



The transmission Process of “Suzhou Pingtan” Chinese opera in Jiangsu, China

Quan Zhang

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music

April 2023

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กระบวนการสืบทอดของ “ซูโจวผิงถาน” ในมณฑลเจียงซู ประเทศจีน

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### ABSTRACT

This article studies the research methods of musicology and ethnomusicology, collects data, and analyzes statistical data through the fields of the respondents. The research objectives of this article were three: 1) To investigate the development of “Suzhou Pingtan” in Jiangsu, China. 2) To analyze the music characteristic of song selected of “Suzhou Pingtan” in Jiangsu, China. 3) To propose the guideline for transmission “Suzhou Pingtan” in Jiangsu, China.

The research results of this article are as follows: 1) Suzhou Pingtan is divided into five development periods according to time, mainly manifested in the development of bibliography, genre, group, actors, and performance forms. 2) There are many tracks handed down from Suzhou Pingtan, among which 16 of the most popular and outstanding tracks are classified according to their early, transitional, and mixed stages. Based on the analysis of melody trend, mode and tonality, rhythm, accompaniment, and other elements, the accompaniment consists of three strings and a lute, sometimes spoken and sometimes sung, and the ending note often ends with a "drawl". Using a euphemistic and gentle local dialect is more able to express special musical emotions. 3) Through questionnaire survey and data collection, 10 transmission methods of Suzhou Pingtan were identified.

**Keyword :** Transmission process, Suzhou Pingtan, Jiangsu, China



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# Chapter I

## Introduction

### 1. Statement of the problem

Suzhou, referred to as "Su" for short, was formerly called Gusu and Pingjiang. It is a prefecture level city under the jurisdiction of Jiangsu Province, one of the important central cities in the Yangtze River Delta approved by the State Council, a national high-tech industrial base and a scenic tourist city. Suzhou is one of the first batch of national famous historical and cultural cities with a history of nearly 2500 years. It is one of the important birthplaces of Wu culture and has the reputation of "heaven on earth". The representative of China's private gardens, the classical gardens of Suzhou and the Suzhou section of the Grand Canal of China, are listed as world cultural heritage by UNESCO.

Suzhou Pingtan originated in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China. It was formed in the late Ming and early Qing Dynasties. It has a history of more than 400 years. At first, Wang Zhoushi, an artist in the south of the Yangtze River, was engaged in criticism and creation of pingtan. In his later years, he founded the Guangyu Association, the first guild organization in Pingtan history. After the establishment of Guangyu City, Pingtan art has developed rapidly. During the Jiaqing and Daoguang years of the Qing Dynasty, there were four famous masters: Chen Yugan, Mao Changpei, Lu Shizhen and Yu Xiushan. Since the middle of the 19th century, Shanghai's economy and culture have developed rapidly, and its population has also been expanding. Since both Shanghai dialect and Suzhou dialect belong to Wu dialect and are popular in Shanghai without language barrier, Pingtan art became popular in Shanghai later, with a large number of Pingtan artists represented by Yao Shizhang, Ma Rufei, Zhao Xiangzhou and Wang Shiquan appearing one after another. This is a sign of the maturity of Pingtan art, which has laid a foundation for its future development. After Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty, Pingtan became prosperous. There are many performances in Shanghai, such as hundreds of famous pianists such as Jiang Yuequan, Yang Zhenxiong and Zhang Jianguo Brothers. Rap repertoire also extends to modern novels, and Pingtan art develops vigorously. (Zhang Li, 2008) From the above paper,



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we can find the history of Suzhou Pingtan and its development in the 20th century. However, since entering the 21st century, with the rapid development of China's network technology and rapid economic progress, the development of Suzhou Pingtan has undergone more changes. Although the history of Suzhou Pingtan cannot be changed, the current development situation changes with time, especially the changes of audience and singers, which shows that the current research on Suzhou Pingtan is not deep enough, and Researcher think it is necessary to deepen the current research on Suzhou Pingtan.

Suzhou Pingtan has a long history, and its singing and content were quite mature in the Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty. Suzhou Pingtan has two systems, one is called "Pingtan" for singing and talking, and the other is called "Tanci" for talking but not singing, both of which are collectively called "Pingtan". No matter Pingtan or Tanci, its development will benefit from the unique geographical advantages of Jiangnan water town and the foundation of Wu language, which is mainly spread around Suzhou in Jiangsu Province. The picture scrolls of water town life with white walls and black tiles, small bridges and flowing water endows the local Wu dialect with soft, glutinous and sweet features. The development of Tanci is based on this rich local language feature and absorbs some essence of other local operas, and blends Suzhou Tanci, a drama with local characteristics. Pingtan music is characterized by its beauty and delicacy. Although in some works, there is no lack of music with very passionate emotional expression and great emotional fluctuation, the overall lyric segment is mainly composed of emotional delicacy, coupled with the lingering sound and sweet and glutinous Wu aria, so the general audience will feel that its lyric segment is more representative. (Li Xiaochun, 2019)

From the above paper, Suzhou Pingtan music is different from other local folk songs, silk and bamboo music. It is the most representative music with exquisite or passionate emotional expression. Therefore, it is necessary to study Suzhou Pingtan music works.

In the 21st century, with the rapid development of economy, especially the impact of foreign culture, the life and cultural environment on which Suzhou Pingtan relies for its survival has changed, which has also led to the lack of successors of actors, the aging of audience groups, the decline of performance venues year by year, and the



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outdated performance bibliography, which has seriously affected the development and transmission of the art of Pingtan. Although Suzhou Municipal Government has given strong support to Suzhou Pingtan, put forward a guiding ideology, five working measures and two safeguard measures, and improved the safeguard system for the transmission and development of Suzhou Pingtan art, the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan art need to be strengthened under the new situation. (Hao Sizhen & Gan Xiaofeng, 2009)

The above is an analysis of the rise and fall of Suzhou Pingtan. Suzhou Pingtan, as an excellent local music, must be well inherited and protected. In order to fully understand the reasons for the decline of music, it is more important to conduct field surveys and fully understand the suggestions and feedback of various groups, so as to really provide ideas for the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan Music.

In today's society, the survival state of Suzhou Pingtan has undergone great changes, showing a trend of gradual loss or even extinction. Therefore, it is our responsibility to protect and transmit the Pingtan culture and make it spread for a long time. We should be good at using the means of mass media to strengthen the transmission of Pingtan through radio, television, internet, etc., reform and innovate Pingtan to attract the public's attention and interest, and strengthen the students' understanding and transmission of Pingtan art through school music education. However, at present, there are still many problems in the combination of Pingtan and media. How to use the advantages of mass media to spread and protect Pingtan and make this treasure of Wudi develop for a long time in the new era is a major opportunity and challenge we are facing at present, which has practical significance. (Wu Lei, 2015)

From the above information, the study of representative local music has far-reaching significance. Considering the above reasons, Rresearcher decided to take Suzhou Pingtan as the direction of my doctoral thesis. Researcher have thoroughly studied the development history of Suzhou Pingtan, the characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan music, and the ideas for the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan art in Jiangsu Province, so as to provide suggestions for the sustainable development of Suzhou Pingtan, and researcher interested in further studying Suzhou Pingtan.



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## 2. Research Objectives

- 2.1 To investigate the development of “Suzhou Pingtan” in Jiangsu, China.
- 2.2 To analyze the music characteristic of song selected of “Suzhou Pingtan” in Jiangsu, China.
- 2.3 To propose the guideline for transmission “Suzhou Pingtan” in Jiangsu, China.

## 3. Research Questions

- 3.1 What is the history and development status of Suzhou Pingtan?
- 3.2 What are the musical characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan?
- 3.3 What are the transmission process and protection ideas of Suzhou Pingtan?

## 4. Importance of Research

- 4.1 We can understand the history and development of Suzhou Pingtan, a famous traditional Chinese music culture.
- 4.2 Through the analysis of the existing music singing genres of Suzhou Pingtan, we can understand the music characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan.
- 4.3 We can explore the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan music and transmit and carry forward the excellent Chinese traditional music.

## 5. Definition of Terms

### 5.1 Development

According to time division, it can be divided into 5 periods:

- 1) Origin
- 2) From the 17th century to the 1830s
- 3) 1840s to 1940s
- 4) 1950s to the 1970s
- 5) 1980s to 2022.

Suzhou Pingtan Performance Form, Performance Venue, Bibliography, Number of Actors, Performance Group, and Overall Development.

### 5.2 Musical characteristics

The 16 selections selected in this article are from scholars. According to the classification of early, transitional, and mixed periods, the characteristics of music



depend on melody lines, patterns, and tones, intervals, musical structure, rhythm, and accompaniment.

### 5.3 Transmission

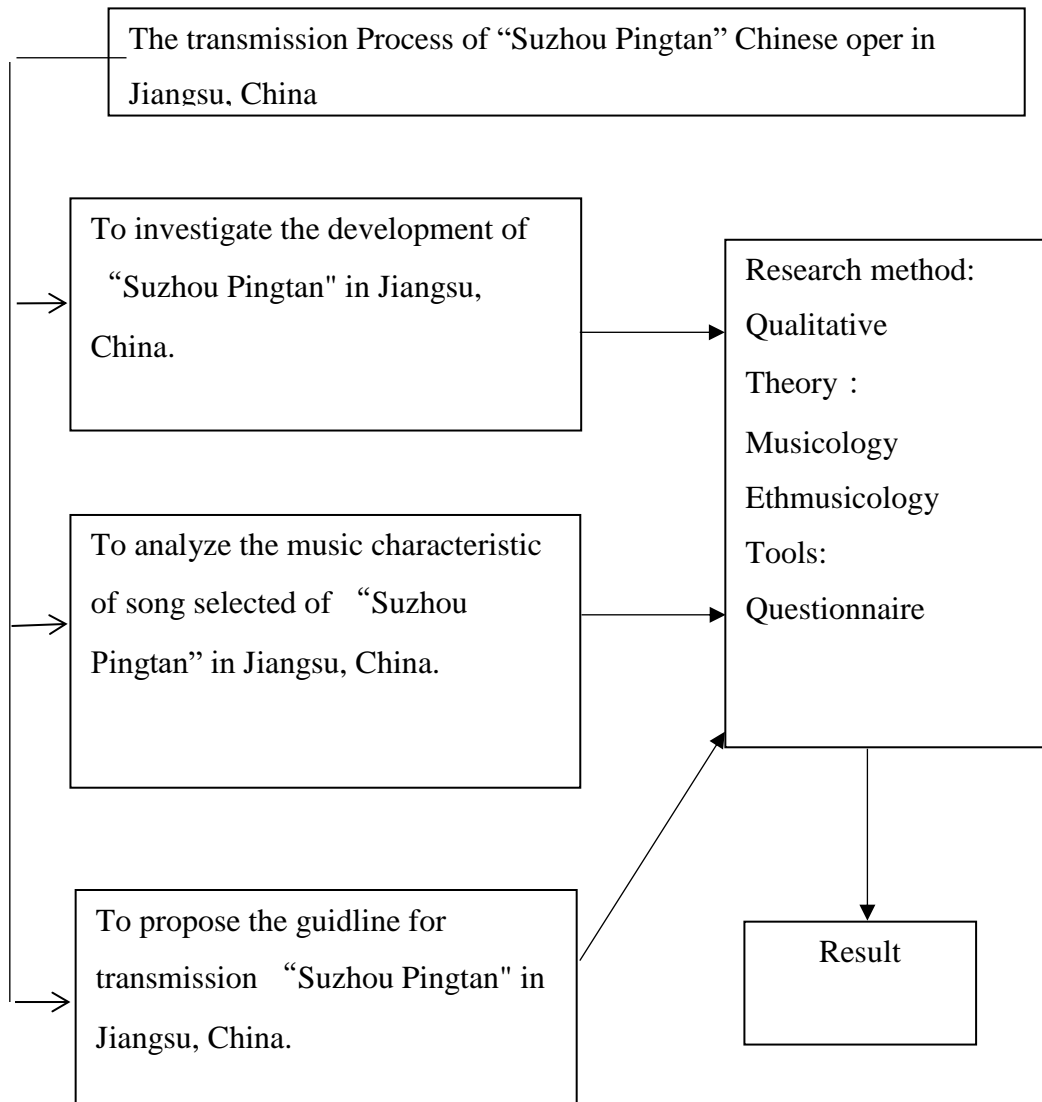
Refers to the transmission method of Suzhou Pingtan. According to clues provided by scholars, there are 10 main modes of transmission:

- 1) Selected into the first batch of intangible cultural heritage list in China.
- 2) Establish national and local inheritors.
- 3) Held Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival in China.
- 4) Improve the performance level and frequency of Suzhou Pingtan Opera Troupe.
- 5) Attach importance to the development of Suzhou Pingtan School.
- 6) Build Suzhou Pingtan Museum in China.
- 7) Increase and construct Suzhou Pingtan performance venue.
- 8) Transmission in primary and secondary schools and universities.
- 9) Attach importance to international transmission.
- 10) The government strongly supports the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan.

## 6. Conceptual Framework

This paper takes Pingtan, Suzhou, Jiangsu, China as the research object. The data are mainly obtained through five research methods: document interview, interview, questionnaire, job analysis and literature. These data can be explained by theories of musicology, ethnomusicology, historical musicology and music aesthetics.

### Conceptual Framework



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## Chapter II

### Literature Reviews

In this study, researcher consulted relevant documents to obtain the most comprehensive information available for this study. The following topics were reviewed:

1. The background of Suzhou Pingtan, Jiangsu, China.
2. The general knowledge of Suzhou Pingtan, Jiangsu, China.
3. Research theory.
  - 3.1 Music Theory.
  - 3.2 Musicology.
  - 3.3 Ethnomusicology.
4. Research Related

Among the relevant theories of Suzhou Pingtan, music theory is mainly used for the analysis of music works. Musicology and ethnomusicology are mainly used to study the development and transmission of Suzhou Pingtan music.

From January 2022 to January 2023, Researcher conducted field interviews in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province. Through interviews with relevant informants (experts, scholars, major actors and the masses), researcher learned about the music characteristics and development status of "Suzhou Pingtan", discussed the transmission, protection and development of national music, and then completed the writing and revision of the paper.

#### **1. The Background of Suzhou Pingtan, Jiangsu, China**

In his paper "The History and Development of Suzhou Pingtan" in 2008, Mr. Zhang li introduced the general situation of Suzhou Pingtan. Firstly, it introduces the historical evolution of Suzhou Pingtan. Suzhou Pingtan was formed in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties. In the forty-first year of Qianlong, Guangyu Society was established. Through rap, people, identity, language, etc. were expressed to reflect life. The audience was inspired and understood the true meaning of life. Then it introduces the origin and development of Suzhou Pingtan. It originated in Suzhou, developed in

Shanghai, and finally formed in Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Shanghai. There are two forms of performance: single stage and double stage, of which double stage is the most common, and the language used is Suzhou dialect. (Zhang Li, 2008)

In his 2021 paper, Wu Jinming mainly described that in the development of Chinese folk music, Chinese rap music has enriched other folk music with its unique and irreplaceable position and role. This is mainly reflected in two aspects. First of all, Chinese folk rap music has a long history and is closely related to social development and people's life. Second, Chinese folk rap music is a milestone in the development of China's national folk music. On the one hand, Chinese rap music has spread and developed the essence of folk songs, nurtured and promoted the production of Chinese opera. On the other hand, the continuous maturity and progress of Chinese rap music has also promoted the progress of Chinese folk instrumental music to a certain extent, and enriched the performance forms and repertoire of folk instrumental music. (Wu Jinming, 2021)

In his 2012 paper "On the Development Course and Historical Status of Chinese Rap Music", Danna mainly studied the relationship between the form and performance of rap art and modern music to further analyze its important impact on contemporary music. Deeply understand the development context of traditional Chinese music and art, learn from the experience of predecessors, and explore a new development path of music and art culture. Chinese rap music is a bright pearl in Chinese traditional music. It has a long history. It is mainly a kind of speech and story in the form of folk music. After 1949, it was also called Quyí music. Chinese rap art has distinctive traditional music characteristics, and is a special category of Chinese folk art. It is a comprehensive category of music, literature and performance. In style, rap art adopts the combination of rhyme and dispersion, narration and endorsement. In the performance, a combination of storytelling and simulated characters was used. In the performance of music, it is more prominent in its narrative, with distinctive language melody. It is the most closely combined language and music in traditional music culture, and also the most popular form of folk performance. Rap music has a deep connection with other arts. (Dan Nan, 2012)

Zhang Hongyi mainly described in his 1981 paper "A Brief Introduction to the Classification of Chinese Rap Music" that there are many kinds of Chinese rap music.



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According to the statistics of "Introduction to Folk Music", there are more than 200 kinds of existing Chinese rap music. How to classify this rap music scientifically is a topic that needs to be seriously discussed in the study of Chinese folk music. At present, the popular classification methods in the field of music and folk art are divided into eight categories, namely: ancient poetry, Tanci, Yugu, typesetting, Qinshu, Zaqu, Xingyin, Banchan Pavilion (collectively referred to as ten categories of folk art with Pingshu and Xiangsheng). Although this classification also reflects some characteristics of similar music, many problems have been found. In view of the commonness of all kinds of music, it is suggested to reflect the essential differences between different kinds of music more scientifically. (Zhang Hongyi, 1981)

In her 2016 paper "On the Original Environment and Artistic transmission of Suzhou Pingtan", Ms. Hong Fang said that the rich Wu cultural environment provided the continuous nourishment of Suzhou Pingtan, and the artistic accumulation formed the unique artistic value and distinctive characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan. Modern society is an innovative society, transmission is the foundation, innovation is development, good transmission is conducive to innovation; Poor transmission and lack of foundation for innovation. To protect Pingtan and do a good job in rescue and transmission is not only to prepare a favorable foundation for innovation, but also to promote its innovation in transmission. (Hong Fang, 2016)

Suzhou Pingtan is the name card of Suzhou and the witness of Suzhou's development. Through understanding the background of Suzhou Pingtan, we can better understand the cultural environment and development process of Suzhou, and also help more people understand Suzhou, China.

## **2. The general knowledge of Suzhou Pingtan, Jiangsu, China**

In his 1999 paper "The Artistic Characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan", Mr. Zhou Liang said that the difference between Pingtan art and other arts lies not only in its characteristics, but also in its existence and irreplaceable foundation; Pingtan and novels are the same in creating artistic images and how to perceive the created images, but their carriers and media means as well as their contact and transmission with the audience are different; Both Pingtan and opera are performances, but they create artistic images and are perceived in different ways. Pingtan "uses Wu dialect" to distinguish it

from other local Diaos, "talk" and opera, "rap art" and novels and opera. Pingtan is "the expression of appearance". Pingtan is not limited by the visual image, and its time and space are free; The omniscient perspective is widely used in Pingtan, and the structure emphasizes "guanzi". Pingtan needs proper repetition; Pingtan's vocal music is mainly narrative, and the music is full of Wu songs. (Zhou Liang, 1999)

Azim Khan; Tariq Aziz; Syed Sohail Ahmad Shah ; Abdul Rauf; Zubair; Syed Awais Ahmad Shah ; Saeedullah ; Suleyman; Khalid H. Thebo, in his 2006 paper, Ping Tan originated from Suzhou, which is a combination of storytelling and ballad singing, and its talk and sing is used in Suzhou dialect, master "speak, laughter, play, sing", Ping Tan has formed two major schools in the long development history, namely Ma Rufe's "Ma Diao" and Yu Xiushan's "Yu Diao". The Ping Tan is different from Opera Kun and Su Tan born in Suzhou, the one of these last two is elegant music for caviar to the general, the other is a popular song loved by the masses, the Ping Tan suits both refined and popular taste. (Azim Khan & Tariq Aziz & Syed Sohail Ahmad Shah & Abdur Rauf & Zubair & Syed Awais Ahmad Shah & Khalid H Thebo, 2006)

Lv Simin's 2019 paper "Analysis of the Characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan Music" mainly tells that the music of Suzhou Pingtan is famous for its beautiful and exquisite emotion, and its mode is mostly the Chinese national six-tone mode, with strong and rich expression. The segmentation of the end of the word creates "rhyme". Pingtan has a variety of singing styles, so it is rich in color. This paper mainly analyzes the artistic characteristics of Pingtan music from three aspects: the mode of Pingtan music, the end of sentence segmentation and accompanying instruments. (Lv Simin, 2019)

(Sun Yiting, 2020) mainly introduced the musical characteristics and representative repertoire of Chen Diao, Yu Diao, Ma v, Jiang Diao and Li Diao in his 2020 paper "Suzhou Pingtan Music aria". This paper mainly discusses the singing types of Suzhou Pingtan music. Since the establishment of Guangyu Club, the first guild organization in Pingtan history, Pingtan art has developed rapidly. It has formed three schools: Chen Diao, Ma Diao and Yu Diao. In its development process of more than one hundred years, new schools of thought based on the styles of the three famous artists have constantly emerged and formed their own schools through transformation and innovation. (Sun Yiting, 2020)



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In her 2016 thesis, (Chen Jie, 2016) said that with the rise of various types of entertainment activities in recent years, various oral performance traditions have disappeared, but many Suzhou citizens still take it for granted that Pingtan represents their local cultural identity. It discusses the interaction between the storyteller and the audience during and outside the performance. This thesis analyzes the "feedback loop" Transmission between performers and audience in various fields of the Pingtan activity, especially focusing on the following fields: the role play and identity presentation of storytellers and audience, the different types of Pingtan followers and their respective forms of participation, the role play of Pingtan and the interaction between Pingtan and audience, and the use of gestures in the performance to convey deeper meaning, The nature of the complementary relationship between words and music in ballad singing, and the impact of television and radio transmission on Pingtan culture. (Chen Jie, 2016)

In his 2009 thesis "Transmission, Innovation and Popularization of Suzhou Pingtan", Mr. Pang Zhengliang described that the transmission of Pingtan art mainly includes talent training, bibliographic creation and bookstore construction. The innovation of Suzhou Pingtan is mainly from the content and form. The popularization of Suzhou Pingtan is mainly aimed at teenagers and cultivating new audiences. Face domestic and foreign audiences. (Pang Zhengliang, 2009)

In her 2016 thesis "On the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan", Ms. Han Xiuli mainly discussed the traditional transmission relationship, transmission mode and transmission content of Suzhou Pingtan, which has practical and positive reference significance for understanding the transmission law of traditional Chinese folk art. (Han Xiuli, 2016)

In his 2017 thesis "The Joy and Worry of the Present Situation of Suzhou Pingtan", Mr. Yuan Xiaoliang told about himself as a famous performing artist of Suzhou Pingtan, learned about the development status of Suzhou Pingtan in the local area, formed a better protection pattern, the performance cost was paid by the government, and the employment difficulties of graduates who studied Pingtan. However, the actors are very worried about their artistic quality and performance quality. There is an extreme lack of high-quality new books, and there are fewer knowledgeable and high-level young audiences. (Yuan Xiaoliang, 2017)



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In his 2014 paper "Suzhou Pingtan: Analysis of Accompaniment Music", Wu Lei mainly described that the status and function of accompaniment music is very important, because with accompaniment music, the singing style can be developed with different characteristics, and the accompaniment itself is also of great artistic value. Therefore, the study of Pingtan accompaniment is very necessary and has far-reaching significance. This paper takes the accompaniment music of Suzhou Pingtan as the research object, and will explore and analyze the instruments used, accompaniment techniques, and the combination of vocal music. (Wu Lei, 2014)

In her 2002 thesis "Reflections on the Rise and Fall of Suzhou Pingtan", Ms. Su Chunmin explored the various factors affecting its rise and decline, faced the potential crisis, and suggested a series of measures to promote Suzhou Pingtan to become brilliant again. (Su Chunmin, 2002)

Suzhou Pingtan, with a history of more than 400 years, needs the joint efforts of practitioners, learners and Suzhou Pingtan lovers to do a good job of transmission and protection. In the new era, we should make full use of modern science and technology to spread Suzhou Pingtan to a wider space and to the masses. Better protection of Pingtan is our responsibility given by history. We should strive to make the ancient intangible cultural heritage better serve the modern society and make the traditional cultural resources become the real cultural productivity.

### **3. Research theory**

#### **3.1 Music Theory**

Ye Songrong's 2012 paper "Yu Runyang's Theoretical Construction in the Study of Western Music History" mainly tells the following story: Mr. Yu Runyang is a famous musicologist and music educator in China, and also a master in the study of western music history and music aesthetics. Yu Yu has worked hard in these two fields for a long time, involving a wide range of fields. His research results are very important and unique for the development of western music history and music aesthetics in China. He not only provides us with the research of western music aesthetics, western music history theory and methods, but also has important guiding significance and guiding significance for the development of these two fields. (Ye Songrong, 2012)



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Yang Yandi first made a comprehensive review of the contemporary western music analysis theory and its historical development in his 1995 paper "Review of Western Music Analysis Theory in the 20th Century". The most important significance of music analysis is that they exist in all explorations of music analysis theories and methods. (Yang Yandi, 1995)

### 3.2 Musicology

Mr. Yu Runyang's 2009 paper "Reflections on Several Issues in the Study of Musicology" mainly tells us that in the field of Chinese musicology, at least in the field of western music history and music aesthetics, there are several seemingly opposite aspects. How to make these two aspects truly penetrate and integrate, and even achieve true dialectical unity, this may be one of the important ways to further promote the further development of Chinese musicology research. The following six seemingly opposite "relationships" are mainly discussed. These six relationships are: history and theory, musicology and other related humanities, theoretical foothold and historical and contemporary theoretical resources, social and historical interpretation and music ontology analysis, music text itself and its experience and understanding, thought and expression. (Yu Runyang, 2009)

Sun Guozhong's 2003 paper, "Contemporary Western Musicology Academic Trend", mainly described the contemporary academic trend of thought from the positivist tradition full of "scientific" spirit to the contemporary academic trend emphasizing humanistic care and meaning thinking. Western musicology continues to broaden its horizons and explore the significance of music in a broader social and cultural context. Sorted out the 1980s. The music academic development represented by "new musicology" focuses on McLery's feminist music criticism. (Sun Guozhong, 2003)

### 3.3 Ethnomusicology

In his 1986 paper "Introduction to Research Methods of Ethnomusicology", Shen Qia mainly described that in order to develop China's ethnomusicology into a humanity with clear objectives, rigorous theoretical system and full play of academic value, in addition to a team of scholars and a large number of specific research results, it is of great significance to pay full attention to the construction of the theoretical

framework of the discipline itself. This is one of the basic indicators for people to measure whether this discipline can be established or mature (Shen Qia, 1986)

Shen Qia's 1996 article "Chinese ethnomusicology" mainly tells that ethnomusicology is a subject that has developed rapidly in recent years. This magazine has published many articles on this subject, but most of them are "expressing their own views", and there is less direct confrontation between different views. In order to further guide this issue, this issue published Shen Cha, Zhang Zhongxiao and Wu's articles on the research methods of ethnomusicology, hoping to discuss this issue and make the discipline develop faster in China. (Shen Qia, 1996)

On the basis of summarizing the rise history and development status of the study of the academic degree of national music in China and the West in the 2001 paper "The Chronological Study of the Academic Degree of National Music", Zhao Zhian made a comparative study of the academic degree of national music and traditional musicology, so that we can have a more comprehensive understanding of the development history, the nature of the discipline and the significance of the study of the qualification of national music. (Zhao Zhi'an, 2001)

McKerrell Simon's 2022 article "Towards practice research in ethnomusicology" believes that ethnomusicologists to begin using performance not just as a tool to understand the social and cultural field, but to use music and dance as methods in 'translational' ethnomusicology that focuses upon the translation and Transmission of artistic performance aesthetics and to theorise a space for research outcomes that are sited in original performative knowledge, explored, produced and delivered through performance itself. The thesis briefly surveys some of the key historical discussions of musical performance in/as research and the epistemological challenges that surround a methodologically defined field such as ethnomusicology where there is no central musical canon. The thesis introduces the concept of 'emic resistance' where the researcher-performer resists translating their non-verbal, somatic aesthetic musical knowledge into text. The thesis concludes by drawing on some of the most recent developments in both ethnomusicological and closely related performance-analytical scholarship to propose a translational model for practice research in ethnomusicology. (McKerrell Simon, 2022)



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Li Li's 2020 article "The Importance of Ethnomusicology in Other Disciplines of Musicology" believes that the rise of ethnology is not long, but it contains many profound humanistic thoughts, and the development of ethnology is smooth, and its influence continues to increase on the basis of other disciplines. Many scholars began to pay attention to ethnomusicology, which not only laid the foundation for the development of ethnomusicology, but also made the development of ethnomusicology more promising. Although many experts and scholars believe that ethnomusicology has the same characteristics as traditional Chinese music, ethnomusicology belongs to academic content, and the limitations of nationality are not conducive to the development of ethnomusicology. As a cultural carrier, ethnomusicology plays an important role in the development of other disciplines of musicology. First, it discusses the origin of ethnomusicology. Secondly, introduce ethnomusicology; Finally, it expounds the importance of ethnomusicology in other disciplines of musicology in order to improve scholars' attention to ethnomusicology and promote the continuous development and progress of ethnomusicology. (Li li, 2020)

#### **4. Research Related**

Yan Wenting's 2016 paper "Research on Suzhou Pingtan" Lidiao "Vocal Music" mainly described that the "Lidiao" aria music of Suzhou Pingtan School was taken as the research object. The female Tanci genre "Lidiao" formed in the 1950s has made a great breakthrough compared with the previous genre in terms of creative characteristics and expression techniques. She disseminated, absorbed and learned the basic modes of other Tanci genres, and integrated the music elements of other sister arts, thus optimizing and restructuring the rich music resources and forming the unique singing characteristics of "Lyrics". In the design of singing, she has integrated modern music elements such as chorus and duet, which makes "Li Diao" unique and has become the object of study and transmission for many artists today. Based on the summary and collation of Xu Lixian and the relevant materials of Li Diao, this paper studies the singing art of Li Diao from such aspects as Xu Lixian's artistic evolution, the singing treatment of Li Diao, the rotation of Li Diao mode, the accompaniment characteristics and layout of Li Diao. (Yan Wenting, 2016)



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Jin Wenjuan's 2020 paper "The Artistic Expression of Suzhou Pingtan Music" mainly describes the artistic expression of Suzhou Pingtan. Suzhou Pingtan has different styles and schools. For example, the language style of some actors is very strict, which is fixed after repeated tempering, called "square mouth"; Some actors are flexible, flexible, good at improvisation, adapt to different audiences, and change at will. This is the so-called "live mouth". The singing of Tanci is composed of various styles and genres, but most of them originate from three ancient Diaos. These are Chen Diao, Yu Diao and Ma Diao. Tanci music uses Jiangnan silk and bamboo complex and simple music playing methods. Both singing and accompaniment, as well as between the three strings and the lute, combine time and space, forming a comparative polyphonic relationship of adding or subtracting flowers, and forming an interlude contrast of rhythm. At the end of the sentence, different parts are combined. The structural principle of Suzhou Pingtan music is the polyphonic musical expression of the art of Tanci language. The vertical structure presents the polyphonic structural features of "fixing the upper part and changing the lower part", "lowering the bone" and "removing the head and biting the tail". The development of horizontal melody shows the characteristics of "playing with words, Diaos and emotions". Suzhou Pingtan is a polyphonic rap music based on the yin and yang rhymes of Suzhou dialect. (Jin Wenjuan, 2020)

Xu Yun's 2017 paper "Research on the Relationship between Suzhou Pingtan Diao and Ci" mainly described the relationship between Suzhou Pingtan Diao and Ci - taking "Jiangdiao" as an example. Suzhou Pingtan originated in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China, and is popular in Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Shanghai. Tanci music is rich in melody, beautiful and euphemistic. It sings in vivid Suzhou dialect, reflecting the humanistic spirit of Jiangnan Watertown, and has high artistic and aesthetic value. The relationship between Diaos and words has always been the focus of the majority of Quyi scholars, and Pingtan, as a folk rap music, its narrative is particularly prominent, which determines the importance of the relationship between Diaos and words to Pingtan. The article mainly studies the "relationship between the Diao words" of Pingtan, and selects "the relationship between the Diao words", "the relationship between the rhythm of the Diao words" and "the role of singing in shaping characters". It takes Mr. Jiang Yuequan's "Jiang Diao" as an example to analyze, and



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concludes that singing is restricted by lyrics, but not dogmatically. The interaction between them is also analyzed with examples. This article discusses the relationship between Suzhou Pingtan Diao and Ci in order to help the creators, singers and lovers of Suzhou Pingtan Diao and their development and transmission. (Xu Yun, 2017)

Zhao Yingyin's 2009 paper "Analysis of the Rise and Fall of Suzhou Pingtan" mainly describes that Suzhou Pingtan has been formed for hundreds of years, and has become an influential art form with its profound artistic accumulation, close contact with the masses and mutual influence with other art types. For a long time, it has been deeply appreciated by both refined and popular. With the development of society and civilization, as well as the development and innovation of electronic media, people's entertainment methods have gradually diversified, and their aesthetic feelings and habits have also changed. Like other traditional operas, folk art and other national arts, Pingtan is also facing new challenges and is struggling to survive between the market and art. This paper analyzes the development characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan from the perspective of music genres and singing characteristics, and analyzes the reasons for its rise and decline. Starting from the five basic elements of Transmission, this paper discusses the future development of Suzhou Pingtan, and puts forward new suggestions for its Transmission in the new era. (Zhao Yingyin, 2009)

Liu Xiaohai's 2018 paper "Research on the Transmission of Suzhou Pingtan since the Late Qing Dynasty" mainly describes that Suzhou Pingtan is a treasure of Chinese folk art, which has been popular in the south of the Yangtze River for hundreds of years, and is one of the local folk arts loved by urban and rural residents. The sustainable development of Pingtan benefits from effective Transmission. Among them, the following teacher system and school system are the two most important models in Pingtan's Transmission history. Guangyu Society, the guild organization of Pingtan artists, has formulated a series of rules. Under the control of the guild, the Transmission mode of following the teacher gradually took shape. Guangyu Society holds Pingtan's Transmission in its own hands through social norms. The standardized follow-up system has promoted the continuous improvement of the art level of Pingtan. At the same time, the spread of Pingtan is deeply restricted by geographical, blood, gender and other factors. Since the mid-1950s, the Transmission mode of the school system under political control has been explored. Pingtan education at this stage aims



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to cultivate new socialist artists who are both popular and professional. Therefore, ideological, political and cultural knowledge entered the study of Pingtan students for the first time. According to the needs of the organization, young students should eventually become literary and artistic workers in socialist countries. The school education achievements of young artists who joined the Pingtan group were tested by the group. During the exploration of Pingtan school system in the 1950s and 1960s, teaching work was affected by various adverse factors, which had a negative impact on the long-term development of art. (Liu Xiaohai, 2018)

Wu Bin, in his 2007 paper "Investigation and Research on the Spread of Suzhou Pingtan", mainly described the investigation and research on the spread of Suzhou Pingtan in Suzhou. Suzhou Pingtan originated in Suzhou and is popular in Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shanghai and other regions. Together with Kunqu Opera and Suzhou Opera, Suzhou is known as "three flowers". Suzhou Pingtan is a local art of Suzhou dialect rap performance. It is the combination of Suzhou Pinghua and Suzhou Tanci, as well as the Wu dialect represented by Suzhou dialect, in the process of transmission. Under the influence of globalization, industrialization and urbanization, Suzhou Pingtan is facing a complex situation: on the one hand, Suzhou Pingtan is facing the embarrassing situation of shrinking bookstores, fewer audiences, lack of actors, low income, low artistic level, and aging bibliography; On the other hand, Article 30 of the national "11th Five-Year Plan" development outline puts forward that we should attach importance to the education of Chinese excellent traditional culture and the transmission of traditional classical skills. Suzhou also calls for building cultural Suzhou, increasing investment, protecting and developing Suzhou's traditional local art. In this context, Suzhou Pingtan is facing unprecedented development opportunities. The main purpose of this paper is to compare the teaching of Suzhou Pingtan in the context of folk Transmission and school Transmission, and try to study and pay attention to the Transmission form of Chinese traditional folk music in the context of modern schools, and provide a perspective and perspective of Chinese traditional folk music education for Chinese music educators. In order to find a better solution, let's re-examine the nationalization of our traditional folk music to world music and our understanding of the universal significance of music education. (Wu Bin, 2007)



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Zhao Zhian in his 2016 paper "On the transmission and transmission of Traditional Music Culture" that music Transmission is the fundamental reason for the dynamic development and intrinsic vitality of traditional music culture, and is one of the main driving forces in the long history of the transmission and development of traditional music culture. The historical process of the spread of Chinese traditional music culture can be divided into three historical stages, namely, oral language, music score, and electronic media transmission. At present, the musicological circle should comprehensively use a variety of modern and contemporary media and means of Transmission to strengthen the promotion and transmission of traditional music culture. (Zhao Zhian, 2016)

In his 2017 paper "Investigation and Research on the Current Situation of the Local Transmission of Suzhou Pingtan in the Last Decade", Kong Jun mainly described the investigation and research on the local transmission of Suzhou Pingtan from 2006 to 2016. It describes the development of Suzhou Pingtan, and combs it from the aspects of performance, creation and genre, which shows that the government attaches importance to the transmission and development of Suzhou Pingtan. The author has gone deep into the folk for many times, visited artists, teachers and Suzhou Pingtan workers, and got a further understanding of the current situation of Suzhou Pingtan. The development of Suzhou Pingtan before applying for the World Heritage is compared with that of the past decade. It describes Pingtan education, social Transmission and government support. At the same time, it analyzes Suzhou Pingtan itself in detail, and takes Suzhou's good scenery as an example to analyze it from three aspects: content, musical form and singing method. Thinking and prospect of Suzhou Pingtan transmission, pointing out the existing problems of Suzhou Pingtan, thinking from three aspects of publicity channels, Transmission channels and government support, and looking forward to its better development. (Pan Xun, 2017)

Shi Wenxun and Tang Rong mainly told us in their paper "Protection, Transmission and Development of Suzhou Pingtan" in 2013 that with the popularity of television, film and the Internet, the rise of new cultural and leisure activities has directly led to the decline of folk music audience in southern Jiangsu. Suzhou Pingtan also faces prominent difficulties such as sharp decline in audience, shrinking bookstore, loss of a large number of artists, and insufficient traditional transmission. On the basis

of investigating and studying the ecological background and artistic characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan, the article further discusses how to better take protective measures and disseminate Pingtan, hoping to have some inspiration for the protection and development of Suzhou Pingtan. " (Shi Wenxun, Tang Rong, 2013)

Pan Xun's 2017 paper "Zhou Liang's Study of Suzhou Pingtan" mainly described the research achievements of Mr. Zhou Liang in Suzhou Pingtan over the past 50 years. This paper introduces in detail the monographs, bibliographies, theories, and protection of Suzhou Pingtan published by Mr. Zhou Liang in the research of Suzhou Pingtan since the early 1980s. He has made outstanding contributions in collecting and sorting out historical materials of Pingtan and exploring the artistic characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan. These studies introduce the general situation and characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan art from the perspective of history, bibliography, performance and theory. Mr. Zhou Liang proposed to protect Suzhou Pingtan: rescue and disseminate traditional bibliography; Rescue and disseminate Pingtan's traditional art, including its forms and characteristics, as well as the laws of art transmission and development; Let Pingtan spread and develop mainly in bookstores. It clarifies the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan, which is of theoretical significance and operability. (Pan Xun, 2017)

Zhou Liang's book Suzhou Pingtan, published by Suzhou University Press in 2000, is a book about Suzhou Pingtan. Some parts are relatively short and have not been expanded. The content of this book is mainly about the development history, artistic characteristics, narrative methods, literary characteristics, social life reflected in the traditional bibliography, performance forms, actors and audiences, as well as Comrade Chen Yun and Pingtan art. (Zhou Liang, 1999)

Mr. Zhou Liang's 2007 book "Suzhou Pingtan Art Theory", based on the achievements of Pingtan art research over the past few decades, has made a comparative analysis of Pingtan art and other art categories through careful combing and thinking, combined with his own perception in practice, revealed the laws and characteristics of Pingtan art, and made a systematic and comprehensive exposition in terms of structure, language, music, etc. The main contents include the general characteristics of Quyi, Suzhou Pinghua, Tanci and its related appellations, the characteristics of Pingtan art,



the narrative mode of Pingtan, Pingtan literature, Pingtan performance, early and recent Pingtan research, and how to protect Suzhou Pingtan. (Zhou Liang, 1999)

Pan Xun, 2017 book Suzhou Pingtan, which young people should know, is a book that comprehensively combs the essence of Chinese traditional music culture and carries it forward and spreads it. Based on the classic traditional Chinese culture, this book comprehensively explains the essence of Chinese culture. The main contents include the 400-year history of Suzhou Pingtan, the glory and differentiation of Guangyu Society, the overview of Suzhou Pinghua, the introduction of famous writers, the overview of Suzhou Tanci, the genres and singing, as well as the works of famous Pingtan artists, the introduction of artists and the appreciation of the masterpiece "Pearl Tower - Gift Tower". The content is rich, comprehensive, illustrated and very attractive. Readers will relax and only get enhanced and real aesthetic pleasure. (Pan Xun, 2017)

Culture is the basis for the survival and development of a nation, and it is also the long-term historical experience of a nation. China's five thousand years of history has left us a splendid cultural heritage. However, with the deepening of globalization and the modernization of science and technology, more and more Chinese intangible cultural heritage is on the verge of extinction. Many technologies and arts that rely on oral Transmission play less and less roles in daily life, so they begin to decline and gradually disappear. Therefore, it is necessary to find countermeasures for the protection and transmission of intangible cultural heritage. Starting from the transformation of Suzhou Pingtan, this article analyzes the current situation and problems faced by Suzhou Pingtan, explores and studies the "active transmission" of Pingtan art and skills, and aims to provide forward-looking guidance for the protection of intangible cultural heritage. (Mengxing Fu & Zhixiong Huang, 2018)

(Azim Khan & Tariq Aziz & Syed Sohail Ahmad Shah & Abdur Rauf & Zubair & Syed Awais Ahmad Shah & Khalid H Thebo, 2006) paper, the origin of Pingtan was mainly described in Suzhou. It is a combination of stories and ballads. It speaks and sings in Suzhou dialect. Master's "peak", "laugh", "play" and "sing". Pingtan has formed many schools in its long history of development. "Pingtan" is different from Suzhou opera "Kun" and "Su Tan". One of the latter two is the elegant caviar music played for ordinary people, and the other is a popular song loved by the public. "Pingtan" is suitable for both elegant taste and popular taste. (Azim Khan & Tariq Aziz & Syed



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Sohail Ahmad Shah & Abdur Rauf & Zubair & Syed Awais Ahmad Shah & Khalid H Thebo, 2006)

Mark Bender, in his 2019 book "Plum and Bamboo: Chinese Traditional Suzhou Pingtan", in the Yangtze River Delta region, the audience was drinking tea in the bookstore while listening to the storyteller singing. The story is staged in the bookstore every week, and the theme generally revolves around complex emotional disputes. This tradition is still prevalent in Shanghai and Suzhou, known as "garden cities". It is a comprehensive introduction to this fascinating oral narrative tradition. Story is one of the traditional Chinese art forms, which can be compared with opera and other forms of performance. At present, Suzhou Pingtan is one of the living storytelling traditions in the world, and hundreds of storytellers are still active in the Yangtze River Delta. Through extensive field research and appreciation of the traditional art of storytelling, Mark Bender applied the methodology of folklore to the study, focusing on the situational narrative performance, and summarized the traditional art for reference. In addition to providing historical and relevant social background, it also discusses how to open and explore the field of oral narration in performance, so as to provide traditional readers with an immersive visual experience. (Mark Bender, 2019)

Conclusion: In the literature review of this chapter, the author selected nearly 40 papers and works, focusing on the development background, music characteristics, transmission and protection, and music theory research of Suzhou Pingtan. Reviewing relevant research papers, we can know that the historical background of Suzhou Pingtan cannot be changed. We can clearly understand the history of Suzhou Pingtan. We can also understand the development status of Suzhou Pingtan and some practices of its transmission and protection. However, there is still a lot of research space in terms of research results, quantity, content and quality. For example, the rapid development of network technology has had a huge impact on Suzhou Pingtan, and the real survival state of Suzhou Pingtan still needs to be studied. What is the most effective way to spread and protect Suzhou Pingtan? These are very important. Suzhou Pingtan is a famous local intangible culture. Based on the analysis of a large number of research documents, this paper discusses the historical development, music characteristics and transmission status of Suzhou Pingtan, providing ideas and references for the promotion, transmission, protection and publicity of China's excellent folk music.



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# Chapter III

## Research Methodology

The name of this research is the transmission Process of “Suzhou Pingtan Chinese opera” in Jiangsu, China. There are three goals in this research: 1) To investigate the development of “Suzhou Pingtan” in Jiangsu, China. 2) To analyze the music characteristic of song selected of “Suzhou Pingtan” in Jiangsu, China.3) To propose the guideline for transmission “Suzhou Pingtan” in Jiangsu, China. Researcher used the following methods to conduct this study.

### 1. Research Scope

#### 1.1 Scope of content

The research content includes the development history, the music characteristics, and guideline of “Suzhou Pingtan” in Jiangsu, China.

#### 1.2 Scope of site

Suzhou, Jiangsu Province in the east of China, adjacent to Shanghai, is a prefecture-level city in Jiangsu Province.



Figure 1 Map of China

Source: Zhang Quan designed in 2022.8



Figure 2 Map of Jiang Su, China

Source: Zhang Quan designed in 2022.8

### 1.3 Scope of time

The researcher conducted field interviews in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province from January 2022 to January 2023.

### 1.4 Key informants

#### Selected criteria

- 1.4.1 He or she has studied Suzhou Pingtan for at least 30 years.
- 1.4.2 He or she has written many books and papers on Suzhou Pingtan.
- 1.4.3 He or she is an elder.
- 1.4.4 He or she has won many honors.

Key informant: Mr. Zhou Liang

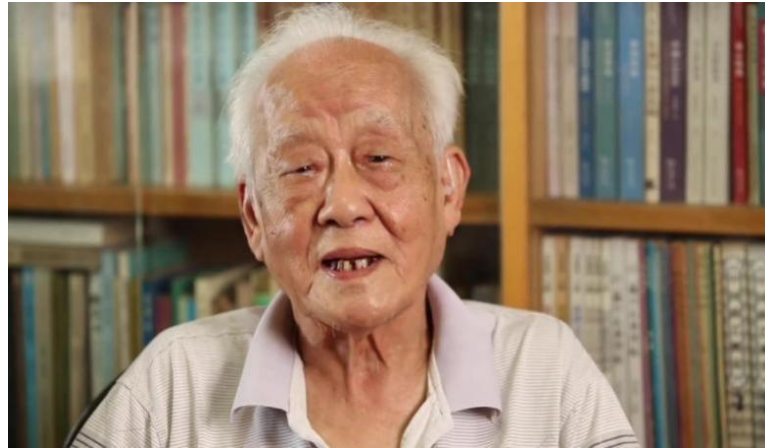


Figure 3 Mr. Zhou Liang

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Zhou Liang (1926 -), male, from Haimen, Jiangsu. He has been engaged in theoretical research on Pingtan since he took part in literary and artistic work. He has made outstanding contributions to the research of Suzhou Pingtan for 50 years. (baidu, 2022)

Key informant: Mr. Sun Ti

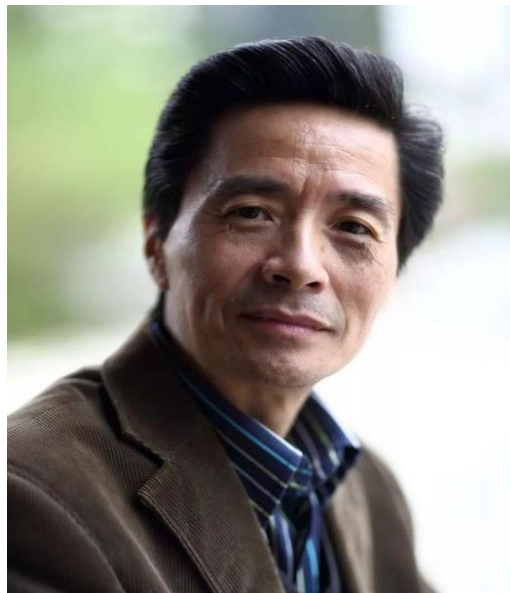


Figure 4 Mr. Sun Ti

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Sun Ti, male, secretary-general of Suzhou Pingtan Art Committee of China Quyi Association, vice chairman of Jiangsu Quyi Association, former principal of Suzhou Pingtan School under China's first-class art supervision, and head of Suzhou Pingtan Troupe.

Selected criteria

- 1) She or he is the main actor of Suzhou Pingtan. At least 20 years of experience in Suzhou Pingtan Performance.
- 2) She or he was born and lives in Suzhou.
- 3) She or he is at least 40 years old.
- 4) She or he has won many awards for her performance.

Key informant: Ms. Wang Chunxia



Figure 5 Ms. Wang Chunxia

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Wang Chunxia, female, is the main actor of Suzhou Pingtan Troupe. She graduated from Suzhou Pingtan School in 1994. Her long performance has reached more than 3000, which has been praised by the audience. (Baidu, 2022)

Main informants: Ms. Sun Yiting



Figure 6 Ms. Sun Yiting  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Sun Yiting, female, director of the custody and research department of Suzhou Opera Museum (China Kunqu Opera Museum, China Suzhou Pingtan Museum), and a distinguished researcher of China Pingtan Culture Research Center of Shanghai Normal University.

Main informants: Mr. Zhang Min and Ms. Gao Xinyi



Figure 7 Mr. Zhang Min and Ms. Gao Xinyi  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)



Zhang Min, male, an excellent young actor of Suzhou Pingtan troupe, studied under Tanci artist Zhao Kaisheng. He has participated in national intangible cultural heritage performances for many times and won the gold medal of accompaniment for academic exchange performances of national outstanding folk artists.

Gao Xinyi, female, a young actor of Suzhou Pingtan troupe, studied from the famous Tanci player Zheng Ying, and is good at singing Xue Diao and Li Diao. She has participated in provincial and municipal Spring Festival worship performances for many times.

General informant: Mr. Wang Shanchun



Figure 8 Mr. Wang Shanchun

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Wang Shanchun, male, principal of Suzhou Pingtan School.

General informant: Ms. Cao Fang





Figure 9 Ms. Cao Fang  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Cao Fang, female, the boss of Xinyuan Teahouse, Pingjiang Road, Suzhou. He organizes and plans the performances of Suzhou Pingtan Troupe every day to fully understand the current situation of Suzhou Pingtan Performance. (Zhang Quan's fieldwork was conducted on June 2022)

General informant: Wu Changchun



Figure 10 Mr. Wu Changchun  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Wu Changchun, male, official of Suzhou Municipal Government, Jiangsu Province. Mainly responsible for the management and guidance of Suzhou culture and art. He is particularly interested in Suzhou Pingtan. (Zhang Quan's fieldwork was conducted on June 2022)

Table 1 Information of informants in field survey

Classification	Full Name or Group	Basic Information
Key informant	Zhou Liang Sun Ti Wang chunxia	Famous scholar of Suzhou Pingtan and main actor of Suzhou Pingtan.
Main informants	Sun Yiting Zhang min Gao xinyi	A young actor who has been engaged in Suzhou Pingtan performance for many years.
General informant	Wang Shanchun Cao Fang Wu Changchun The masses (Public servants, teachers, students, businessmen, etc.)	The organizer of Suzhou Pingtan Performance, and various audiences who like Suzhou Pingtan.

## 2. Research process

### 2.1 Selected locations and information

2.1.1 Suzhou Pingtan Museum, Jiangsu Province

2.1.2 Suzhou Pingtan Troupe, Jiangsu Province

2.1.3 Suzhou Pingtan Performance Teahouse, Pingjiang Road, Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province

2.1.4 Suzhou Pingtan School, Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province

2.1.5 Jiangsu Suzhou Municipal Government Culture and Art Management Center

### 2.2 Selection criteria

16 pieces of music originated from scholars. Each genre selected one song, totaling 16.

- 1) Early genres (Chen diao, Yu diao, Ma diao).
- 2) Transition period (Xiaoyang diao)
- 3) Mixed type (Xia diao, Xu diao, Shen diao, Xue diao, Yan diao, Qi diao, Yao diao, Zhang diao, Xiang diao, You diao, Xiang xiang diao, Xiao Fei diao)

### 2.3 Research tools

According to the research objectives of this article, in-depth research is conducted on each issue. researcher use instruments such as recorders, video cameras, and video recorders to conduct research through research tools such as literature analysis, field surveys, and questionnaire surveys.

2.3.1 Through interviews with Mr. Zhou Liang, Mr. Sun Ti and Ms. Sun Yiting, we can understand the historical development, current status and transmission of Suzhou Pingtan.

2.3.2 Through interviews with Ms. Wang Chunxia, Mr. Zhang Min and Ms. Gao Xinyi, we can understand the singing and music characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan.

2.3.3 Through interviews with Mr. Su Changchun and Mr. Wang Shanchun, we learned about the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan.

Through interviews with information providers, we have a deeper understanding of the development of the research object.

In order to better collect first-hand information and understand the needs and suggestions of researchers, practitioners and the masses. Three different questionnaires were specially designed.

In the process of questionnaire design, researcher followed the following steps:

- 1) According to the characteristics of the three types of survey population, three different questionnaires were developed.
- 2) According to the preliminary research, the content of the questionnaire is preliminarily designed and submitted to the instructor for inspection.
- 3) Improve the content of the questionnaire according to the tutor's suggestions.
- 4) Submit the revised questionnaire to the expert group for discussion and inspection.

5) Revise the questionnaire again according to the opinions of the expert group, and finally determine the content of the questionnaire.

Through the use of questionnaires, the relevant information of Suzhou Pingtan was systematically collected and studied.

#### 2.4 Data collection

From January 2022 to January 2023, Researcher learned about the development of Suzhou's culture and art, felt the local customs and customs, and conducted in-depth research on the historical development, music characteristics and transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan through telephone, WeChat and other online contact methods and field survey in Suzhou. All the contents were recorded through interview records, audio recordings, video recordings, photos, questionnaires, etc.

2.4.1 Due to the impact of the COVID-19, Researcher can only contact Mr. Zhou Liang, a famous Pingtan research expert, by telephone to learn more about the historical development and research status of Suzhou Pingtan.

2.4.2 With the help of Ms. Sun Yiting, Researcher went to Suzhou Pingtan Museum and Suzhou Archives in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, checked the literature and database retrieval on the spot, and collected and recorded the development process of Suzhou Pingtan and important bibliographic data. The feedback information of the personnel who visited Suzhou Pingtan Museum was collected by issuing questionnaires.

2.4.3 With the help of Mr. Sun Ti, the former head of Suzhou Pingtan Troupe and the principal of Suzhou Pingtan Learning, Researcher have a detailed understanding of Suzhou Pingtan's singing genre, music characteristics and representative repertoire of singing genre in various periods.

2.4.4 At the performance site of Suzhou Pingtan, through watching the performances of Ms. Wang Chunxia, Mr. Zhang Min and Ms. Gao Xinyi of Suzhou Pingtan Troupe, Researcher really felt the charm of Suzhou Pingtan, and learned the musical characteristics, actor transmission, performance status and actual development of Suzhou Pingtan in detail. The feedback information of viewers was collected through the distribution of questionnaires.

2.4.5 With the help of Wang Shanchun, the current principal of Suzhou Pingtan School, Researcher learned about the development of Suzhou Pingtan School

and the transmission of students. The feedback information of teachers and students of Suzhou Pingtan School was collected by issuing questionnaires.

2.4.6 In the interview with Mr. Su Changchun, a staff member of the Suzhou Municipal Government, we learned about the government's help policy for Suzhou Pingtan and the specific measures taken by the government to invest funds to do a good job in the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan.

2.4.7 In Xinyuan Tea House, Pingjiang Road, Suzhou, Researcher interviewed Ms. Cao Fang to understand the impact of Suzhou Pingtan on the society, the public's love for Suzhou Pingtan, and the performance and operation situation, and collected the feedback information from the masses through issuing questionnaires.

In the field survey interview, Researcher asked relevant personnel to help distribute 3000 questionnaires to collect the most effective information and data.

- 1) Questionnaire 1: to be filled in by the scholars who study Pingtan
- 2) Questionnaire 2: to be filled by Pingtan performers
- 3) Questionnaire 3: to be filled by the masses

## 2.5 Data management

All collected data have been classified and sorted out.

### 2.5.1 Interview records and recordings

The interview records and recordings are all converted into written records, and the original recording data and recordings are stored separately. To provide help for the study of the historical development of Suzhou Pingtan.

### 2.5.2 Photos and videos

According to the research objectives, the photos and videos are classified and managed according to the historical development, bibliography, performance reality, music clips and development status of Suzhou Pingtan. To provide help for the study of the historical development, musical characteristics and current situation of Suzhou Pingtan.

### 2.5.3 Documentation

Some documents, original music audio, papers, treatises, and relevant government documents are sorted and stored according to historical data, research data, and policy data. To provide help for the study of the historical development, musical characteristics, transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan.

#### 2.5.4 Questionnaire

Collect all the questionnaires sent out, ensure the quantity of the questionnaires, summarize the contents of the questionnaires, extract effective information, and sort them according to the research objectives. Provide effective help for research objectives.

#### 2.6 Data analysis

The collected data were collated and sorted according to the three objectives of the study. In the part of historical development, Researcher used the descriptive analysis method to analyze the literature and interview data. In the part of music characteristics, Researcher used musicology and Chinese ethnomusicology theories to analyze the 16 representative works selected, including mode, rhythm, aria, and ending. In the part of transmission and protection, Researcher used quantitative analysis and descriptive analysis, combined with interview data and questionnaire survey, to summarize and analyze.

1) Through the documents and materials provided by Mr. Zhou Liang, Mr. Sun Ti and Ms. Sun Yiting, historical photos of the museum, interview records and recordings, it provides strong support for the research on the historical development of Suzhou Pingtan.

2) Through the photos, videos and original music aria of the performances of Ms. Wang Chunxia, Mr. Zhang Min and Ms. Gao Xinyi, it provides help to study the music characteristics and performance status of Suzhou Pingtan.

3) Through the government public documents, curriculum, customer information and other materials provided by Mr. Wang Shanchun, Mr. Wu Changchun and Ms. Cao Fang, it provides support for the research on the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan.

4) Through the questionnaire survey of three groups of researchers, performers and the masses, effective suggestions are provided for the development status, transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan.

In order to better analyze the characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan music, based on the information and suggestions of the informant Sun Ti (who is both a researcher and a famous actor), this paper selects 16 representative tracks of Suzhou Pingtan with the main singing style as the analysis content.

Based on the field survey data, this paper analyzes the historical development of Suzhou Pingtan, the characteristics of the representative music singing genre works, and the feasibility of the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan by using the method of combining musicology, ethnomusicology, western music analysis and traditional Chinese music analysis.

## 2.7 Summary of Chapters

In this article, the researchers introduce seven chapters:

- 1) Chapter Researcher Introduction
- 2) Chapter II Review Literature
- 3) Chapter III Methods of Research
- 4) Chapter IV The development of “Suzhou Pingtan”.
- 5) Chapter V The music characteristic of song selected of “Suzhou Pingtan”.
- 6) Chapter VI The guideline for transmission of “Suzhou Pingtan”.
- 7) Chapter VII Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions.

## Chapter IV

### The development of “Suzhou Pingtan”

This chapter interviewed scholars and performing artists who have studied Suzhou Pingtan for many years, as well as staff from China Suzhou Pingtan Museum, Suzhou Pingtan School and Suzhou Pingtan Troupe, and consulted relevant documents and historical archives. According to the development characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan, its 400-year history is divided into five periods: origin, from the 17th century to the 1830s, from the 1840s to the 1940s, from the 1950s to the 1970s and from the 1980s to 2022.

This chapter studies the performance forms of Suzhou Pingtan, the performance places in different periods, the singing schools, the music, and other contents, analyze the historical development process of Suzhou Pingtan, and understand how Suzhou Pingtan has evolved from a simple folk rap to a unique local folk art.

#### 1. Origin of Suzhou Pingtan

Suzhou Pingtan is a local folk art that originated in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province. With Suzhou as the development center, she sings in Suzhou dialect. Usually there are two people rapping, holding three strings on the top and pipa on the hand, playing and singing by themselves. The ci singing is graceful and soft, and the Wu non-soft language is beautiful. It is widely spread in Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shanghai and other areas. Comment is "Pinghua", playing is "Tancci", Suzhou Pingtan is the general name of Suzhou Pinghua and Suzhou Tancci. Suzhou Pinghua, commonly known as "big books", speaks rather than sings. It is a solo performance that focuses on "speech and beauty". It depicts historical and romantic stories featuring powerful heroes and women. Suzhou Tanci, commonly known as "little books", consists of two persons, usually speaking and singing, and features such as "speaking, playing, singing" and "rationality, taste, interest, delicacy and skill" in performance. The contents are mostly romantic novels and folk stories. Although they are two different operas, Pinghua and Tanci have a lot in common. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the



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two operas were organized in the same art group and gradually came to be collectively known as "Pingtan".

Suzhou Pingtan has a long history of more than 400 years. In 2006, Suzhou Pingtan was included in the first batch of new items of China's national intangible cultural Heritage. In 2008 and 2011, it was selected as the second and third batch of expansion projects. It is one of the representative folk art in Jiangsu Province and popular among urban and rural residents. It is a mirror of Jiangnan culture and an important carrier of Jiangnan humanistic spirit. Known as the most beautiful voice in China. Pingtan, Kunqu opera and Suzhou gardens have become the "three cultural wonders" of Suzhou, a famous historical and cultural city.



Figure 11 Accompaniment instrument – San Xian

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)



Figure 12 Accompaniment instrument - PiPa

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The history of Pingtan, also known as storytelling, can be traced back to the Han Dynasty. The word "Pinghua" originated in the Song Dynasty and is another name for "lecturing on history". Suzhou Pinghua originated in the Song Dynasty. The Ming Dynasty "Yongle Grand Ceremony" has preserved the name of Pinghua book; In Li Yu's "Qingzhong Spectrum", there is a description of Suzhou open-air storytelling, and Suzhou dialect has appeared in the storytellers. In the fourteenth year of Jiaqing Dynasty (1809), Chen Yugan's Biography of the Righteous Demon mentioned the "Great book", which is the story of storytelling. Yao Shizhang, one of the "last four", began to speak Pinghua in Wu instead of Zhongzhou. In the early Qing Dynasty, Li Shengzhen's "All Plays Zhuzhi Ci" has a song called "Tanci", "Siyixuan Zi half Wu Yin, why not listen to tea war late at night. Recently, the 'Pinghu' strings are cold, and the silk and copper compete to sing and play dulcimer." Wu people play Pinghu Diao with strings and cords; "Wu Ren" and "Wu Yin" should be the Suzhou Tangui in the Wu language area. This is in line with the process of combining Suzhou Pingtan with Wu language. (Sun Yiting & Sun Ti, 2022)

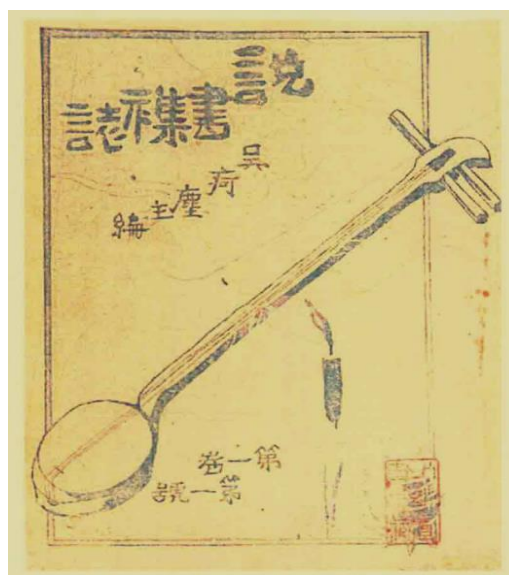


Figure 13 The cover of Shuoshu Magazine

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Pingtan originated from folk singing in the Song and Yuan Dynasties. It is generally believed that Suzhou Pingtan originated in the Jiajing period of the Ming

Dynasty. At that time, the southern songs with Wu songs as the keynote became popular. Nanqu has blossomed and borne fruit in Suzhou. It has entered the noble class all the way, evolved into Kunqu Opera, and entered the civilian class all the way, becoming Pingtan Opera. (Pan Renjie, 2012)

The above mainly tells that Suzhou Pingtan originated from the folk. Due to the prosperous local economy in Suzhou, some wealthy people like to listen to and enjoy music, so Suzhou Pingtan, which is spoken and sung in dialect, emerged.

## **2. From the 17th century to the 1830s**

### **2.1 History of Suzhou Pingtan in this period**

Liu Jingting, a famous Pinghua artist in the late Ming and early Qing Dynasty, once told stories in Suzhou and its surrounding areas, which has a close relationship with Suzhou Pinghua. From the formation of Suzhou Pingtan in the late Ming and early Qing Dynasty to the maturity of Qianlong, Jiaqing and Daoguang years. During this period, Jiangsu had a stable society and a prosperous economy. Suzhou was densely populated and economically developed, which led to the development of Quyi. According to Wu County Annals, "Tanci and Pinghua were popular in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, but they were totally different. The general name was Shuoshu, which originated in Wuzhong" (Zhang Li, 2008)

In the Qing Dynasty, the prosperity of Suzhou's commodity economy, the rapid development of the city, the rich cultural life, and the citizens' demand for the sound and color of opera performances objectively promoted the formation and development of Suzhou Pingtan Art.



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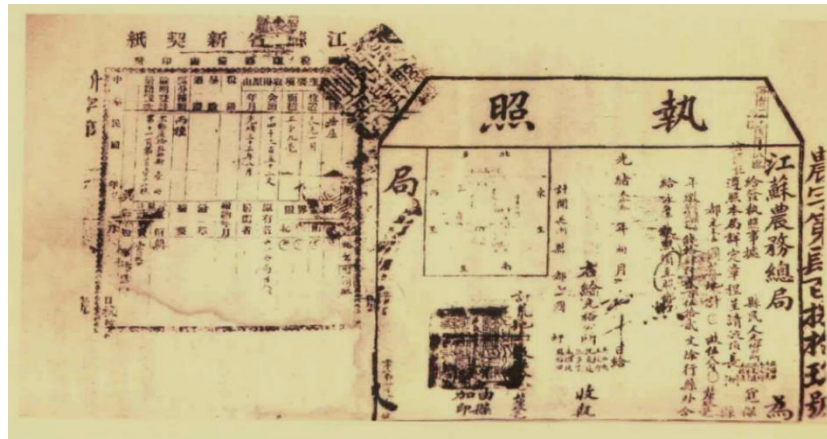


Figure 14 Guangyu Office License

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Guangyu Society, formerly known as Guangyu Commune, is the earliest and most influential guild organization in Pingtan circle. Among the collections of Suzhou Pingtan Museum in China, there are rare handwritten copies of the rare edition of "Departure Record" organized by Guangyu Society Pingtan Guild in the late Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China (18th century), which are of great value to the study of the history and artistic achievements of Suzhou Pingtan. Guangyu Society was founded before the reign of Emperor Kangxi, during the reign of Emperor Kangxi, during the reign of Emperor Qianlong, and during the reign of Emperor Jiaqing. Before the reign of Emperor Kangxi and the "theory of the reign of Emperor Kangxi" are contained in The End of Guangyu Residence: "During the reign of Emperor Kangxi, the residence was reestablished and named Guangyu." The "theory of the reign of Emperor Qianlong" is based on the statement that Wang Zhoushi founded Guangyu Residence at the First Tianmen Gate of Suzhou Palace Lane in Emperor Qianlong (1776). At present, this statement is accepted by most people. (Sun Yiting, 2020)



Figure 15 Guangyu's debut record

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

## 2.2 The development of Suzhou Pingtan in this period

In the initial period of Pingtan's development, there was no fixed performance place. Artists walked through the streets and streets, sang along the road, or sang in the open air at the bridgehead or village side, or walked around the house, entered the room, and occasionally sang in the homes of large families. In the early days, the busiest place in Suzhou was Guanqian Street, and the busiest place in Guanqian Street was Xuanmiao Temple. The old Xuanmiao Temple is not only a place of entertainment for the common people, but also a place where all kinds of people gather. Most storytellers choose to tell stories in the open air in Xuanmiaogan Square to attract the audience. Rural villages and towns in Jiangnan are also the main performance areas of Pingtan. (Sun Yiting & Sun Ti, 2022)

In early Qing Dynasty, there was no modern book market. At that time, the "bookstore" was just a temporary bookstand set up in a corner of the teahouse, plus a few chairs. In Suzhou at the end of the Ming Dynasty and the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, teahouses of different sizes and scales were all around the city, the downtown, the land and water docks, and even the corners of deep alleys. The poet Shen Chaochu once sang about the teahouse in "Memories of the South of the Yangtze River": "Suzhou is good, and the teahouse is the most secluded. When the sun is envious, green snow is cooked in a pot, chicken oil is baked in a Songjiang eyebrow cake, and flowers

and plants are all over the streets." Gu Lu's "Tongqiao Yizhao Record" records that during the Jiaqing and Daoguang years of the Qing Dynasty, there were no fewer than ten teahouses around Huqiu, many of which were near the Tanghe River to welcome tourists. In order to attract business, the teahouse owner hired Quyi artists from all walks of life to perform, so as to enhance the competitiveness of the teahouse. However, the operation of teahouses does not focus on Quyi performances. At that time, local operas and quyi, including Kunqu Opera and Suzhou Pingtan Opera, were performed in teahouses. Kunqu Opera has a narrow audience, and gradually fades out of the teahouse and only performs in the music club. Suzhou Pingtan has a wider audience. In addition, the artists have constantly improved their vocals, tables and lyrics, gradually catering to the taste of the leisure class. Therefore, the teahouse operators look at the Pingtan market with great potential and gradually fix the setting of the book store, which is called "teahouse book store". In the Daoguang years, there were always bookstores in some large and high-grade teahouses. "However, there were books. One person sat high on the top, and hundreds of people listened to the books, from the gentry to the servants and servants. They were all bustling. After ten days of menstruation, they forgot their sleep and meals, and were never tired of reading, but they listened to books.". (Zhou Wei & Wu Chenyu, 2016)

In the later period of this historical stage, the development of Suzhou Pingtan had its first prosperous period. It is mainly because of social stability and good economic development that people have a great demand for spiritual life. According to the Wu County Annals of the Qing Dynasty, when Qianlong made a tour to the south, he summoned King Zhou Shi to play and sing in front of him in Suzhou, gave him a seven pin crown belt and drove back to Beijing. It was he who became famous at one stroke that expanded the influence of Suzhou Pingtan. (Zhao Yingyin, 2009)

### 2.2.1 A large number of excellent books have emerged.

For example, Suzhou commentaries such as "Gods List", "The Water Margin", "The Legend of Ji Gong", and Suzhou storytelling such as "Three Laughs", "Jade Dragonfly", and "The Legend of White Snake". In addition, there are a large number of inscriptions of Tanci.



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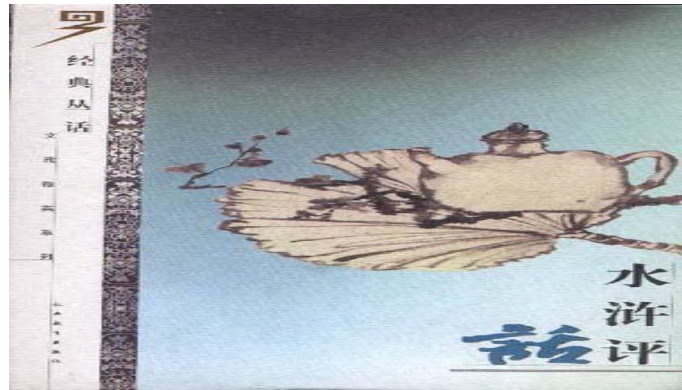


Figure 16 Water Margin Commentary

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)



Figure 17 Suzhou Tanci Legend of White Snake

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)



Figure 18 Commentary on the Twenty first Historical Tanci

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

### 2.2.2 There are many schools.

In the middle and late Qing Dynasty, the famous "top four masters" in Pingtan history - Chen Yuqian (the founder of "Chen Diao"), Yao Yuzhang, Yu Xiushan (the founder of "Yu Diao"), Lu Ruiting and the "last four masters" - Ma Rufeifei (the founder of "Ma Diao"), Yao Shizhang, Zhao Xiangzhou and Wang Shiquan, all of whom are epoch-making heavyweights. At the same time, there are Mao Changpei's White Snake, Zhang Hanmin's Water Margin, Ji Wugong's Sui and Tang Dynasties, Jin Hongliang's Golden Spear, Wu Yuchang's Three Smiles, Chen Hanzhang's Three Kingdoms, Jiang Rushan's Yue Zhuan, Zhu Minzhai's Twin Beads of Phoenix, Zhang Hongtao's Wen Wu Xiang Qiu, Ma Chunfan's Pearl Tower, Lin Hanyang's Heroes, Zhu Ji'an's The West Chamber and other representatives and their bibliographies. At the same time as the last four famous artists, there was also the intervention of "female Tanci". There was once a poem named "Wumen Xinzhu Zhi Ci", which said, "At the beginning of the evening, after making up, Researcher went to the library and walked around in the light. Baiba Qingfu had enough leisure and carefully evaluated the color, sound, fragrance and fragrance." In both the Pingtan artists and the audience, the participation of women contributed more to the prosperity of the art of Pingtan. (Sun Yiting & Sun Ti, 2022)



Figure 19 Selected Chants of Chen Diao

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)





Figure 20 Selected Songs of Yu Diao

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)



Figure 21 Mr. Ma Rufeifei's Preliminary Collection of South Ci Quotations

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

### 2.2.3 Fixed and standardized performance venues.

Before the formation of Suzhou Pingtan, there was no fixed place for performances, most of which were performed in the countryside, streets and alleys, and under trees on the roadside. After the formation of Suzhou Pingtan, with the prosperity of social economy, the main place for people's leisure and entertainment is teahouses. The teahouses and bookstores are both teahouses and bookstores, so teahouses and bookstores are all over the city and countryside. The performance of Suzhou Pingtan has changed from outdoor to indoor. In the teahouse and bookstore, there are performance posters to inform everyone about the performance. Or carry out publicity by holding billboards and walking around the streets for several times before the performance. Or, before the performance, promote it by peddling at the gate of the teahouse and bookstore. To sum up, from open-air performances to teahouse

bookstores, and then to extensive publicity, Suzhou Pingtan Performance has a certain scale, the number of listeners has gradually increased, and Suzhou Pingtan has a considerable market. (Zhao Yingyin, 2009)



Figure 22 Early Suzhou Pingtan Performance Scenes

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

#### 2.2.4 A guild organization appears.

With the increase of Suzhou Pingtan audience and the fixed performance venues, the number and level of artists are also improving. In order to protect the self-interest of artists and maintain the normalization and rationalization of performances, a guild was established according to the development of schools and regions. Guangyu Society is the earliest Pingtan Artists Guild with the largest number of participants and the longest history. All guilds shall organize the establishment of articles of association, abide by the rules of the trade, protect the interests of artists externally, coordinate relations internally, organize annual meetings and letters, improve the performance level and social status, hold public welfare activities, and promote the development of Pingtan art. (Li Xiaochun, 2019)

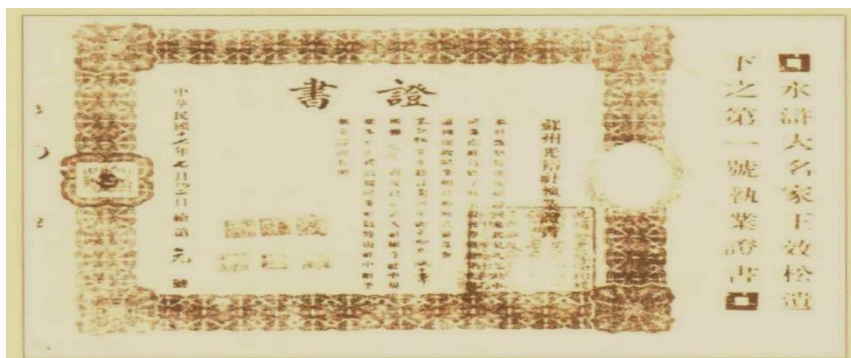


Figure 23 Practicing Certificate of Suzhou Pingtan Water Margin Famous Artist  
Wang Xiaosong

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

### 2.2.5 Transmission has been developed.

During this period, the development of Suzhou Pingtan has gradually embarked on a standardized transmission path, which is mainly reflected in four aspects. First, the transmission pedigree has gradually become clear. Second, the main bibliography has been preliminarily finalized and developed at this stage. Third, the records of famous Pingtan artists have gradually increased, and genres of singing have begun to appear. Fourth, art experience is further improved on the original basis.

The above mainly describes the development of Suzhou Pingtan during this period, mainly including the emergence of excellent bibliographies, the emergence of teaching skills, the establishment of fixed performance venues, the emergence of guild organizations, and the excellent transmission.

## 3. From the 1840s to the 1940s

### 3.1 History of Suzhou Pingtan in this period

In the 1940s and 1960s, Britain launched the first opium war and the second opium war against China. Western countries opened the door of the ancient closed Manchu and Qing dynasties, making China a semi feudal and semi colonial country, and opening a chapter in China's modern history. In 1842, the Qing government signed the Nanjing Treaty, which humiliated the country. Suzhou was the frontier of imperialist invasion. Due to the impact of the war, the society was in turmoil and

commerce was difficult to develop. Suzhou Pingtan developed slowly under this situation. (Chen Jie, 2016)



Figure 24 The Treaty of Aggression on China -- Nanjing Treaty

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

In 1851, the Taiping Rebellion broke out in China. In the later period of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, the Taiping Army led by Li Xiucheng captured Suzhou, the main birthplace of Pingtan. The fierce battle between the Qing army and the Taiping army in Suzhou caused great damage to the city of Suzhou. The Pingtan Industry Association -- Guangyu Society was also destroyed in the war, which affected the normal development of Suzhou Pingtan.

Shanghai, which is adjacent to Suzhou, has witnessed rapid development of commodity economy since its opening. Western powers set up concessions, and foreign businessmen also sought business opportunities in Shanghai, which promoted the economic development of Shanghai. The concessions provided an unprecedented Xintiandi for the development of Pingtan in Shanghai. In the middle of the 19th century, Suzhou Pingtan entered Shanghai with social changes. Pingtan artists came to Shanghai one after another, gradually forming two centers, Suzhou and Shanghai. (Su Chunmin, 2002)

### 3.2 The development of Suzhou Pingtan in this period

#### 3.2.1 Diversification of performance forms

Suzhou Pingtan has a saying and singing style, which can be divided into three performance modes, namely, single stage for one-person, double stage for two people, and three stages for three people. The actors play and sing by themselves,

accompanied by three stringed instruments and pipa. In the 1920s, with the awakening of new women, a team of professional female storytellers formed, and the performance form of both men and women appeared in Suzhou. In 1934, the Wu County Government considered that men and women were immoral, and prohibited both men and women from performing in Wu County, which was later transferred to Shanghai. Both men and women have greatly enriched the expressiveness of Pingtan, which is very popular among the citizens. (Tang Lixing, 2017)



Figure 25 After the liberation of women, women watched Pingtan in Shanghai

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

### 3.2.2 Famous scholars, schools and bibliography increase

During this period, due to social unrest, the development center of Suzhou Pingtan shifted from Suzhou to Shanghai. In the 1920s and 1940s, when Pingtan was developing in the "golden age", most of the famous Pingtan artists gathered in Shanghai. In the fierce art competition, Pingtan skills were increasingly refined. In order to adapt to the changes of the times and the changes of the audience's aesthetic taste, Pingtan artists have made various efforts to meet the cultural consumption needs of the audience, either through the adaptation and creation of the bibliography content, or through the updating of the form of the bookstand performance, or through the introduction of new genres of singing. During this period, there were many famous critics and schools in Pingtan circle. Huang Zhaolin, a famous writer in Three Kingdoms, Ye Shengyang, a famous writer in Heroes, Xie Pinquan, Xie Shaoquan and

Wang Shaoquan, three heroes in Three Laughs, Zhao Xiaoqing, Qian Youqing and Wang Shouqing, the "three ministers", appeared one after another. Commentary on famous scholars and representative books, such as Xu Jixiang's Hero, Shi Xiufeng's Golden Spear, Zhou Yiliang's Biography of Yue, Yang Lianqing's Baogong, Yi's Biography of Jintai, Jiang Yifei's Hero, Wu Jun'an's Sui and Tang, Zhang Yushu's Three Kingdoms, Zhu Shaoqing's Stabbing Horse, Wu Zi'an's Sui and Tang, Zhang Hongsheng's Hero, Shen Xiaomei's Jigong, Tang Gengliang's Three Kingdoms, Pan Boying's Stabbing Horse, Cao Hanchang's Yue Biography Gu Hongbo's Baogong, Wang Xiongfei's The Three Kingdoms, etc. A list of famous writers and representatives of Tanci, such as Xia Hesheng (the founder of "Xia Diao"), "Describing the Golden Phoenix", "Three Laughs", Zhou Yuquan (the founder of "Zhou Diao"), "Jade Dragonfly", "Wen Wu Xiang Qiu", Xu Yunzhi (the founder of "Xu Diao"), "Three Laughs", and "Horse Selling"; Shen Jian'an (the founder of "Shen Diao"), Xue Xiaoqing (the founder of "Xue Diao"), the "Pearl Tower", Jiang Ruting, Zhu Jiesheng (the successor of "Xinyu Diao"), the "Double Beads and Phoenix", Zhu Yaoxiang (the founder of "Xiang Diao"), and Zhao Jiaqiu (the cause of laughter and laughter); Liu Tianyun's Three Smiles, Yang Renlin's The Legend of White Snake, Li Bokang's Yang Naiwu, Qi Lianfang (the founder of "Qi Diao")'s Embroidery Sachet, Wei Hanying (the founder of "New Wei Diao")'s Pearl Tower, Huang Yi'an's Romance of the Western Chamber, Yan Xueting (the founder of "Yan Diao")'s Yang Naiwu, Li Zhongkang (the founder of "Zhongkang Diao")'s Yang Naiwu, Zhu Yiting's Three Smiles, Xing Ruiting's Three Smiles Jiang Yuequan (the founder of "Jiang Diao"), "Jade Dragonfly" and "White Snake"; Zhang Jianting (the founder of "Zhang Diao"), Zhang Jianguo's "Ten Beauties", "Gu Dingchen", and Yao Yinmei (the founder of "Yao Diao"), "The Cause of Crying and Laughing"; Yang Zhenxiong (the founder of "XiongDiao"), Yang Zhenyan's "Romance of the Western Chamber", "Wu Song" and "Hall of Eternal Longevity"; Zhou Yunrui (founder of "Zhou Yunrui Diao") and Chen Xi'an's Pearl Tower; Ling Wenjun's Painting the Golden Phoenix; There are also "Tanci Queen" Fan Xuejun's "Begonia" and Huang Jingfen's "Wo Pao" and so on. (Sun Yiting, Sun Ti, 2022)

3.2.3 The number and level of artists have improved, the number of performances has increased, and audience recognition is high.



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The wireless broadcasting has made Suzhou Pingtan expand infinitely. The sound of Pingtan can be heard in the streets and water towns. Pingtan has entered its heyday. On the basis of the original aria, it has developed unique genres, Shen and Xue. The bibliography of the performance has also been actively adapted and innovated. This kind of modern theme bibliography is close to life and very popular with the audience. In Shanghai, an immigrant city, Pingtan's audience has always been the first in local folk art. "There was a crazy period in Shanghai's book store industry. The area around Sansi Road, Daxin Street, Nanshi Chenghuang Temple and other places were like five steps, ten parts and one place. There were lanterns and signboards hanging everywhere." (Tang Fengchun's oral materials, Shanghai Pingtan Troupe Art Archives, Volume 24, Item 24)



Figure 26 A propaganda newspaper that plays banci

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)



Figure 27 Traditional Bibliography of Pingtan: The Three Kingdoms: Guan Yu Goes to Maicheng, Battle in Changbanpo  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)



Figure 28 Suzhou Pingtan Black Glue Old Records  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The above mainly introduces the development of this period, with diverse forms of performance, an increase in famous scholars, genres, and bibliographies, an increase in the number and level of artists, an increase in the number of performances, high audience recognition, and diverse Transmission methods.



#### 4. 1950s to 1970s

##### 4.1 History of Suzhou Pingtan in this period

This period is a new stage for Chinese society after the founding of New China. The new government has taken new measures in political, economic, cultural and other aspects in order to promote social development. The new people's regime will transform the cause of traditional drama. With the development of cultural undertakings, the government has begun to actively cultivate new artists and put the right to education in the field of literature and art under the control of the government. The comprehensive innovation of Pingtan industry has interrupted the original transmission and development of Pingtan, and the "feudal dross" of the old era of "following teachers" has been ordered to end. Instead, another learning mode - school system has emerged. (Zhao Yingyin, 2009)

In November 1951, Shanghai Pingtan Troupe was established, which was the first state-owned performance group in Pingtan history. After the establishment of Shanghai Pingtan Troupe, the performance activities of individual artists began to be constrained by the group organization. The artists of the Pingtan Troupe had no independent decision-making power in terms of admission, but also had to deal with various political tasks. The time of performance in the bookstore was correspondingly reduced and was no longer consistent. It was also difficult to implement the method of cultivating artists by listening to books in the bookstore. Most of the artists of Shanghai Pingtan Troupe belong to famous artists. In the past, first-class artists were the main choice for apprentices to learn from their masters. The inability of these artists to participate in transmission naturally reduced the enthusiasm of young people to learn arts. The government administrators forcefully terminated the traditional transmission mode of Pingtan in a one size fits all manner, and there were regulations prohibiting the admission of apprentices in some places. (Wu Chenyu, 2008)

In May 1966, China broke out a political movement that swept the country - the Cultural Revolution. After the start of the Cultural Revolution, Pingtan suffered a devastating blow. The Shanghai Pingtan Troupe could not operate normally, and the Suzhou Pingtan Troupe was disbanded. Pingtan School is not immune from this storm, and the recruitment work of the school has to be terminated, so the exploration of Pingtan School's educational model has been interrupted. The upheaval of the Cultural

Revolution led to the fault of Pingtan talents, which had a far-reaching impact. (Zhou Liang, 2008)

#### 4.2 The development of Suzhou Pingtan in this period

##### 4.2.1 The Central Government attaches importance to the development of Suzhou Pingtan

In the middle and late 1950s, Chen Yun, then Vice Chairman of the CPC Central Committee, began to pay attention to Pingtan, a local folk art in the south of the Yangtze River. Chen Yun attached great importance to the transmission of Pingtan. Under his leadership, Jiangsu and Shanghai cooperated to build Suzhou Pingtan School in the early 1960s. The original intention of Suzhou Pingtan School is to cultivate the new generation of Pingtan artists who are both "red and professional". The cultivation of Pingtan art talents has embarked on a new road that combines modern art education with traditional apprenticeship transmission. (Sun Yiting, Sun Ti, 2022)

##### 4.2.2 New way of pingtan education

The Pingtan Class, Pingtan Troupe School and Suzhou Pingtan School established in the 1950s and 1960s represent a new way of Pingtan education, which can be called "school system". This training mode has the following characteristics: First, the "one-to-one" training under the teacher following system has changed to "many to many" training, that is, each course has a special teacher to teach many students in a class; Second, in addition to learning Pingtan skills, we should also systematically accept political courses, cultural courses and other courses; Third, there is a clear and unified teaching schedule.

##### 4.2.3 Many famous critics emerge, and the main transmission mode is established

This period saw the emergence of famous commentators Yang Zhenxin, Tang Junqi, Zhang Guoliang, Hu Tianru, Jin Shengbo, Wu Junyu, and famous storyteller Zhu Xueqin (founder of "Qin Diao"), Xu Lixian (founder of "Li Diao"), Zhu Huizhen (successor of "Xin Yu Diao"), Hou Lijun (founder of "Hou Diao"), You Huiqiu (founder of "You Diao"), Xu Tianxiang (founder of "Xiang Diao"), Wang Yuexiang (founder of "Xiang Diao") Xue Xiaofei (founder of "Xiaofeidiao") and other new representatives. The school system training mode has gradually become the main transmission mode of Pingtan since the 1950s. The transmission mode of following

teachers based on the traditional Pingtan format gradually lost its existence space and value, and gradually went extinct. (Liu Xiaohai, 2018)



Figure 29 Performance photos of Jiangsu Pingtan Troupe

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

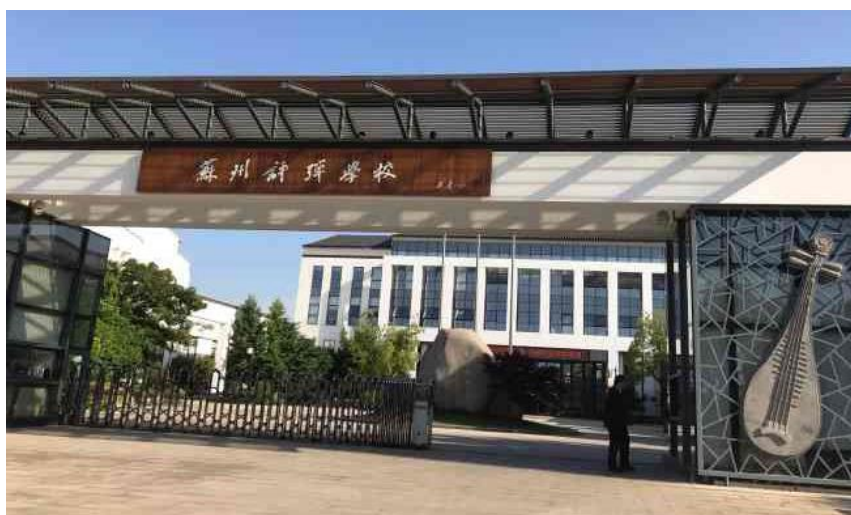


Figure 30 Suzhou Pingtan School

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

In this period, Pingtan entered a new development period after the founding of New China. Under the guidance of the literary and artistic policy of "letting a hundred flowers blossom and bringing forth the new through the old", the vast number of

Pingtán artists have improved their consciousness of serving the people through learning, and their work enthusiasm has risen. The Central Committee has also convened a national opera work conference, which has pointed out the direction for the vast number of Pingtán artists, and everyone has worked together to embark on the journey of building a new Pingtán. Due to the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution, China's economy and culture have been greatly affected, and the development of Suzhou Pingtán has also stalled and suffered damage. (Zhou Liang, 2008)

The above content is mainly about the development of Suzhou Pingtán after its establishment in China. The Chinese government attaches great importance to the development of Pingtán in Suzhou. With the establishment of the Suzhou Pingtán School and the Suzhou Pingtán Troupe, Pingtán Education has opened up new avenues, led to the emergence of many famous critics, and established the main transmission model of school education.

## 5. From the 1980s to 2022

### 5.1 History of Suzhou Pingtán in this period

In the 1980s, after China crushed the Gang of Four, it gradually entered a new era of reform and opening up. Suzhou Pingtán was liberated, and Pingtán gradually flourished. The number of performances increased, and Pingtán creation also developed.

At the end of 1990s, with the development of computer network, people's life concept gradually changed, and cultural needs also diversified. The attraction of records, radio and television has gradually weakened, the development situation of traditional bookstores has become more severe, the pressure on actors to survive has become greater, the number of actors has also declined sharply, the number of bookstores has decreased, the performance market has shrunk, and many well-known actors have switched careers. The original bibliography is out of touch with the times, and the number of outstanding actors and works has decreased. The overall artistic level has declined. Suzhou Pingtán is facing a crisis of no successors, and has reached the point where protection and rescue are needed. (Zhu Tianyue, Zhang Zhuoyuan, Dou Lingyan, 2020)

### 5.2 The development of Suzhou Pingtán in this period

Suzhou Pingtan School resumed enrollment, and continued to play an important role and make special contributions to the training of Pingtan's creative, performance and teaching talents, the transmission of Wu's culture and the promotion of the national essence. The Pingtan circles in Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Shanghai once had more than 40 groups of different sizes, and each group had a large pool of talents, numerous bibliographies, and a thriving audience. The creation or adaptation of various newly compiled historical bibliographies and modern theme bibliographies is also vigorous. A large number of new full-length works have been launched, such as *Jiulongkou*, *Pearl Case*, *Huang Taiji*, *Dourgen*, *Saijinhua*, etc; New works in the middle part, such as "True Love and Fake Intention", "Reversing the Master and Servant", "Zhao's Orphan", "Sun Pang Douzhi", "New Pipe Line", "Who is the Most Beautiful Person", "Cai E and the Little Impatiens", "Lao Tzu Chou's Filial Piety Son", "Ordinary Party Members", "Big Foot Queen", "Rain and Rain at Dusk", "Thunderstorm", etc., as well as countless short stories and opening programs, the bibliography creation is thriving, and the critics are competing to show their style. (Sun Yiting, Sun Ti, 2022)

In order to transmit and protect Suzhou Pingtan, the first China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival was held in 2000, and it was held every three years thereafter, vigorously spreading the artistic charm of Suzhou Pingtan. Suzhou Pingtan School and Suzhou Pingtan the troupe has been designated as a public institution funded by local finance to ensure the transmission and performance of Suzhou Pingtan. In 2004, China Suzhou Pingtan Museum was completed. In 2006, Suzhou Pingtan was approved by the State Council to be included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage lists, and ranked first in the "Quyí" category. (Sun Yiting, Sun Ti, 2022)



Figure 31 The 8th China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)



Figure 32 Suzhou Pingtan Museum, China

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

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Figure 33 Elegant Art Enters Campus - Suzhou Pingtan Appreciation Conference

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The above content is mainly about the development of Suzhou Pingtan in recent decades. Listed as China's intangible cultural heritage, established the Suzhou Pingtan Museum, held the Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival in China, actively disseminated in primary and secondary schools, and emerging new era works and artists.

To sum up, Suzhou Pingtan has gone through more than 400 years of history from its origin to its development to its glory, and then to today's need for protection and transmission. Its development cannot be separated from the prosperity of local economy and the change of social environment. History is the best textbook. As China's excellent traditional music culture, we should remember history, understand history, and actively do a good job in inheriting and protecting excellent music. At present, with the efforts of the government, Suzhou Pingtan has received better support and help. Relevant courses have been introduced into primary and secondary schools and colleges, and the opportunities for performance have increased. At the same time, it also actively displays Chinese traditional art to foreign countries. Through the Internet technology, we have carried out propaganda in Tiktok, Kwai and other We media. However, the number of audiences in Suzhou Pingtan is still decreasing, the number of performances is not much, the level of actors needs to be improved, and the survival pressure is great, especially under the influence of COVID-19 virus for three



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consecutive years. The overall development of Suzhou Pingtan is not optimistic. It is still important to do a good job in the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan.

Table 2 Development of Suzhou Pingtan

Time	Factor	Develop	Development impact
Before the 17th century	Social stability	Arigin	Suzhou Pingtan appeared among the people
From the 17th century to the 1830s	Economic prosperity is conducive to the development of art	Bibliography, teaching, performance venues, guild organization, and transmission are extensive.	Many excellent bibliographies, fixed performance venues, mentoring, guild organizations, and wide transmission have been established.
1840s to 1940s	War, social instability	Famous scholars, genres, and bibliographies have increased, the level of artists has improved, and the number of performances has increased.	Performance forms are diverse, audience recognition is high, and Transmission methods are diverse. The Cultural Revolution hindered the development of Suzhou Pingtan.
1950s to 1970s	In the early days of China's founding, the Cultural Revolution	Suzhou Pingtan School, Suzhou Pingtan Troupe, Pingtan Critics, and school education as the main Transmission mode.	The Chinese government attaches great importance to the development of Suzhou Pingtan and has established Suzhou Pingtan School and many local Pingtan troupes. The Cultural Revolution seriously affected the development of Suzhou Pingtan.
1980s to 2022	Social stability and rapid development of network technology	Listed as intangible cultural heritage, built Suzhou Pingtan Museum, held Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival, and disseminated on campus	Suzhou Pingtan has received the attention of the state and society, protecting excellent bibliographies and displaying a high level of traditional Chinese art.



## Chapter V

### The music characteristic of song selected of “Suzhou Pingtan”

This chapter analyzes 16 selected pieces of Suzhou Pingtan music from scholars. Suzhou Pingtan music can be divided into early vocal music genres, transitional vocal music genres, and mixed vocal music genres. These 16 pieces of music are their masterpiece.

Table 3 Representative singing genre of Suzhou Pingtan (source: zhang Quan.2022)

Name	Type	Genre and representative song names
Representative singing genre of Suzhou Pingtan	Early genres	“Yu Diao-Gong yuan” “Chen Diao-Yu qing ting” “Ma Diao-Zhen zhu ta xie jia xin”
	Transition period	“Xiao Yang Diao-Ying ying bai yue”
	mixed type	“Qi Diao-Qiu si” “Xia Diao-San xiao” “Xu Diao-Li mao huan tai zi” “Shen Diao-Zhen zhu ta” “Xue Diao-Zi juan ye tan” “Yan Diao-Yang nai wu” “Yao Diao-Shuang an yuan” “Zhang Diao-Gu ding chen” “Xiang Diao-Cheng feng po lang” “You Diao-Liang zhu song xiong” “Xiang Xiang Diao-Liang zhu ying tai ku ling” “Xiao Fei Diao-Zhen zhu ta su en ren”

According to the suggestions of scholars, analysis is conducted through melody, mode, interval, rhythm, structure, and accompaniment, with three of them analyzed in detail.

## 1. Early genres

### 1.1 Yu Diao-Gong yuan

Yu Diao, founder of Yu Xiushan, was born in Jiaqing and Daoguang of the Qing Dynasty, and enriched the melody of singing on the basis of Jiangnan folk music. The representative work “Gong Yuan”.

**Gong yuan**  
宫苑

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Zhu Huizhen  
演唱: 朱慧珍

*Lento*      2                      3                      4                      5                      6

7                      8                      9                      10                      11                      12                      13

14                      15                      16                      17                      18                      19

20                      21                      22                      23                      24                      25                      26

Figure 344 Gong yuan Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

“Gong Yuan” is one of the representative works of Suzhou Tanci tradition, which has been handed down for more than 100 years. The story tells a plot in the "Hall of Eternal Life". Emperor Ming of the Tang Dynasty doted on Mei Fei, which made Yang Yuhuan feel sad and drunk. "The opening chapter" is mainly a paragraph of Yang Guifei's drunken singing and self-pity, which is concise, catchy, and full of texture.

Describing a complete story in simple and clear language, highlighting the changes in plot and character temperament, is the representative of the beginning of "Jade Carving". It is most appropriate to use the sentimental and euphemistic "jade carving" to interpret the drunken Yang Guifei, who believes she has fallen out of favor.

1) The form of melody lines.

The figure displays four lines of musical notation in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). Each line represents a sentence of the song, with a downward-sloping arrow indicating the melodic trend. The lyrics are written in Chinese characters and Pinyin below the notes.

- Line 1: Measures 7-8. Lyrics: xi (西) gong (宫).
- Line 2: Measures 9-14. Lyrics: ye (夜) jing (静), bai hua (百花), xiang (香).
- Line 3: Measures 16-19. Lyrics: yu (欲) juan (卷), zhu (珠) lian (帘).
- Line 4: Measures 21-23. Lyrics: chun (春) hen (恨), chang (长).

Figure 35 Gong yuan Melodic trend

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Each sentence presents a zigzag downward trend, with the first sentence descending from F to bass  $\flat B$ , the second sentence descending from D to bass  $\flat B$ , the third sentence descending from F to bass F, and the fourth sentence descending from D to bass F.

## 2) Mode and tonality.



Figure 36 Gong yuan modal tonality

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

This aria is a six-tone mode consisting of a five-tone mode plus a “Bian zhi”. The final sentence falls on the “Zhi” tone, so the mode is a “six tone ‘Zhi’ mode”.

## 3) musical interval.



Figure 37 Gong yuan musical interval

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The interval of this aria is mainly composed of the progression of the pentatonic scale, and the characteristic interval is a pure pentatonic jump.

## 4) Rhythm.

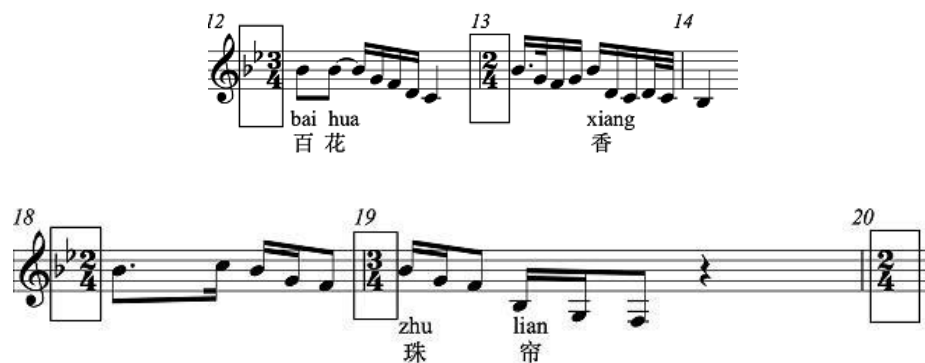


Figure 38 Gong yuan rhythm

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The rhythm of this aria is characterized by a "composite rhythm" based on the rhythm of the melody, consisting of 2/4 and 3/4.

#### 5) Music structure.

The aria consists of four sentences, the first showing "the theme motive", the second sentence following the first sentence, the third sentence following the second sentence, and the fourth sentence binding the entire paragraph into the main voice.

#### 6) Accompany.



Figure 39 Gong yuan accompaniment

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The accompaniment of the music is mainly composed of polyphonic texture, and the skeleton of the accompaniment pitch is basically the same as the human voice pitch, which is relatively traditional.

Singer Zhu Huizhen (1921-1969), whose voice is clear, beautiful, and sweet, is known as the "Golden Voice". Her tone is mellow and comfortable, and her charm is pure.

#### 1.2 Chen Diao-Yu qing ting

Chen Diao, founder Chen Yuqian, born in Suzhou, is a Suzhou Tanci artist during the Qianlong and Jiaqing dynasties of the Qing Dynasty. In his early years, he sang Suzhou Kunqu Opera, but later changed to lyrics. His singing style is similar to Kunqu Opera. He mainly sings with a loud voice, which is broad and vigorous, and occasionally uses a deep voice to add twists and sorrows.

"Yu qing ting" is a traditional storyteller that tells the story of Shen Guisheng's private love affair with a nun. Zhizhen's child was adopted by the Xu family and renamed Xu Yuanzai. Later, Xu Yuanzai became an official, went to the nunnery to recognize his mother, and returned to his ancestral home.

## Yu qing ting 玉蜻蜓

Ting tang duo zi  
厅堂夺子

Transcription by Zhang Quan

记谱: 张全

Singer: Lu Yanhua

演唱: 陆雁华

**Rubato**

xu gong bu jue lei wang  
徐公 不觉泪 汪

wang dun shi nao nu man xiong tang xiang ni chu  
汪 顿 时 恼 怒 满 胸 堂 想 你 初

shang yun ti ba liang xin bian  
上 云 梯 把 良 心 变

qi pin zhong fu pie die niang  
欺 贫 重 富 撇 爹 娘

Figure 40 Yu qing ting Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

This aria is the famous aria of "Chen Diao", "Tingtang Douzi". It is accompanied by three strings and pipa. The overall atmosphere is relatively relaxed. The recitation is combined with free rhythm. The voice and accompaniment come and go one after another, echoing each other. When singing the voice, the instrument is accompanied with embellishment or without accompaniment. Between the lines of the voice, the instrument plays short sentences. F major, Chinese pentatonic mode, without deviation. The ending of the sentence is marked with "ang" rhyme, and the falling sound of each sentence in the voice is mainly "zhi" and "shang". The melodic form is "parabola", with a large number of "big jump" intervals, and the falling sound is mainly "downward" jump. The voice area is mostly located in the middle and low voice area of the female voice, and the end of the sentence is often used to drag the cavity and air tremble, singing three sighs, sincere and moving.

### 1.3 Ma Diao -Zhen zhu ta xie jia xin

Ma Diao, founder of Ma Rufeif, was born during the Tongzhi period of the Qing Dynasty. The singing style is crisp and powerful, straightforward as "speaking frankly", and the story is enriched and has great influence.

"Zhen zhu ta" is a work of Tanci in the Qing Dynasty. Decorated by Suzhou Tanci artists such as Zhou Shushi and Ma Rufeif, it gradually spread. The earliest existing version is the Preface to the Scholars in the Book of Zhou during the reign of Qianlong in the Qing Dynasty. Prime Minister Sun Fangqing was ridiculed when he went to Xiangyang to borrow money from his aunt because his family was poor. His cousin Chen Cui'e gave him the Pearl Tower, a treasure passed down from generation to generation to help him learn. Later, Fang Qing won the first prize and asked for leave to marry. He disguised himself as a Taoist, mocked his aunt with shame, and then married Cui E.

## Zhen zhu ta 珍珠塔

Xie jia xin  
写家信

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Yuan Xiaoliang  
演唱: 袁小良

**Allegretto**      2      3      4      5      6      7

wei ceng lu bi yi xin shang zheng si lu bi dao  
未 曾 落 笔 已 心 伤 正 思 落 笔 倒

8      9      10      11      12

lei liang hang yi jing lu bi daoduan hui chang  
泪 两 行 已 经 落 笔 倒 断 回 肠

Figure 41 Zhen zhu ta Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The aria of "Zhen zhu ta" and "Writing a Letter from Home" is a famous aria of "Ma Diao", and the version recorded by the author is the version sung by Yuan Xiaoliang. This aria is still accompanied by the traditional accompaniment of playing lyrics, the three stringed instrument and the pipa, with a fast speed and

regular rhythm. The voice and accompaniment form a branch polyphony. The instrument acts as a "flower" cushion for the voice singing, and there is a local "contrast polyphony". The instrument plays between each voice. A flat major, the Chinese six tone mode, accompaniment instruments use the partial tone "changing the palace" for many times to make the melody more colorful. The falling tone of voice is mainly "palace", with "ang" rhyme. The melodic form is "zigzag", and the falling sound is mostly in the second half of the beat. The biggest singing feature of this aria is the trailing voice at the end of the sentence with continuous "air tremor", such as sections 10-11, which is very expressive.

## **2. Transition period.**

### **2.1 Xiao Yang Diao-Ying ying bai yue**

"Xiao Yang Diao" was created by Tanci artist Yang Xiaoting. On the basis of the widely played and sung "Shu Diao" at that time, and based on the characteristics of rap content and personal voice, he formed his own singing genre, known as "Xiao Yang Diao". Real sound is called the "sunny side", and false noise is called the "cloudy side". Because the positive side sandwiches the negative side, it is called "Yin Yang Tone". The characteristics of "Xiaoyang Diao" are the use of earthy sounds to create sentences, the use of deep voices to express emotions, and the use of high-pitched minor falls. The melody is clear and beautiful, and the lasting appeal is meaningful.



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# Ying ying bai yue 莺莺拜月

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Shun Fushu  
演唱: 孙扶庶

**Allegretto**

2 3 4 5 6 7 8

si lun  
丝 纶

9 10 11 12 13 14 15

ge xia jing wen zhang zhong gu lou zhong  
阁 下 静 文 章 钟 鼓 楼 钟

16 17 18 19 20 21

ke lou chang yan ling xiang xiang ding dang  
刻 漏 长 檐 铃 响 响 叮 当

22 23 24 25 26 27 28

cui ying ying ying yu lai huan hong niang  
崔 莺 莺 莺 语 来 唤 红 娘

Figure 42 Ying ying bai yue Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

## 1) The form of melody lines.

6 7 8 9 10 11 12

si lun ge xia jing wen zhang  
丝 纶 阁 下 静 文 章

15 16 17

zhong gu lou zhong ke lou chang  
钟 鼓 楼 钟 刻 漏 长

20 yan ling xiang xiang ding dang  
檐 铃 响 响 叮 当

24 cui ying ying ying yu lai huan hong niang  
崔 莺 莺 莺 语 来 唤 红 娘

Figure 43 Ying ying bai yue melodic trend

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Each sentence presents a zigzag downward trend, with the first sentence descending from the treble #D to the #G, the second sentence descending from the treble #F to the #F, the third sentence descending from the #D to the B, and the fourth sentence descending from the #D to the #F.

## 2) Mode and tonality.

20 yan ling xiang xiang ding dang  
檐 铃 响 响 叮 当

24 cui ying ying ying yu lai huan hong niang  
崔 莺 莺 莺 语 来 唤 红 娘

Figure 44 Ying ying bai yue modal tonality

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

This aria is a six-tone mode consisting of a five-tone mode plus a "Qing jue". The final sentence falls on the "Zhi" sound F, so the mode is a "six tone 'Zhi' mode".

## 3) musical interval.

6 si lun  
丝 纶

16 ke lou chang  
刻 漏 长



Figure 45 Ying ying bai yue musical interval

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The interval of this aria is mainly composed of the progression of the pentatonic scale, and the characteristic interval is a pure fourth downward jump.

#### 4) Rhythm.



Figure 46 Ying ying bai yue rhythm

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The rhythm of this aria is very distinctive, presenting a "composite rhythm" characteristic based on the rhythm of the melody, consisting of 2/4 and 3/4 intervals.

#### 5) Music structure.

The aria consists of four sentences, the first showing "theme motivation", the second sentence following the first sentence, the third sentence following the second sentence, the fourth sentence binding the entire paragraph, falling into the main tone, and the last three sentences showing a tendency to reduce the length of the phrase.

#### 6) Accompany



Figure 47 Ying ying bai yue accompany

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The accompaniment of the music is mainly composed of polyphonic texture, and the skeleton of the accompaniment pitch varies from time to time with the human voice, which is more multi vocal than the traditional Pingtan accompaniment.

The opening part of the Tanci "Yingying baiyue" is a famous aria of "Little Yang", and the version recorded by the author is the singing version of Sun Fushu. This aria is accompanied by three strings, playing and singing by oneself, with regular rhythm. The voice and accompaniment form a branch polyphony texture. The accompanying instrument makes a "flower" branch polyphony. Between each voice, the instrument plays a short sentence of "palace Diao". B major, Chinese six tone mode, accompaniment instruments appear "changing palace" for many times, making music more colorful. The falling tone of the voice is mainly characterized by "gong" and "zhi", with "ang" rhyme. Melodic form is "zigzag", and the falling voice is mostly in the second half of the beat, which is characterized by "syncopation". Use both true and false voice, mainly false voice. It is not only cool and vigorous, but also graceful and melodious. It is suitable to play and sing with the accompaniment of three strings.

### 3. Mixed type.

#### 3.1 Qi Diao-Qiu si

Qi Diao, founder of Qi Lianfang (1910-1986), a native of Suzhou, originated from the "Yu Diao" and mainly uses falsetto, singing with true and falsetto. However, in terms of vocal methods, the "Yu Diao" is bright, while the "Qi Diao" is restrained. Runqiang is also very different, with its own unique charm.

"Qiu si" is a famous Diao of "Qi Diao". It combines a variety of poems to express the longing for autumn, with a very beautiful and euphemistic melody.



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# Qiu si 秋思

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Xing Yanzhi  
演唱: 邢晏芝

**Lento**

2 3 4 5 6

yin zhu qiu guang  
银 烛 秋 光

7 8 9 10 11 12

leng hua ping bi tian  
冷 画 屏 碧 天

13 14 15 16 17 18

ru shui ye yun qing  
如 水 夜 云 轻

Figure 48 Qiu si Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

## 1) The form of melody lines.

4 5 6 7 8 9 10

yin zhu qiu guang  
银 烛 秋 光

leng hua ping  
冷 画 屏

12 13 14 15 16

bi tian ru shui ye yun qing  
碧 天 如 水 夜 云 轻

Figure 49 Qiu si melodic trend

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

This piece of music is different from the general trend of zigzag downward movement of traditional music. It is more singing and more in line with the aesthetic

characteristics of modern people, presenting a beautiful melodic form of ups and downs, which is more balanced and beautiful.

## 2) Mode and tonality.

Figure 50 Qiu si Mode tonality

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The aria is in a five-tone mode, with the final sentence falling on the "Zhi" tone, so the mode is "five tone zhi mode."

## 3) musical interval.

Figure 51 Qiu si musical interval

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The interval of this aria is mainly composed of the progression of the pentatonic scale, but on a traditional basis, it incorporates continuous or partial jumps, which is very tense and bolder in expression.

## 4) Rhythm.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in a key with four flats. The top staff has measures 6, 7, and 8. Measure 8 is highlighted with a box and contains the note 'leng' (冷). The bottom staff has measures 15 and 16. Measure 16 is highlighted with a box and contains the note 'qing' (轻) with the label 'Zhi' above it. Arrows indicate the flow of the music from measure 6 to 7 and 7 to 8, and from measure 15 to 16.

Figure 52 Qiu si rhythm

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The rhythm of this aria is relatively regular, and rather than presenting the characteristic of "composite rhythm," it embodies an even rhythm that is easy to sing. In addition, in terms of rhythm, it retains the processing method of the last word of each sentence in traditional Pingtan, that is, allowing its "head" to occupy an independent small section, making the music gentle, dignified, and meaningful.

## 5) Music structure.

This paragraph consists of two major sentences, the upper and lower, and the secondary structure of the first major sentence is two "musical phrases". This structure, which consists of musical phrases and musical phrases, assumes a "split and combined" shape as a whole.

## 6) Accompany

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is in treble clef and shows measures 3, 4, 5, and 6. The bottom staff is in bass clef and shows the accompaniment for the same measures. The lyrics 'yin zhu qiu guang' (银 烛 秋 光) are written below the top staff. Arrows indicate the flow of the music from measure 3 to 4, 4 to 5, and 5 to 6.

Figure 53 Qiu si accompaniment

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The accompaniment of a piece of music is not only a commonly used vocal polyphonic texture in traditional Pingtan, but also presents a "dominant motivation" similar to the main melody in the accompaniment, which is repeated in the accompaniment of the main melody (human voice). Compared to traditional accompaniment, it is more independent, more modern, and closer to true multi vocal music.

### 3.2 Xia Diao-San xiao

**San xiao**  
三笑

Zhou mei ren tang lou xiang hui  
周美人堂楼相会

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Xu Yunzhi  
演唱: 徐云志

**Lento**

xiao jie shi wei piao qiao mu kan cun gu  
小姐是微 瞟 俏 目 看 村 姑

jian ta shi sui zhu xiang jian su qi wu  
见 她 是 虽 住 乡 间 俗 气 无

Figure 54 San xiao Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

"Sanxiao" is Mr. Xu Yunzhi's most famous masterpiece. "Meet the White Dragon", "Meet the Plum Pavilion", "Meet the Brothers and Sisters", and "Meet the Beautiful Family of Zhou" are all the most beautiful arias. The human voice and the three strings form a "dialogue style" texture. The accompanying musical instrument is used as a "decorative style" cushion. Reciting and singing are combined. The sound is mainly composed of soloists, with three strings playing a short "court Diao" between each sound. In the Chinese six tone mode of E major, the accompanying instruments have repeatedly appeared in the "palace of change", making their melodies more colorful. The falling sound mainly consists of "gong", "zhi", and "yu". The melodic form is "jagged". The deep voice is mostly in the second half of the beat. It has the unique "syncopation" characteristic of Tanci.



## 3.3 Xu Diao-Li Mao Huan Tai Zi

**Li mao huan tai zi**  
狸猫换太子

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Feng Chenxi  
演唱: 冯晨曦

**Lento**

ling li cong ming kou gong ta  
伶 俐 聪 明 寇 宫 人 她

feng zhu ming qie xiang yu yuan  
奉 主 命 且 向 御 园

xing  
行

Figure 55 Li mao huan tai zi Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

"Li Mao Huan Tai Zi" is a representative aria of "Xu Diao". During the reign of Emperor Zhenzong of the Song Dynasty, Concubine Liu colluded with Guo Huai, her internal servant, to peel off the skin of the civet and exchange the baby born to Concubine Li. Princess Li was subsequently imprisoned in the Cold Palace. After the death of Zhenzong, Ren Zongzhaozhen ascended the throne, and Bao Zheng went to Chenzhou to investigate the fraud of his uncle Pang Yu. On the way, Bao Zheng accepted the grievance of Li Guifei and resolved it for her. He welcomed her back home. Because this story is very popular, it is praised by future generations. The accompaniment of vocal and plucked music creates a supportive polyphonic texture. The accompanying instrument has a "flower" shaped cushion, such as the "Xu Diao" feature, and only three strings are used for accompaniment. Between each sound, the instrument plays a small "court Diao". A major Chinese six tone mode with occasional addition of "clear corners" as accompaniment, with the sound area located in the tenor area of the male voice. The falling tone of the tone is mainly composed of "symbols" and "ing" rhymes. Toto is widely used, and the flat syncopated rhythm makes music more energetic.

## 3.4 Shen Diao-Zhenzhu Ta

## Zhen zhu ta 珍珠塔

San da bu xiao  
三打不孝

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Shen Jianan  
演唱: 沈俭安

**Moderato**

2 3 4 5 6 7

wo shi ming er xiangyang yuan tan qin xiang dao lin xing he  
我是命而襄阳远探亲想到临行何

8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

deng xi ding ning shuo dao gu zhang gu niangqin jing zun  
等细叮宁说到姑丈姑娘钦敬尊

16 17 18 19 20

san dang zhi zhong yi mai qin liang jia bu sao yi jia ren  
三党之中一脉亲两家不啻一家人

Figure 56 Zhen zhu ta Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

"San da bu xiao" of "Zhenzhu Ta" is a famous aria of "Shen Diao". Only three stringed accompaniments, with moderate speed and regular rhythm. The sound and accompaniment form the backbone, and the accompaniment instrument plays short sentences between each sound. Combine speaking and singing. In the Chinese six tone mode, the accompaniment instrument uses a partial tone "Biangong". The falling tone of the voice is mainly characterized by "gong" and "zhi". The melody is in the form of a "zhi" shape, while the falling tone at the end of the sentence is mostly the "logical beat" in the second half of the sentence. The range of this aria is located in the male mid-range, decisive, short, and powerful.

### 3.5 Xue Diao-Zi juan ye tan

"Xue Diao" enhances musicality and rhythm. It has the characteristics of sonorous tone, bright rhythm, powerful diction, crispness and frankness. The chorus is sung with even more ups and downs, with thousands of miles of torrents.

## Zi juan ye tan 紫鹃夜叹

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Luo Wenlian  
演唱: 骆文莲

**Allegretto**

2 3 4 5 6 7 8

yue hei chen chen ye man man  
月黑沉沉 夜漫漫

9 10 11 12 13 14

feng jing tie ma ge lian xuan jing qiao qiao xi  
风惊铁马隔帘喧 静悄悄西

15 16 17 18 19 20

xiang wu sheng xi you yi wei duo qing duo yi de bi zi juan  
厢无声息 有一位多情多义的婢紫鹃

Figure 57 Zi juan ye tan Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

"Zi juan Nights" is a famous aria of "Xue Diao". The accompanying instruments are the pipa and the three strings, which have the characteristics of "Xue Diao" accompaniment and enhance the "Tuo" pipa performance to singing. The speed is fast, the rhythm is regular, and the short sentences played by the accompaniment instruments are basically in court mode. Combine speaking and singing. Chinese five tone mode, with the sound mainly composed of "gong". The melodic form is a "Z" shape.

### 3.6 Yan Diao-Yang nai wu

Yan Xueting (1913-1983), founder of "Yandiao", was born in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province. On the basis of "wide empty Diao", according to the characteristics of his voice, he fully demonstrated the beautiful vocal range of his mellow and bright middle note, and absorbed the music melody of "Xiao yang diao", which was transformed into his own unique singing.

## Yang nai wu 杨乃武

Mi shi xiang hui  
密室相会

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Yan Xueting  
演唱: 严雪亭

**Allegretto**

2 3 4 5 6

yi sheng chang tan hui shen zou ti lei jiao liu nu mu zheng  
一声长叹回身走 涕泪交流怒目 睁

7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

yan dai ai yin sheng dai ku qi qi can can bu kan wen  
言带哀音声带哭 凄凄惨惨不堪 闻

Figure 58 Yang nai wu Singing passage  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

"Yang Naiwu and Xiao Baicai" are one of the four major suspects in the late Qing Dynasty. During the Tongzhi period, Yang Naiwu and Bi Xiugu were suspected of adultery and murder. After being punished, they confessed their crimes and were sentenced to death. But they were wronged. This case shocked the court. Despite several trials, they are still innocent, but they have also been subjected to torture. Yang Naiwu's aria "Chamber of Secrets Meeting" is a famous aria in "Yan Diao". This aria is too fast. Voice and recitation intertwine. The sound and accompaniment constitute the main and branch polyphonic texture of "Jiahua". Occasionally, the vocals are sung alone, or supplemented only by a simple accompaniment of three strings "embellished". Between each sound, three strings play short sentences. "B flat major, Chinese six tone mode, accompaniment instruments using partial tone" variation. ". The falling notes of musical instruments are mainly "gongs", while the falling notes of human voices are mainly "sticks". The melody span is not too large, the rhythm is relatively stable, and the falling tone at the end of the sentence is mostly the "logical beat" in the second half.

### 3.7 Yao Diao-Shuang an yuan

"Yao Diao" was created by the famous storyteller Yao Yinmei (1906-1997). His parents were both storytellers. Influenced by his family, he came to the stage at the age of 14 to talk about "The Golden Platform Biography". Later, he learned storytelling.

Tang Zhiyun taught him how to describe the Golden Phoenix. When he was in his twenties, he changed the novel "Jade Link" into storytelling. In 1935, he adapted Zhang Henshui's novel "The Cause of Crying and Laughing" into storytelling. Later, when he played the story, he changed it. He became famous at one stroke for his unique style, which caused a sensation in the book world. "Yao Diao" is vivid in language, delicate in description and ingenious in conception. In plain speaking, it is kind, humorous, attractive, and has the reputation of "skillful mouth". Its singing is free and flexible, popular and clear, which gives full play to the rap nature of Tanci music. It combines singing with singing. Singing and speaking are integrated, and is known as "Yao Diao".

## Shuang an yuan

### 双按院

Lian yin  
炼印

Transcription by Zhang Quan

记谱: 张全

Singer: Hu Guoliang

演唱: 胡国梁

**Allegretto**

2 3 4 5 6

dan ting qiao lou san xia cui  
但 听 谯 楼 三 下 催

7 8 9 10 11

na yang zhuan di tou zhou shuang mei  
那 杨 传 低 头 皱 双 眉

Figure 59 Shuang an yuan Singing passage  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

"Shuang An Yuan" is a representative piece of "Yao Diao", accompanied by traditional accompaniment instruments such as Sanxian and Pipa, with fast speed, especially Pipa, which has a fast accompaniment and a slow singing style, forming the form of "playing tightly and singing slowly". The combination of recitation and singing is very dramatic and scene oriented. The voice and accompaniment form the backbone and the "Jiahua" texture. Between each phrase of the human voice, accompaniment instruments play courtly style short sentences. In the Chinese pentatonic mode, the descending tones are mainly "gong" and "zhi". The interval structure is mainly

characterized by large jumps, with most of the final falls in the second half of the sentence. The range of this aria lies in the male middle note area.

### 3.8 Zhang Diao-Gu ding chen

Zhang Diao, created by Tanci actor Zhang Jianting, was formed around the 1950s. Due to his talent for good voice, wide range, high pitch, and strong strength, when performing the selected pieces of "Lin Chong Misjudged Zhen Niang", he focused on the changes in the tone during his slow singing based on "Jiang Diao", and sang different melodies during the tone transition. The six-character trailing of the following sentence has strong clarity, enthusiasm, rich tone, and rich flavor, forming a unique "Zhang Diao" style.

**Gu ding chen**  
顾鼎臣

Hua ting ping li  
花厅评理

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Huang Jiaming  
演唱: 黄嘉明

**Moderato**

2 3 4 5 6

gui fu zhang fang yi ming sang  
贵 府 账 房 一 命 丧

7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

ci an bi xu yu ni gong shang liang  
此 案 必 须 与 你 共 商 量

Figure 60 Gu ding chen Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

"Gu Dingchen-Hua Ting Ping Li" is a famous piece of "Zhang Diao", which is still accompanied by traditional accompaniment instruments such as Sanxian and Pipa, using a combination of recitation and singing, with a moderate overall speed. During vocal singing, the accompaniment is made into a simple "decoration" pad. Between each phrase of the human voice, accompaniment instruments play courtly style short sentences. The combination of the three strings and the human voice perfectly matches. The aria adjustment is in D major, while the Chinese six tone mode adds a partial tone of "changing the palace". The falling tone of each tone is mainly "Gong" and "Zhi".

The interval structure is dominated by "progression" and "small jumps", and this aria is located in the mid to high range of the male voice.

### 3.9 Xiang Diao-Cheng feng po lang

Xiangdiao, founder of Xu Tianxiang (1921-1992), is a storyteller. The original name is Yunsheng, a native of Shanghai. Singing "Jiang Diao", "Xue Diao", and some Diaos of Peking Opera has formed a more dynamic, clearer, and modern aria, known as "Xiang Diao.". He is good at singing "Nine Turn Three Ring Tone" and integrating it into some paragraphs of "Xiang Diao".

## Cheng feng po lang 乘风破浪

Transcription by Zhang Quan

记谱: 张全

Singer: Cheng Shijie

演唱: 陈仕洁

**Allegretto** 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

bi hai lan tian lang gun gun  
碧海 海天 浪 滚 滚

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

hai mian yu chuan qun qun  
海面 渔船 群 群

Figure 61 Cheng feng po lang Singing passage  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

"Cheng feng po lang" is a famous aria of the "Hunan Opera". The melody of this aria is very beautiful and powerful. With the three strings, the speed is relatively slow. The sound and accompaniment form a "dialogue type" and "round singing" relationship. The short sentences played by accompaniment instruments in interludes are basically in the court mode. The Chinese six tone mode includes the "Biangong". Corresponding to the court mode of three string interlude, the falling tone is mainly characterized by "gong" and "zhi". The melody range is moderate, and the adjacent intervals are mainly "small jumps".

### 3.10 You Diao -Liang zhu song xiong

"You Diao" was created by You Huiqiu, a famous Tanci writer, and contains Adagio based on "Jiang Diao" and Allegro based on "Shen Diao". He made full use of his

own bel canto area, strengthened the change of the small Diao, and used the techniques of trill, decorative sound and resonance to make the singing euphemistic, delicate, soft, smooth and pleasant. When singing the repeated sentences, you can master them freely, from strengthening the melody and speeding up the rhythm to making use of the small cavity to change the speed. Zhu Xueyin's pipa accompaniment is unique and powerful. The two are a perfect combination, which can be called "the combination of zither and lute".

## Liang zhu 梁祝

Song xiong  
送兄

Transcription by Zhang Quan  
记谱: 张全  
Singer: Xu Gang  
演唱: 徐刚

**Lento**      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

wo shi you xing er lai shi bai xing hui  
我是有性而来败兴回

11      12      13      14      15      16      17      18      19      20      21

xiang lai shi huan xi wo qu shi ai  
想来时欢喜我去时哀

Figure 62 Liang zhu Singing passage  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The aria "Song Xiong" of "Liang Zhu" is a famous aria of "You diao", The melody of this aria is very beautiful and lyrical. Accompanied by three strings and pipa, the pipa "ring finger" playing method makes a polyphonic counterpoint with the voice. The speed is moderate, and the accompaniment serves as the "embellishment" cushion for the voice. The short sentences played by accompaniment instruments in interlude are basically in palace mode. Chinese six tone mode, including partial tone "Bian Gong". The falling voice is mainly "Gong". The range of melody is moderate, the adjacent intervals are mainly "small jumps" and "progressive", and the overall sound area is located in the male mid tone area.

### 3.11 Xiang Xiang Diao-Liang zhu ying tai ku ling



Fragrant melody, which has a unique style, plays compactly, sings quickly, and repeats sentences, especially those that are good at growing up. It is particularly suitable for expressing sadness and sad emotions as well as emotional places. Tears cannot overcome sadness and have a strong artistic appeal. "Three Wars Raising Tiger" and "Ying Tai Gu Ling" are his masterpieces.

## Liang zhu

### 梁祝

Ying tai ku ling  
英台哭灵

Transcription by Zhang Quan

记谱: 张全

Singer: Shi Yajun

演唱: 施雅君

**Rubato**

liang xiong ting na er bian yi pian  
梁兄听那耳边一片

ku sheng yin ying tai shi gan  
哭声音英台是肝

chang cun duan jing po sui liao xin  
肠寸断竟破碎了心

Figure 63 Liang zhu Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The aria "Yingtai Kuling" from "Liangzhu" is a famous aria from "Xiang Xiang Diao". The melody of this aria is very lyrical. Accompanied by the three strings and the pipa, the playing method and sound of the "ring finger" of the pipa form a polyphonic counterpoint, and the emotions are very intense. The pace changes from free to allegro, with a very compact rhythm, which contrasts with sound in terms of "tight" and "slow". Chinese six tone modes, including "Biangong". The falling tone of the voice is mainly "gong", with a very stable tone, highlighting the central tone.

### 3.12 Xiaofei Diao-Zhen zhu ta su en ren

"Xiaofei Diao" was developed by Xue Xiaofei on the basis of "Wei Diao" and "Shen Diao". The rhythm is bright, the line is smooth, and dozens of refrains can be tactfully connected, especially in the early and late days. Singing a song can arouse the

audience's emotion. It is one of the few genres of singing in Pingtan after the founding of New China.

## Zhen zhu ta 珍珠塔

Su en ren  
诉恩人

Transcription by Zhang Quan

记谱: 张全

Singer: Xue Xiaofei

演唱: 薛小飞

Moderato

2 3 4 5 6

chu men shi jie zheng chong yang zheng shi wu yu  
出 门 时 节 正 重 阳 正 是 无 雨

7 8 9 10 11 12

wu feng dao bu jin guang xiang na zhou ji zhong ta men ming er lang  
无 风 叨 不 尽 光 想 那 周 继 忠 他 们 命 儿 郎

13 14 15 16 17

guan bao xiang song wo yi lu song wo dao ru yang qin er a  
关 宝 相 送 我 一 路 送 我 到 汝 阳 亲 儿 啊

18 19 20

xiang ni ou tu jiao xing ba na gong ming jiu(na) guan  
想 你 偶 图 侥 幸 把 那 功 名 就 (那) 关

21 22 23

bao de en qing ni bu neng wang  
宝 的 恩 情 你 不 能 忘

Figure 64 Zhen Zhu Ta Singing passage

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The aria of "Zhen Zhu Ta" and "Su En Ren" is a famous aria of "Xiaofei Diao". The mood of this aria is tense. The rhythm of the accompanying instruments is tight. Combined with the steady rhythm of the voice, it creates a tense and intense atmosphere. Because the sentences of the voice are closely connected, the theme structure does not need to be interlude, and the overall performance of the voice is concentrated. The Chinese pentatonic mode, with the voice falling mainly in "Gong" and "Zhi", the tone is very stable.

Pingtán music is mainly composed of six tone modes, which make it very expressive. There are two forms of six tone modes: one is the partial tone "Qingjiao" added to the five-tone mode based on Gong, Shang, Jiao, Zhi and Yu, and the other is the partial tone "Biangong" added to the five-tone mode. In Pingtán music, these two six tone modes exist, and the latter is more common.



Figure 65 Chinese national tonal scale

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

Pingtán music have a small "drawl" at the end of a phrase, separating the last word of the lyrics of the phrase. This special treatment is formed by the tone of the Wu language, which has strong Jiangnan characteristics, which is also an important musical feature of Suzhou Pingtán. The last word "Tuo Qiang" is sometimes longer, sometimes just a sound. Although only one sound interval is used, it still forms a unique flavor. The use of one sound interval is often to create a compact music mood. The difference between various schools of Pingtán is often the different treatment of the last word "tacitly", which makes people know whether it is Jiang's Diao, Yu's Diao or Wei's Diao. For example, the second sentence of the opening part of the Tanci "Yingying Baiyue" (sung by Sun Fushu), and the fourth section of the music score example is the final word "Tuo Qiang" composed of single tones.



Figure 66 Example of the last word "Tuo Qiang"

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

There are mainly two accompaniment instruments for Pingtán, namely pipa and sanxian. Sometimes, some other instruments, such as erhu, are occasionally added. Other instruments are generally used for special needs. The timbre between Sanxian and Pipa is granular, so Pingtán artists have skillfully combined the two instruments in long-term

practice, and the music form is mostly branch polyphony. For example, the high voice part is the pipa, and the low voice part is the three strings. Between the voice parts, "You are simple and Researcher complicated, and Researcher complicated and you are simple." However, the relationship between them is very tight. The two voice parts come from a common theme.

Pingtian's aria is mainly vocal, and it is divided into male and female timbres. Male and female partners, with concise staff, can easily carry pipa and sanxian, which is convenient for touring through the streets. The voice is a kind of covering timbre. When the covering voice is combined with the granular pipa and sanxian, it will produce a strong contrast with penetrating power. For example, in the beginning of the play, "Gong Yuan" (Zhu Huizhen sings), the basic tone of the accompaniment of the prelude and interlude is as follows: the score example, "Gong" falling B occurs many times, and this is the center tone of the falling sound. The phenomenon of using palace style short sentences as prelude and interlude is widely seen in the lyrics, which is also one of the biggest features of the lyric's music.



Figure 67 Example of accompaniment melody

Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

The Chinese national mode is different from the mode categories of major and minor Diaos in Europe. The most common is the pentatonic scale and the six-tone and seven-tone scale based on the pentatonic scale. In the pentatonic scale composed of Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi and Yu, different tones can be used as the main tone to form the five modes of Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi and Yu.



Figure 68 Chinese National Five-tone Mode Chart

Source: Zhang Quan (2023)

The generation of pentatonic scale is based on the method of generating basic tones according to the fifth degree. The five tones of the pentatonic scale are formed by continuously producing the fifth interval upwards. For example, starting from the C tone, the five tones of C, G, D, A and E can be obtained by the method of upward continuous fifth generation. The pentatonic scales of C, D, E, G and A can be formed by arranging them from low to high. The names of these five sounds are Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi and Yu.



Figure 69 Chinese National Six-tone Mode Chart  
Source: Zhang Quan (2023)

Adding other notes to the pentatonic scale can form a six-tone scale and a seven-tone scale, and the other notes added are called "partial notes". The partial tone can only play an auxiliary role and color role in the pentatonic scale, but cannot become the main tone of a certain mode. For example, if "gong" is C, then "bian gong" is B (half tone lower than C), which can be understood as "bian" means half tone lower. So, the mode of this melody is the six-tone mode.

In conclusion, the music characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan are mainly different in singing. The actors play and sing by themselves, set off each other, sing in local dialect, mainly lyrical works, with the comic characters and plots in the book exaggerated, and interspersed with relaxed and humorous gags, making it a highly developed comprehensive rap art. During the reign of Qianlong in the Qing Dynasty, various famous artists gradually accumulated a large number of bibliographies, and the art of saying tables and playing and singing has been enriched and developed, resulting in a variety of singing styles. Today, innovative works of the new era are also presented with the development of society, fully demonstrating the cultural charm of Suzhou Pingtan. The music of Suzhou Pingtan comes from Chinese Kunqu Opera, with three strings and pipa as the main accompaniment instruments, some say and sing.

The mode is based on the six tones of the Chinese national mode, and often ends in the way of "drawl". Combined with the story of the book, it has become an irreplaceable and distinctive local excellent folk music.



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## Chapter VI

### The guideline for transmission of “Suzhou Pingtan”

The transmission of Suzhou Pingtan is in various ways. Protection is the guarantee of transmission and also conducive to the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan. The two complement each other. Therefore, it is necessary to maintain the vitality of Pingtan performances and expand the influence of Suzhou Pingtan through various forms of transmission and effective protective measures.

Based on the information provided by the informants Zhou Liang, Sun Ti, Cao Fang, Wu Changchun, and Wang Shanchun, as well as the feedback from the questionnaire, there are 10 main modes of transmission:

- 1) Selected into the first batch of intangible cultural heritage list in China.
- 2) Establish national and local inheritors.
- 3) Held Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival in China.
- 4) Improve the performance level and frequency of Suzhou Pingtan Opera Troupe.
- 5) Attach importance to the development of Suzhou Pingtan School.
- 6) Build Suzhou Pingtan Museum in China.
- 7) Increase and construct Suzhou Pingtan performance venue.
- 8) Transmission in primary and secondary schools and universities.
- 9) Attach importance to international transmission.
- 10) The government strongly supports the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan.

#### 1. The main modes of transmission of Suzhou Pingtan

##### 1.1 Selected into the first batch of intangible cultural heritage list in China.

In May 2006, China's first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list was published, and Suzhou Pingtan (project number V-1) ranked first in the category of folk art (China Intangible Cultural Heritage Network. 2023.1.5).

The inclusion of Suzhou Pingtan in the list of China's intangible cultural heritage shows that the country attaches importance to the development of Suzhou Pingtan,

providing support and assistance in policies, funds, measures, and other aspects, and effectively disseminating it at the national level.

Table 4 Quyi in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list in China (source: China Intangible Cultural Heritage Network.2022)

number	name	classification	Release time	area	unit
V-1	Suzhou pingtan	Quyi	2006	Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province	Suzhou Pingtan Troupe
V-2	Yangzhou pinghua	Quyi	2006	Yangzhou City, Jiangsu Province	Yangzhou Quyi Research Institute
V-3	Fuzhou pinghua	Quyi	2006	Fuzhou City, Fujian Province	Fuzhou Quyi Troupe
V-4	Shandong dagu	Quyi	2006	Shandong Province	Shandong Art Research Institute
V-5	Xihe dagu	Quyi	2006	Hejian City, Hebei Province	Hejian City Cultural Museum
V-6	Dongbei dagu	Quyi	2006	Hejian City Cultural Museum	Shenyang Culture and Performing Arts Center

### 1.2 Establish national and local inheritors.

The representative inheritor of China's national intangible cultural heritage refers to the inheritor who bears the responsibility of inheriting the national intangible cultural heritage representative projects, has representativeness in specific fields and has great influence in certain areas, and has been recognized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China. (Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, 2022)



Table 5 Inheritors of National Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative Projects  
(source: China Intangible Cultural Heritage Network.2022)

Serial number	full name	Gender	entry name	Reporting area or unit
02-0707	Xing Yanzhi	female	suzhou pingtan	Suzhou, Jiangsu Province
02-0708	Jin Lisheng	male	suzhou pingtan	Suzhou, Jiangsu Province
03-1151	Wang Yuexiang	female	suzhou pingtan	Suzhou, Jiangsu Province
03-1152	Xing Yanchun	male	suzhou pingtan	Suzhou, Jiangsu Province
03-1153	Zhang Guoliang	male	suzhou pingtan	Suzhou, Jiangsu Province
03-1154	Jin Shengbo	male	suzhou pingtan	Suzhou, Jiangsu Province
03-1155	Yang Naizhen	female	suzhou pingtan	Suzhou, Jiangsu Province
03-1156	Chen Xi'an	male	suzhou pingtan	Shanghai Bookstore Workers Association
03-1157	Yu Hongxian	female	suzhou pingtan	Shanghai Bookstore Workers Association
04-1700	Jiang Wenlan	female	suzhou pingtan	Shanghai Bookstore Workers Association
04-1701	Zhao Kaisheng	male	suzhou pingtan	Shanghai Bookstore Workers Association

Suzhou Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism revised the Measures for the Identification and Management of Representative Inheritors of Intangible Cultural Heritage Projects in Suzhou to effectively encourage and support the representative inheritors of intangible cultural heritage in Suzhou to carry out transmission activities. The Measures shall be implemented as of May 27, 2021.

The establishment of inheritors of Suzhou Pingtan is an important method of transmit Suzhou Pingtan. By establishing inheritors, famous Pingtan artists can impart excellent technology to more people.

### 1.3 Held Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival in China.

China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival (hereinafter referred to as the Festival) is a national Suzhou Pingtan art exhibition and performance activity. Since 2000, Suzhou has held the China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival every three years and regularly,

becoming one of the largest, highest artistic level and most widely participated Pingtan art activities in the country. The holding of Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival in China is of great significance to carry forward the excellent traditional Chinese culture, display the transmission, innovation and development achievements of Suzhou Pingtan Art, promote the creation of literary and artistic works, and cultivate and tap young talents.

Table 6 China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival (source: Zhang Quan.2022)

Name	Time	Length of performance	City
The first China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival	September 2000	4 days	Suzhou
The 2nd China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival	July 2003	7 days	Suzhou
The 3rd China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival	July 2006	9 days	Suzhou
The 4th China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival	June 2009	9 days	Suzhou
The 5th China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival	July 2012	9 days	Suzhou
The 6th China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival	October 2015	10 days	Suzhou
The 7th China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival	October 2018	10 days	Suzhou
The 8th China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival	October 2021	9 days	Suzhou

Taking the sixth Suzhou Pingtan Festival of China as an example, a total of 14 performing groups participated in the performance, with a total of 18 wonderful performances. The opening ceremony performance was started by the Tanci group singing "Moonlight on the Spring River". The artists successively performed the short Tanci "Dating", the long commentary "Water Margin. Beating the Shop", the long Tanci "The Cause of Laughing. The First Appointment with the Xiannongtan" and other

works. The beautiful singing and rich expression fully displayed the unique charm of Chinese folk art. The bibliography of the performances in this art festival is rich in themes and forms. The units participating in the performance are diversified, and the actors are younger as a whole. Pay more attention to literary criticism, analyze the advantages and disadvantages of participating programs, and summarize experience. The ticket price is cheaper and suitable for public consumption. (Zhang Yin, 2015)

Taking the 8th China Suzhou Pingtan Art Festival as an example, a total of 14 Suzhou Pingtan performance groups brought 19 performances, including 13 newly created medium-length bibliographies, more than 40 medium-length bibliographies, newly edited short stories, and 8 excellent long-length transmission bibliographies. In the form of "simultaneous performance and broadcasting, online and offline integration", each bibliography is performed once. The program arrangement of this art festival reflects the pursuit of inheriting Wu Yun dialect and promoting the flow of fragrance through innovation, which better reflects the latest achievements of creative transformation and innovative development of Jiangnan culture in the new era. A number of historical and expressive works have emerged, including "Captain Hero" and "Zhang Guimei's Medical Treatment", and a large number of new excellent short and medium stories that originate from life and are higher than life. There have been many famous new stars, providing a broad platform for art exhibition and learning and exchange for the majority of young and middle-aged Pingtan actors. There are both traditional excellent tracks and innovative bibliographies of the new era. (Sun Ti, 2021)

#### 1.4 Improve the performance level and frequency of Suzhou Pingtan Opera Troupe.

The current performance groups are mainly local Pingtan troupes supported by the government, such as Suzhou Pingtan Troupe and Changshu Pingtan Troupe. Most of these Pingtan troupes belong to institutions within the local system, with special government financial support, and carry out performance and actor training on a regular basis.

Established in 1951, Suzhou Pingtan Troupe is a public institution funded by the Suzhou Municipal Government. It is collectively owned and under the leadership of the Municipal Bureau of Culture. It is subordinate to Guangyu Library and Meizhu Library, two well-equipped first-class Pingtan performance venues. Encourage young

and middle-aged actors to strive to become artistic heirs, and form a good situation in which new people emerge in large numbers through art education, apprenticeship transmission, centralized training, and performance practice. For top performers, improve the starting point and focus on training; For young actors, art training, basic skills training, and rehearsal of high-quality books. The Suzhou Pingtan Troupe has formed an artistic backbone team with a combination of the old, the middle and the young. A group of young actors in their 30s and 40s have taken the lead. (Wu Bin, 2007)

The government's support policies for the work of Pingtan have also been introduced, which is undoubtedly good news for the development of Pingtan. In January 2013, the Standing Committee of the Tenth People's Congress of Jiangsu Province adopted the Regulations on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Jiangsu Province, which deployed and guided the transmission and transmission of intangible cultural heritage and encouraged the transmission and development of the cultural core of intangible cultural heritage with respect and without damage. In September of the same year, the Standing Committee of the 15th People's Congress of Suzhou passed the Regulations on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Suzhou, According to the characteristics and current situation of specific intangible cultural heritage items, the regulations encourage classified protection by means of rescue protection, memory protection, productive protection and regional overall protection, and propose policies to encourage development and transmission. It provides support and guarantee for the protection and development of local intangible cultural heritage from the legal level. (Zhu Mengting, 2015)

Suzhou Pingtan Troupe is the main body of Suzhou Pingtan transmission, a government funded unit within the national system, and a key support group for local governments. It not only has the funds for transmission, but also has a good place to arrange, and is an important force in the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan.

See the final attachment for specific information about the local Pingtan teams.

#### 1.5 Attach importance to the development of Suzhou Pingtan School.

Suzhou Pingtan School is a provincial secondary professional art school established in 1962 with the proposal of Honorary President Chen Yun, the support of the Ministry of Culture, and the approval of the People's Government of Jiangsu



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Province. It is the only "cradle" in the country to train Pingtan art performance talents. The learning faculty is strong, with many famous teachers, and carries out the school-running mode of combining production, teaching and research with one specialty and multiple abilities. The school has set up a five-year junior college class, a three-year secondary school class and a Pingtan transmission class, which has trained more talent and enthusiasts for performing arts. (Wu Bin, 2007) The curriculum of Suzhou Pingtan School is divided into three parts: professional skills courses, public basic courses and optional courses. The professional skills courses mainly include Suzhou dialect tuning, table speaking, playing, singing, playing and singing, comprehensive playing and singing, solfeggio and ear training, writing, composition, Pingtan art appreciation, vocal music, music theory, etc. Public basic courses mainly include moral education courses and cultural courses. The optional courses mainly include piano, zither, pipa, erhu, makeup, dance, vocal music and other courses. (Dai Wei, 2021)

Suzhou Pingtan Troupe and Suzhou Pingtan School are two units under the leadership of the Bureau of Culture, Radio, Film and Television. Since 2014, the two units have started to communicate and interact. The good actors of the Pingtan Group can teach in the Pingtan School, and the good young teachers of the Pingtan School can also perform in the Pingtan Bookstore. This is not only conducive to the promotion of good teachers, but also allows the actors to combine theory with practice and improve their professional skills. (Zhang Zimu, 2019) Family transmission, apprenticeship, and Pingtan guild organization are the most common ways in the past. The new transmission, teaching, and research models of Pingtan troupe, Pingtan school, and Pingtan research institution are more reasonable and scientific than the traditional transmission mechanism. They have greatly improved the teaching, training quality and efficiency of traditional Pingtan art transmission. (Xia Meijun, 2009)

Suzhou Pingtan School is an important place to disseminate Suzhou Pingtan, and it is also an important place to improve the level of Suzhou Pingtan. Every year, Pingtan School trains many excellent Pingtan actors and disseminates them by cultivating excellent students.

#### 1.6 Build Suzhou Pingtan Museum in China.

The Suzhou Pingtan Museum in China was established in 2004, and contains more than 12000 pieces of precious historical materials, as well as hundreds of unique



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versions and scripts of various types of Pingtan. The entrance hall exhibition area provides an overview of Pingtan and tour routes. One hall has a bookstore in the form of the Qing Dynasty and regularly performs Pingtan bibliographies. The other hall introduces the development history of Pingtan, famous Pingtan artists of various generations, and cultural and historical materials.

The establishment of the Suzhou Pingtan Museum is an aggregation of the historical development of Suzhou Pingtan, allowing the public to visit and understand the history of Suzhou Pingtan. Through static viewing of cultural relics and dynamic appreciation of performances, better transmission can be achieved.

#### 1.7 Increase and construct Suzhou Pingtan performance venue.

The bookstore is an important venue for Suzhou Pingtan performances. The bookstore is the main place for the spread of Pingtan art. Suzhou has taken measures to strengthen and support the construction of bookstores, invested in the renovation of modern new bookstores, mobilized the enthusiasm of the society to run bookstores, and built bookstores in towns, streets and conditional communities. (Pang Zhengliang, 2009) If Changshu has built a new Pingtan Art Museum, its overall architectural style and facilities layout are first-class. A number of township bookstores have been built in succession, such as Meili, Shajiabang, Zhitang, Haiyu, Xieqiao, Dongbang and other township bookstores and Menglan and other rural bookstores. The library construction can effectively promote the spread of Pingtan art, and is also one of the important contents of Pingtan protection. (Pang Zhengliang, 2009)

Since the People's Congress of Suzhou issued the only local regulation for the protection of opera in China, the Regulations on the Protection of Kunqu District in Suzhou, in 2006, Suzhou has issued a series of documents such as the Implementation Opinions on the transmission and Development Project of Suzhou Pingtan Art, the Implementation Opinions on the Establishment of the transmission System of Suzhou Pingtan Art, and the Reward Methods for Supporting Rural and Community Bookstores to Carry out the Public Performance of Pingtan Long Bibliography. The "five-pronged" work plan of establishing the transmit system, supporting the development of Pingtan bookstores, deepening the reform of Pingtan performance groups, strengthening the construction of industry associations and Pingtan Guangyu Society, and improving the



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construction of basic vocational education has formed a good atmosphere for protecting the excellent traditional folk art represented by Suzhou Pingtan. (Zhang Zimu, 2020)

The main performance venue for Suzhou Pingtan is the bookstore, which has a stage and audience seats. It is specially designed for Suzhou Pingtan. By increasing the performance venues, especially in towns, communities, and busy road sections, Suzhou Pingtan's performance venues have been increased, which can better perform and achieve transmission effects.

#### 1.8 Transmission in primary and secondary schools and universities.

The spread of Pingtan art cannot be separated from the audience. Now most of the people who listen to Pingtan are old people. If this continues, they will face the disappearance of the audience! To attract more young audiences, we should start from "small audiences".

Pingjiang District of Suzhou and Suzhou Pingtan Museum of China jointly launched the popularization project of juvenile Pingtan. Suzhou Pingtan Museum was named as the traditional cultural practice base for minors in Pingjiang District, and Pingjiang Experimental School was identified as the Pingtan characteristic school. So that all primary school students in Pingjiang can visit the Pingtan Museum once, enjoy a performance by a famous Pingtan artist, have a set of Pingtan popular teaching materials, listen to a lecture by a famous Pingtan artist, and learn a classical piece of Pingtan music. So that Pingjiang has a group of young people's Pingtan art performance team, a group of young people's Pingtan art characteristic classes, a Pingtan art characteristic education school, a group of famous Pingtan educators, and a group of new Pingtan works suitable for young people. (Wu Bin, 2007)

In order to make Pingtan popular and promoted among teenagers in Suzhou, the Suzhou Pingtan Museum of China launched the activity of "Pingtan Famous Artists on Campus". Suzhou famous Pingtan actors will hold voluntary lectures and live performances for primary and secondary school students every week. "The activity of" Ten thousand students to watch and comment on the museum "was launched, and students were organized to enter the Pingtan Museum, and 100 students were welcomed to visit every day. The activity of "100 students singing Pingtan" will also be launched. Every week, under the guidance of Pingtan actors, 100 students will pick up the pipa

and three strings, and play Wu Nong's soft language to learn to sing the classic Pingtan songs.



Figure 70 Primary school students listen to Suzhou Pingtan Lecture  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

An optional course "Suzhou Pingtan Appreciation" is offered in Suzhou University. Take the basic knowledge of Suzhou Pingtan as the framework, and combine the appreciation and thematic research of Pingtan schools and representative bibliographies. The combination of appreciation and interpretation, and the combination of interpretation and live performance of actors. Cultivate college students' love and appreciation of the art of Pingtan, and improve their cultural literacy and taste through the edification of Chinese culture. There are more than 400 students taking this course, and the classroom is full. (Tao Yingyun, 2021)

Now, some primary and secondary schools in Suzhou have opened Suzhou Pingtan Appreciation Class. Through the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan art, the young generation can understand, understand and like Suzhou Pingtan, which not only spreads the artistic value of Pingtan, but also plays the educational function of Pingtan art, and improves the artistic quality of primary and secondary students.

#### 1.9 Attach importance to international transmission.

On the evening of January 30, 2018, the "Chinese Treasure" Suzhou Pingtan Special Performance appeared at the "International Music Bridge" event in San Antonio, USA. At the scene of the performance at Fernando Cathedral, Suzhou Pingtan, which has the reputation of being the most beautiful voice in China, was



enthusiastically performed by two national first-class actors, Zhang Jianzhen and Chen Yan, from the Wuzhong District Pingtan Troupe, winning warm applause from the audience. (<https://www.ourjiangsu.com/a/20180201/1517454218645.shtml>)

"Suzhou Yayun Visits Japan - Suzhou Pingtan Music Concert" held three consecutive cultural exchange performances in Tokyo, Japan, from October 6-8, 2016. (<https://www.kankanews.com/detail/1OwGqq1n3yE>)

On May 6, 2019, the "2019 Vienna United Nations Chinese Day" series of activities opened in the central hall of the United Nations Office at Vienna. At the opening ceremony, Sheng Xiaoyun, Vice Chairman of the China Quxi Association, Chairman of the Jiangsu Province Quxi Association, and National First-Class Actor, led the audience into the charming Jiangnan and the Millennium Watertown with a Suzhou Pingtan "Night Mooring at Maple Bridge". (May 7, 2019, Jiangsu, China Net)

Suzhou Pingtan also performs in New Zealand, Germany, Denmark, Vienna, Hong Kong, and other countries to disseminate traditional and excellent Chinese art.



Figure 71 On September 29, 2017, the Suzhou Pingtan Troupe performed at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Source: Xin Hua Net (2017)

With the support of the government, Suzhou Pingtan has selected outstanding celebrities to exchange performances around the world, promoting China's exquisite music culture and disseminating China's excellent traditional art.

1.10 The government strongly supports the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan.

In recent years, the Jiangsu Provincial Government has taken the development of Suzhou Pingtan art as an important starting point for the protection and transmission

of traditional art, and has given strong support in terms of policies, funds and talents. It has successively issued documents such as the Opinions on Prosperity of Stage Art and the Opinions on Promoting Cultural Construction to a New Level, providing good policy support for consolidating and promoting the transmission and development of Pingtan art, performance positions and the construction of community bookstores. The central and provincial governments have set up special funds for the protection of intangible cultural heritage and the construction of public cultural service system, and the protection and transmission of Pingtan inheritors and key Pingtan projects are included in the scope of relevant special funds. The provincial finance has set up special support funds for the cultural industry and Jiangsu Art Fund to include the industrial development, tour and exhibition of excellent traditional Chinese culture, including intangible cultural heritage projects, into the scope of financial support, while the provincial performing arts group has included the low-priced performance of Pingtan in the scope of special support funds. Relevant districts and cities have given full play to the role of financial funds in guiding and ensuring the development of the city. Suzhou has set up special funds for the arts to support the transmission and protection of Pingtan, the creation of fine works, and the exhibition and performance. Actively support and encourage Pingtan artists to participate in the selection and performance of the national platform, incorporate Pingtan performance into the scope of the cultural benefit project and "send the opera to the countryside", and upgrade a number of public welfare small theatres, and further improve public cultural facilities. The "famous teachers and apprentices" program of Jiangsu literature and art were implemented. The province selected 100 pairs of famous literary and art masters and young talents to form apprentices, and 8 Suzhou Pingtan masters and 8 apprentices, including Sheng Xiaoyun, joined hands. Efforts were made to cultivate a number of Zijin cultural celebrities, talents and excellent young people of Zijin culture, and Pingtan actors Wang Qin, Wu Jing, Zhang Jianzhen, etc. were selected. The exhibition and performance of outstanding young talents of stage art in Jiangsu Province was held to create conditions for young actors to show their style and improve their abilities, and further promote the "blue and blue" of Pingtan art.

([http://www.jiangsu.gov.cn/art/2022/8/1/art\\_59167\\_10589632.html](http://www.jiangsu.gov.cn/art/2022/8/1/art_59167_10589632.html))



Figure 72 Send Suzhou Pingtan to the countryside for performance  
Source: Zhang Quan (2022)

With the support of the government, Suzhou Pingtan has formed a five-in-one model of "school, troupe, museum, venue and festival". The government pays for the performance costs of actors, which eliminates the worries of the bookstores and actors. The income of actors is also increasing year by year, making the number of professionals engaged in Suzhou Pingtan actors growing day by day. This series of measures promote the overall prosperity of Suzhou Pingtan. (Kong Jun, 2017)

Of course, Suzhou Pingtan also has other forms of transmission. For example, the spread of traditional media such as TV and radio, the spread of new media such as network platform, WeChat, microblog, Tiktok, Kwai, and the spread of individual spontaneous performance and teaching.

## 2. Problems in the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan.

According to informants and questionnaires, Suzhou Pingtan encountered two problems in its transmission:

2.1 Actors are the main body of Suzhou Pingtan Transmission. There are too few outstanding Suzhou Pingtan actors, and it is necessary to vigorously improve the level and quality of Pingtan actors.

2.2 "Opuses is the foundation for the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan. There are too few excellent opuses, requiring more scholars and actors to create and innovate opuses."

2.3 Transmission cannot entirely rely on government support, and some groups and actors lack enthusiasm. They need to exert their subjective initiative and strengthen internal motivation to disseminate excellent Suzhou Pingtan.

In conclusion, according to the information and questionnaire provided by the informant, we can learn that the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan is multifaceted, and it can be effectively inherited by adding intangible cultural heritage, setting up national and local inheritors, carrying out art festival activities, and spreading in the campus. The protection of Suzhou Pingtan is comprehensive. The government lists Pingtan Troupe and Pingtan School as the units within the system. The income of actors is guaranteed. The performance is paid by the government. The Suzhou Pingtan Museum is established to protect the excellent traditional bibliography of Pingtan. The excellent long bibliography and traditional bibliography are performed to improve the level of the performance bibliography of the bookstore. However, with the change of the social environment, the transmission and protection of Suzhou Pingtan still need the attention of the society and effective innovation. It is limited to rely on the support of the government alone. Research scholars, Pingtan troupes, Pingtan actors, Pingtan teachers and students, as well as the people from all walks of life need to work together to transmit and protect Suzhou Pingtan.

## Chapter VII

### Conclusions, Discussion and Suggestions

#### 1. Conclusion

This thesis takes Suzhou Pingtan, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, as the research object, and analyzes the development history, music characteristics, transmission of Suzhou Pingtan.

##### 1.1 Development of Suzhou Pingtan.

The development of Suzhou Pingtan cannot be separated from the prosperity of the local economy and changes in the social environment. Suzhou Pingtan has developed well in terms of bibliography, performance forms, artist level, performance sessions, schools, and international transmission. At present, due to the influence of fast food culture, as well as the development of online platforms such as Tiktok and Kwai, the number of audiences in Suzhou Pingtan is decreasing, the number of performances is small, the level of actors needs to be improved, and the pressure of survival is great, especially under the influence of COVID-19 virus for three consecutive years. The overall development of Suzhou Pingtan is not optimistic.

##### 1.2 The musical characteristics of Suzhou Pingtan selected music.

Suzhou Pingtan music is mainly sung in local dialect and mainly composed of lyrical works. Through studying 16 representative selections provided by scholars, and analyzing the melody trend, mode and tonality, interval, rhythm, and accompaniment of the three pieces in detail, we can understand the comprehensive rap art of Suzhou Pingtan music. The music of Suzhou Pingtan comes from Chinese Kunqu Opera, with three strings and pipa as the main accompaniment instruments. Someone said someone sang. This pattern is based on the six tones of the Chinese ethnic pattern, usually ending in a "procrastinating" manner. Combining the story of the book, it has become an irreplaceable and distinctive local excellent folk music.

##### 1.3 The transmission of Suzhou Pingtan.

According to the information and questionnaire provided by the informant, we can understand that the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan is multifaceted, and there are 10 main modes of transmission, including effective transmission by joining national



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intangible cultural heritage, establishing national and local inheritors, organizing art festivals, disseminating on campus, and disseminating internationally. However, with the changes in the social environment, the transmission of Suzhou Pingtan still requires social attention and effective innovation. Relying solely on government support is limited. Researchers, Pingtan troupes, Pingtan actors, Pingtan teachers, students, and people from all walks of life need to work together to disseminate Suzhou Pingtan.

## 2. Discussion

Through the research of this paper, we can understand that Suzhou Pingtan is a local folk art, which is constantly innovating and changing with the development of society.

Suzhou Pingtan music is famous for its beautiful and delicate emotions. Its modes are mostly Chinese national six tone modes, with strong and rich expressive power. (Lv Simin, 2019), I strongly agree with Lv Simin's viewpoint. Suzhou Pingtan music is characterized by gentleness, comfort, delicacy, euphemism and beauty. In some works, there will be music with passionate emotional expression and great emotional fluctuation. However, on the whole, it is mainly composed of lyrical fragments with exquisite emotions, coupled with beautiful, soft and sweet Wu dialect singing, so the lyrical segments of Suzhou Pingtan are more representative.

Suzhou Pingtan originated in Suzhou and is popular in regions such as Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Shanghai. Suzhou Pingtan is a local art of Suzhou dialect rap performance. It is a combination of Suzhou Pinghua and Suzhou Tanci, as well as the Wu dialect represented by Suzhou dialect, in the transmission process. (Wu Bin, 2007) , History cannot be changed, the researchers strongly agree with Wu Bin's view.

In terms of performance, the number of actors in Suzhou Pingtan has increased from a few to many, the professional level has become higher and higher, the performance groups have gradually become more formal, the number of performances has also changed with the development of society, and the forms of performance have become more and more rich.

The improvement in performance, creation, genre, and other aspects shows that the government attaches great importance to the transmission and development of



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Suzhou Pingtan. (Kong Jun, 2017) The researchers agree with Kong Jun's view, Currently, the government supports Suzhou Pingtan very much.

The singing of Suzhou Pingtan mainly focuses on the human voice, which is mainly divided into male and female voices, usually with male and female partners. From the perspective of characteristic sounds, similar to traditional opera music, Suzhou Pingtan music has a small "tuoqiang" at the end of the sentence, separating the last word of the sentence lyrics. This is an important musical feature of Suzhou Pingtan. "Tuo Qiang" at the end of the word is sometimes longer, sometimes with only one sound. The use of one tone as a spacing is often intended to create a compact musical atmosphere that is very similar in morphology to dialect pronunciation, thereby reinforcing the strong Jiangnan characteristics of Pingtan.

From the perspective of accompaniment instruments, there are two main accompaniment instruments in Suzhou Pingtan, namely the pipa and the small three-stringed instrument. Occasionally, some other instruments, such as the erhu, are added for special needs. Although the number of performers and musical instruments in Suzhou Pingtan is small, its expressive force is extensive and full of vitality.

In the place of performance, Suzhou Pingtan has gradually moved from the rural areas to the prosperous urban areas. It has won the aesthetic recognition of Suzhou citizens with its beautiful Wu dialect and perfect performance, and has become an important representative of folk art in Jiangsu Province, and finally swept the country.

However, Suzhou Pingtan has always been in the process of development and change, especially in the contemporary society with rapid development of global economy, culture, science and technology. In order to seek a better survival, Suzhou Pingtan should keep pace with the times and actively adapt to social development, including the creation of new books, the effective use of bookstores, the improvement of actors, the comprehensive operation of Pingtan groups, the attempt of new performance forms, and the promotion of online live broadcasting. Whether these current changes can really promote the prosperity of Suzhou Pingtan needs long-term test and audience recognition.

### 3. Suggestions

3.1 Research should be conducted on the teaching curriculum in various schools and performance groups.

3.2 Comparative research should be conducted on this type of music in different fields to see similarities and differences.

3.3 There should be a comprehensive policy study on the transmission of such music.



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