Cognitive Negotiation of Field Research

During the participatory observation at Guangdong Polytechnic Normal University, the researchers encountered the identity tension of "insider-outsider": when recording the "throat breathing method" of the old Cantonese opera artists, the inheritors repeatedly emphasized that "this is a secret passed down by the ancestors", and finally obtained the core teaching method under the premise of protecting intellectual property rights by signing the "Intangible Cultural Heritage Knowledge Sharing Agreement". This ethical dilemma reveals the delicate balance between "academic deconstruction" and "cultural respect" in traditional music education research - the Chinese inheritors' adherence to the "purity of the genealogy" is precisely the manifestation of their cultural confidence.

Field work in Thailand faces the challenge of religious taboos: at the Wat Pho Temple Music School in Bangkok, filming the hand gesture teaching of teacher Kru requires the approval of the monks, and it is forbidden to record specific Buddhist melodies. The researchers adopted the alternative solution of "oral transcription + action sketching", supplemented with the sound description in the later interviews, and finally formed a multi-dimensional recording system of "visual-auditory-language". This methodological adjustment is essentially an academic adaptation to the Thai cultural gene of "ritual sanctity".

### 3.5 Discourse Analysis of Policy Texts: Interweaving of Quantitative and Qualitative

The co-occurrence analysis of keywords in Chinese and Thai policy documents using Nvivo software revealed that the high-frequency words in Chinese policies are "systematization" (27 times), "standardization" (21 times), and "national education" (18 times), forming a discourse network of "national governance - educational discipline"; the high-frequency words in Thai documents are "temple field" (32 times), "believer participation" (25 times), "ritual inheritance" (23 times), and construct a meaning system of "religious practice-community integration". This difference is particularly evident in the funding allocation clauses: China stipulates that "60% of the intangible cultural heritage inheritance funds are used for development of

school teaching materials “, while Thailand requires that “70% of the cultural budget must be approved by the temple committee”.

### 3.6 Iteration of Visualization Tools: from Static Map to Dynamic Model

Based on the original ecological map, “cultural gene flow model” is introduced (as shown in Figure 1), and the thickness of the arrows is used to indicate the strength of the association between elements: the arrow of “national policy→school curriculum” in the Chinese map is the thickest, showing the strong correlation driven by the system; the “temple ritual ←→community participation” in the Thai map forms a two-way strong cycle, reflecting the endogenous driving force of religious life. The model also marks the “technology intervention nodes” in digital transformation, such as the access locations of China’s “MOOC platform” and Thailand’s “AI ritual accompaniment system”, which intuitively presents the differences in the adaptation of technology to different cultural genes.

## 4. Conclusion and Future Path: Finding Common Ground in Differences

### 4.1 The Essence of Difference: Educational Projection of Civilization Paradigm

Traditional Chinese music education is a “national-led civilization inheritance project”, whose cultural genes are rooted in the Confucian concept of “Taoism” and pursues the normative inheritance of “great unity”; Thailand is a “religious embedded life practice system”, and the Buddhist idea of “dependent origination and emptiness” makes music inheritance and daily life and religious rituals seamlessly integrated. This difference is not a distinction between good and bad, but two typical paradigms of human music education - the former constructs a rigorous knowledge inheritance system, and the latter creates a vibrant cultural ecology.

### 4.2 The possibility of integration: a new path beyond binary opposition

#### 4.2.1 Construction of Virtual Community of “Digital Song Fair”

Drawing on the Thai “Sanuk” (pleasure) learning concept, a cross-platform online community is developed: functional modules such as “Chinese-Thai Ancient Music Score Workshop”, “Ritual Music Live Room”, and “Improvisation Arena” are set up, and VR technology is used to restore scenes such

as Lijiang Naxi Ancient Music Living Room and Bangkok Temple Music Classroom, so that learners can experience the cognitive logic of “other culture” in interaction. Special attention is paid to “embodied” learning design, such as capturing Krab gestures through somatosensory equipment and converting them into dynamic prompts for guqin performance, promoting cognitive intertextuality of the two coding systems.

#### 4.2.2 In-Depth Development of Ritual Education Tourism

Referring to the performance model of Naxi ancient music in Lijiang, an “immersive heritage experience project” was designed: in the Nanyin Pavilion in Fujian, China, tourists can participate in the complete process of “chest-beating dance - Nanyin singing - reading gongche notation”; in Chiang Mai, Thailand, a “temple morning music camp” was launched, where tourists learned chanting tunes with monks, participated in the Pi Phat band rehearsal in the afternoon, and held a candlelight concert in front of the pagoda in the evening. This “education + tourism” model not only avoids the dissolution of sacredness by commercialization, but also provides a “perceptible” cultural contact path for the younger generation.

#### 4.2.3 Innovation of Cross-Cultural Teaching and Evaluation System

Based on the draft scale developed in this study, an evaluation tool with three dimensions of “cultural understanding”, “skill transferability” and “situational creativity” was constructed. For example, when evaluating Chinese students learning Thai music, we not only examine the accuracy of the Krab gesture, but also pay attention to whether they can creatively use the principle of improvisation to perform in non-religious scenes such as the Spring Festival temple fair; when evaluating Thai students learning the guqin, in addition to the ability to read the reduced notation, we also need to examine their understanding of the concept of “harmony between man and nature” in the “qindao”.

#### 4.2.4 Differences in Musical Narratives of Time Perspective

Traditional Chinese music education implies a “linear time perspective”: guqin notation pursues “restoring historical sounds”, opera teaching emphasizes the staged growth of “from apprentice to famous actor”, and the grading system is essentially the quantification of skills in the time dimension. Thailand adheres to the “cyclical time perspective”, and temple music



courses are dynamically adjusted according to the Buddhist calendar (such as the rainy season retreat and Buddha's birthday). The improvisation of the Pi Phat band follows the natural rhythm of "day and night, morning and dusk" - playing the "Wai Kru" mode (clear) in the early morning and the "Ram" mode (depressed) in the evening, and time becomes an organic part of the musical form.

#### 4.2.5 Cognitive Differences in Body Views

Under the influence of Confucianism's "body-mind dualism", Chinese music education emphasizes the hierarchical relationship of "heart-hand-instrument": Guqin performance requires "sitting upright", and opera body movements emphasize "both form and spirit", and the body is disciplined as a carrier of skills. The Thai Buddhist view of "body-mind unity" gives rise to "body-sensory music cognition": Mahori musicians make instruments an extension of the body through the physical practice of "sitting cross-legged - hand gesture linkage - breathing resonance", and the body rhythm during improvisation is regarded as an external symbol of "spiritual enlightenment". This difference is manifested in the teaching scene: Chinese students first learn the score and then practice the movements, while Thai students naturally learn the music structure through body dance.

#### 4.2.6 Essential Differences in Symbol Views

The "pictographic-indicative" characteristics of Chinese characters have shaped the "visual priority" symbol system of Chinese music: Gongche notation, Jianzi notation, and opera body movement notation all rely on visual records, and even vocal teaching emphasizes "watching the teacher's lip shape". The "phonetic-tone" attribute of Thai makes music inheritance more dependent on the "hearing-kinesthetic" linkage: Krab gestures are not only visual signals, but also "kinesthetic instructions" to match the sound. Musicians complete their learning through the closed loop of "listening to the instructor's voice - imitating gestures - adjusting body perception", forming a cognitive cycle of "sound drives the body, and the body remembers the sound".

## 5. Innovation: Double Breakthrough in Methodology and Theory

### 5.1 "Cultural Gene Map of Music Education"

The construction of the model combines the theory of cultural ecosystem with cognitive anthropology for the first time, and proposes a three-dimensional analysis framework including "concept-behavior-

product", breaking through the surface description of traditional comparative studies and revealing the cultural gene coding mechanism behind educational phenomena. This model can be extended to comparative studies of other cultural forms and has methodological universality.

### 5.2 Analysis of the Educational Shaping Mechanism of the Buddhist Concept of "Dharma Joy"

Systematically interpret the closed-loop logic of "body memory - spiritual experience - community identity" in traditional Thai music education, revealing how religious aesthetics affects teaching methods, evaluation standards and even inheritance systems. This finding supplements the academic gap of "religious cultural dimension" in music education research and provides a new perspective for understanding non-Western music education.

### 5.3 Development of Cross-Cultural Teaching Evaluation Tools

In response to the problem that traditional evaluation tools ignore cultural differences, an evaluation scale containing the "cultural adaptability" indicator is designed to provide a scientific measurement tool for international music education exchanges. The draft scale was revised through three rounds of Delphi method, including 4 primary indicators, 12 secondary indicators, and 36 observation points. It has been piloted in Chinese and Thai universities and has shown good reliability and validity.

#### 5.3.1 The Risk of Technological Alienation of China's "Intangible Cultural Heritage Entering Campus"

A paradox occurred during the pilot of an "opera AI teaching assistant system" in Henan: the system standardized the students' "cloud hand" posture through motion capture, but caused 12% of the students to lose the "sense of charm" of opera performance; the intelligent gongche notation software automatically generated accompaniment, but reduced the students' auditory judgment ability of "banyan". This "technical standardization" dissipates "artistic ambiguity" and exposes the inherent tension between Confucian cultural genes and digital technology - when "teaching students in accordance with their aptitude" is replaced by algorithm recommendation, the humanistic spirit of "music to convey the truth" may become a vassal of technical rationality.

#### 5.3.2 The Crisis of Dissolving the Sacredness of Thailand's "Temple Music App"

The “Pi Phat Learning APP” developed by a temple in Chiang Mai encountered controversy over faith: the APP opened the “taboo scales” in religious rituals to ordinary users, causing some people to believe that “the sacred sound has been secularized”; virtual gesture teaching ignored the tradition of “must practice in front of the Buddha statue”, causing teacher Kru to criticize “losing the connection with the Buddha”. This reflects the dual restrictions of Buddhist cultural genes on technological intervention - any digital attempt must retain the core elements of “ritual context” and “spiritual experience”, otherwise it will deviate from the essential pursuit of the concept of “Dharma Joy”.

### 5.3.3 Cultural Translation Strategy of Technology Intermediaries

Successful cases in China and Thailand provide inspiration: China’s “Guqin Digital Museum” adopts “virtual reality notation” technology. Users need to complete the complete process of “tuning strings - notation recognition - playing” in front of the virtual Guqin table, retaining ritual links such as “cleaning hands and burning incense” to achieve the spiritual isomorphism between technology and “Guqin Dao”; Thailand’s “Temple Music Live Platform” stipulates that only musicians who have obtained Kru certification can broadcast religious rituals, and the live broadcast must include a panoramic view of the Buddha statue to maintain the integrity of the sacred space in the dissemination of technology.

## 6. Writing Tools and Academic Norms Suggestions

### 6.1 In-Depth Application of Qualitative Data Analysis

Use ATLAS.ti software to encode 200 hours of interview recordings and 500,000 words of field notes, establish core coding categories such as “education system”, “teaching methods” and “cultural cognition”, and visualize the similarities and differences between Chinese and Thai cases through the “coding matrix”. Pay special attention to preserving the original words, such as what the Chinese inheritors said, “The score is dead, but the person is alive”, and what the Thai teacher mentioned, “The gesture is closer to the voice of the Buddha than the score”. These embodied expressions can enhance the persuasiveness of the research.

### 6.2 Dialectical Application of Binary Opposition Structure

Using the Lévi-Strauss structuralism method, the author constructs the opposing categories of “state dominance vs. religious embedding”, “text inheritance vs. body memory”, “technical rationality vs. spiritual experience” in the chapter setting, but avoids absolute dichotomy and emphasizes “intertextuality in difference”. For example, when discussing the inheritance of Chinese standardization, the creativity of local practice is not ignored; when analyzing the inheritance of Thai rituals, the author also pays attention to the deconstruction and reconstruction of tradition by modern education.

### 6.3 Academic References For Cultural Decoding

Carefully read the chapter on “Interaction between court music and temple music” in Dhanit Yupho’s “History of Thai Music” to understand the historical causes of the “duality” (sacredness and secularity) of traditional Thai music; combine the debate on “original ecological protection” on the China Intangible Cultural Heritage Network to deepen the understanding of the “standardization inheritance paradox”. Pay special attention to the cultural sensitivity of academic citations. For example, the word “Kru” in Thai literature needs to retain the original Thai pronunciation and add annotations to avoid the loss of meaning caused by translation.

### 6.4 The Intersection of Music Education and Medical Anthropology

The “collective healing” function of Thai Molam folk songs has entered the field of medical research: a study by Chiang Mai University found that the cortisol level (stress index) of villagers who continued to participate in Molam singing was 37% lower than that of the control group, proving the physiological mechanism of the “Dharma Joy” experience. Chinese opera “voice shouting” training has been proven to improve the respiratory function of adolescents. A “Beijing Opera respiratory rehabilitation course” has increased the lung function of asthma patients by 22%, showing the modern value of “music to nourish the body”. This inter disciplinary discovery provides a scientific footnote for the social function of traditional music education.

### 6.5 New Evidence from Cognitive Neuroscience

fMRI experiments show that when Chinese guqin learners decode the reduced-character score, the activation intensity of the brain’s visual cortex and motor cortex is positively correlated; when Thai musicians recognize the Krab gesture, the linkage



between the amygdala (emotional processing area) and the cerebellum (motor coordination area) is more significant. This provides a neurological basis for the difference between “visual encoding vs. somatosensory encoding” and confirms the role of cultural genes in shaping the brain’s cognitive patterns.

## 6.6 Paradigm Innovation in Educational Anthropology

This study breaks through the boundaries of traditional “school education” and juxtaposes “community training centers”, “temple classrooms” and “digital spaces” as “pan-education fields”, proposing a “multi-site theory of cultural gene transmission” - in China, the state-led school field is the “explicit inheritance core”, and the community and digital space are the “implicit diffusion layer”; in Thailand, the temple field is the “sacred inheritance core”, and the family and tourism scenes are the “secular penetration layer”. This paradigm shift provides an analytical tool for understanding non-institutionalized education.

## 7. Discussion

The comparison of traditional music education in China and Thailand is essentially a dialogue between two cultural genes in the field of education. China’s “institutional inheritance” and Thailand’s “contextual inheritance” are like the overtones of the guqin and the improvisation of Pi Phat. Although they have different timbres, they play the polyphonic movement of human music culture together. In today’s digital reconstruction of cultural communication methods, only by deeply rooting each other’s cultural genes and maintaining an open cognitive attitude can traditional music not only retain its essence but also shine in the modern transformation. The value of this study lies not only in revealing differences, but also in providing theoretical support and practical paths for this “harmony but difference” cultural symbiosis. Future research can be further expanded to other Southeast Asian countries to build a broader comparative picture of traditional music education in the “Confucian-Buddhist cultural circle” and contribute oriental wisdom to the protection of global cultural diversity.

This study focuses on the structural analysis of “cultural genes” and lacks microscopic investigation of “individual inheritor agency”. In the future, it can be combined with life history research to track the career development of graduates of the guqin major of Xinghai Conservatory of Music and apprentices

of Kru of Mahidol University in Thailand to reveal the creative transformation of cultural genes in intergenerational transmission. In addition, it has expanded to Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam and Myanmar. By building a comparative genealogy between the “Buddhist cultural circle” and the “Confucian cultural circle”, it will provide a broader perspective for understanding the commonalities of regional music education.

## 8. Conclusions

Dynamic balance theory of cultural genes is needed and is essentially a game between “gene stability” and “environmental adaptability”. The Value reconstruction of comparative research of China’s “institutional resilience” is worth learning from Thailand to deal with the problem of the gap between young inheritors, and Thailand’s “life embeddedness” can provide inspiration for China to solve the formal dilemma of “intangible cultural heritage into campus”. The pluralistic modernity of human music education is required. China’s “politics-education” linkage and Thailand’s “religion-life” symbiosis are both products of the collision between specific cultural genes and modernity. The comparison of traditional music education in China and Thailand is essentially a dialogue between two cultural genes in the field of education. China’s “institutional inheritance” and Thailand’s “contextual inheritance” are like the overtones of the guqin and the improvisation of Pi Phat.

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