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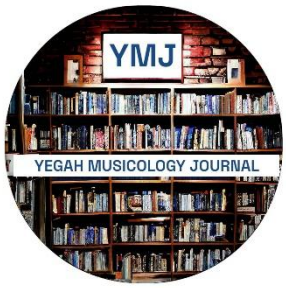

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CHINESE ZITHER SE IN ANCIENT AND TRADITIONAL MUSICAL AND INSTRUMENTAL CULTURES OF TURKISH, MONGOLIAN AND TUNGUSKA-MANCHU ETHNIC GROUPS

ZİNKİV, Iryna[1]
REN, Jiaqi[2]

ABSTRACT

The relevance of this study is conditioned by the dynamic development of the guzheng zither of medieval and folk instruments of Inner Mongolia, Manchuria (North and North-East China), Mongolia, the Far East and Southern Siberia (Russian Federation), the original prototype of which is one of the oldest string plucked instruments in China – the se zither (瑟). The purpose of the study was to investigate the design features and tuning methods of se zither (瑟). A system of scientific research methods was used, namely organological analysis, comparison, deduction, and

[1] Department of Music Theory, Mykola Lysenko Lviv National Music Academy, 79000, 5 Ostap Nyzhankivskyi Str., Lviv, Ukraine, ir.zinkiv@outlook.com, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0406-3370
[2] Department of Folk Instruments, Mykola Lysenko Lviv National Music Academy, 79000, 5 Ostap Nyzhankivskyi Str., Lviv, Ukraine, jiaqiren12@gmail.com, https://orcid.org/0009-0000-8892-1514

abstraction. As a result of the study, it was found that the se zither (瑟) differs from the classical Chinese zither qín (琴). Given the study of historical and archaeological sources of the 7th – 2nd centuries BCE, the oldest area of distribution of the xie zither was found within the ancient kingdom of Chu (6th – early 2nd century BCE), whose population was ethnically different from the Huaxia Chinese, and its modification, the zheng zither (箏), during the Qin dynasty (771 – 221 BCE). In addition, the ways of its infiltration into the medieval instrumentation of the ancient peoples of these regions of Central and South-East Asia were determined. The shape, design features, and the method of tuning with movable stands have established the genetic connection of this type of zither with ancient and traditional instruments of Turkic and Mongolian ethnic groups and its infiltration into the medieval court instruments of the Tunguska-Manchu.

Keywords: Musicarchaeology, Organology, Chinese archaeological and folk instruments, Zithers, Se, Qín, Zheng, Chathan, Jetigan, Yatga.

TÜRK, MOĞOL VE TUNGUSKA-MANÇU ETNİK GRUPLARININ ESKİ VE GELENEKSEL MÜZİKAL VE ENSTRÜMENTAL KÜLTÜRLERİNDE ÇİN ZİTHERİ

ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın önemi, orijinal prototipi Çin'deki en eski telli çalgılardan biri olan se zither (瑟) olan İç Moğolistan, Mançurya (Kuzey ve Kuzeydoğu Çin), Moğolistan, Uzak Doğu ve Güney Sibirya (Rusya Federasyonu) orta çağ ve halk çalgılarının guzheng zitherinin dinamik gelişimi ile ilgilidir. Çalışmanın amacı, se zither'in (瑟) tasarım özelliklerini ve akort yöntemlerini araştırmaktır. Organolojik analiz, karşılaştırma, çıkarım ve soyutlama gibi bilimsel araştırma yöntemlerinden oluşan bir sistem kullanılmıştır. Çalışma sonucunda, se zither'in (瑟) klasik Çin zither'i qín'den (琴) farklı olduğu tespit edilmiştir. M.Ö. 7. - 2. yüzyıllara ait tarihi ve arkeolojik kaynaklar incelendiğinde, se zither en eski yayılma alanı, nüfusu etnik olarak Huaxia Çinlilerinden farklı olan antik Chu krallığı (M.Ö. 6. - 2. yüzyılın başları) ve onun bir modifikasyonu olan zheng zither (箏), Qin hanedanlığı (M.Ö. 771 - 221) döneminde bulunmuştur. Buna ek olarak, Orta ve Güneydoğu Asya'nın bu bölgelerindeki eski halkların orta çağ enstrümanlarına etki etme yolları belirlenmiştir.

Şekil, tasarım özellikleri ve hareketli ayaklarla akort etme yöntemi, bu kanun türünün Türk ve Moğol etnik gruplarının eski ve geleneksel enstrümanlarıyla genetik bağlantısını ve Tunguska-Mançu'nun orta çağ saray enstrümanlarına etki ettiğini ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müzikarkeoloji, Organoloji, Çin arkeolojik ve halk çalgıları, Zithers, Se, Chuse, Qín, Zheng, Chathan, Jetigan, Yatga.

INTRODUCTION

The zither se is one of the oldest types of stringed instruments found in China. The earliest examples date back to the late 5th and early 4th centuries BCE, and the first mention of it is found in historical sources from the Western Zhou period (1045 – 771 BCE). Researchers studying archaeological se zithers and their later modifications (zheng zithers), due to the similarity in shape and a characteristic structural element – string stands – identify only their typological analogues, which still exist in the folk instruments of Korea (gayageum), Vietnam (đàntranh), Japan (koto), Mongolia (yatga), Kazakhstan (jetigan), and the peoples of Southern Siberia (chathan).

Several studies have been devoted to the investigation of archaeological finds of the zither se. The American instrumentologist B. Lawergren (2000) analyzed the design, stringing methods, and decoration of three archaeological se zithers of the late 5th and 2nd centuries BCE, which originated from excavations in South-East China (Hubei and Hunan provinces). C. Li (1996) examined the fossil zithers found before 1996 and, based on fixed-string instruments found in burials with zithers, suggested that their tuning was pentatonic. The study of I. Furniss (2019) was devoted to the exploration of all types of musical instruments and their functions during the Eastern Zhou and Han periods (770 – 220 BC), as well as the musical and instrumental culture of the Chu Kingdom. The researcher provides a brief overview of several archaeological finds from Southeast China and their function in court orchestral music. The convex soundboard symbolised the celestial body, and the flat base represented the earth’s crust. Thirteen marks on the fingerboard indicated the 12 months of the calendar year, with an additional mark for the leap month. Thus, the design of the zither embodied the idea of the harmony of the universe and the cyclical nature of natural phenomena (Zhuo, 2016; Truyền, 2023). In the studies of other researchers, general information about the se zither is given only in the context of its later modification – zheng or guzheng zither, which was widespread during the Qing (221 – 206 BCE) and Han (206 BCE – 220 CE) dynasties (Gen-Ir, 2009; Bernshtam, 1951).

M. Antoshko (2020) suggests that the act of playing the zither se involves a synthesis of the material and the ideal, the objective and the subjective, the real and the imaginary, which is reflected in the specific timbre and semantic specificity of the instrument. According to L. Vasylieva (2020), zither strings represent the elements of the universe, namely fire, water, earth, metal, and wood. She concluded that the design of the zither embodied the idea of the harmony of the universe and the cyclical nature of natural processes. N.O. Eremenko and O.G. Stakhevich (2024) argue that se zither and shen mouth organ are the earliest examples of the bain system, which is based on the principles of combining instruments with each other in joint performance. However, none of the authors aimed to study the origins, migration routes, and the process of adaptation and functioning of the zither in medieval musical and instrumental cultures and traditional practices of the Turkic, Mongolian, and Tunguska-Manchu peoples.

The aim of the study was to analyse the design features of the archaeological zither and to investigate its evolutionary processes and influences on other musical cultures. In addition, the study sought to determine the conditions of its functioning within medieval Turkic, Mongolian, and Tunguska-Manchu musical traditions and instruments.

METHOD

In the course of the study, the organological method, which refers to the study of musical instrument design, construction, and classification, was employed for the purpose of classifying zithers. In particular, the study focused on examining authentic zithers from a range of ethnic groups. This method proved invaluable in classifying the instruments according to their design, acoustics, and other features. By employing organological analysis, an investigation was conducted into the structure and construction details of the zither, with a particular focus on the body, soundboard, string holder, pegs, strings, and other components. Furthermore, this method facilitated the identification of the materials utilised and enabled the discernment of the processing and finishing techniques employed during the instrument's fabrication.

The comparison method was used to analyze zithers from various historical periods and to identify the evolution of its design solutions, improvements, and local modifications among different ethnic groups. This method was the basis for comparing the musical and instrumental characteristics of zither among the Turks, Mongols, and Tungus and identifying common and distinctive features, sources of mutual influence, and borrowings within the common cultural area. It was also used to

model cultural interaction based on a two-way process of borrowing and adaptation. This approach was used to investigate the ways in which the Chinese zither se entered other ethnic groups, as well as its deformation as a result of the influence of autochthonous traditions among the Turks, Mongols, and Tungus.

The method of deduction was necessary to establish cultural ties between the Turkic, Mongolian, and Tunguska-Manchu ethnic groups, which were in close cultural contact through kinship and common nomadic territories. Based on the general knowledge about the spread of se zither between these peoples through cultural diffusion, specific features in the structure and performance traditions of these ethnic cultures were identified. In addition, the method of deduction identified the specifics of the adaptation of elements of another culture to local traditions during cultural borrowing. In particular, it was used to express how, penetrating the environment of the Turks, Mongols, and Tungus, the Chinese se zither underwent transformation in accordance with their musical traditions. On this basis, the local varieties of construction and performance styles on the se zither of different ethnic groups were revealed, considering its transformation under the influence of local cultures.

Based on the method of abstraction, samples of se zither used by different ethnic groups were considered. Their common essential structural elements were identified, including the resonator body, strings, and string holder. With the help of this method, the fundamental functions of the se zither were determined, which were expressed in the accompaniment of singing, ritualistic performances, and solo music. The method of abstraction also helped to form generic concepts for classifying many varieties of se zither according to certain characteristics – size, number of strings, body shape. In this way, abstracting from historical details, this study explores the diffusion patterns and adaptation mechanisms of the se zither among the Turkic, Mongolian, and Tunguska-Manchu peoples, providing a narrative framework for understanding its spread and transformation across these cultures.

RESULTS

Chinese legends and written sources mention two ancient varieties of zither – the Chinese qín and the se or chuse, which was of foreign origin. The main difference between these instruments, apart from the shape and size of the body and other design features, is the way the strings are tuned: on the qín zither – with pegs, and on the se – with movable stands located on the instrument's

soundboard. The largest number of ancient written sources are devoted to the qín zither (later called the guqín), which was a favourite instrument of scholars and philosophers and was associated with the name of Confucius. Various aspects of the qin zither have been studied in depth by Chinese and European musicologists (Wu, 2020; Ruiping and Wei, 2024).

Fewer ancient sources have been preserved about the se zither, whose other name, chu-se, means that this instrument originated in the Chu kingdom. The se zither was first mentioned in the songbook Shī Jīng, dating 11th – 6th centuries BCE. The dating of these songs suggests that the instrument already existed in its present form during the Zhou Dynasty (1122 – 247 BCE). Written sources from the 5th – 8th centuries BCE mention that these zithers were of different sizes, had 23 to 25 silk strings, and also mention the technology of their manufacture. The few images of zithers on art monuments (drawings, stone bas-reliefs, figures of musicians) did not allow for a detailed analysis of the instrument's design. It was only due to archaeological excavations that have been carried out since 1930 in South-East China (Henan, Hubei and Hunan provinces) that more than 100 se zithers dating 5th – 2nd centuries BCE were discovered. Their study provided a detailed analysis of the instrument's dimensions, manufacturing technology, methods of fixing and tensioning the strings and tuning them (using separate movable stands under each string). Based on a set of design features, the researchers determined the further development and improvement of the instrument, which in ancient sources from the beginning of the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE) was called zhen (箏), taguchzhen (古箏), where "gu" (古) means "ancient".

The instrument has the shape of a long rectangular box (Figure 1). The body and the slightly convex top are carved from a single piece of wood. The bottom of the instrument is covered with a flat, thin board. At the right end of the zither there were holes for threading each string, as well as a long crossbar designed to raise the string above the soundboard (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Zither se, from the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng (433 BCE).

Source: The ancient music floats into my dream: The song is not over, but the people are not leaving (2017).

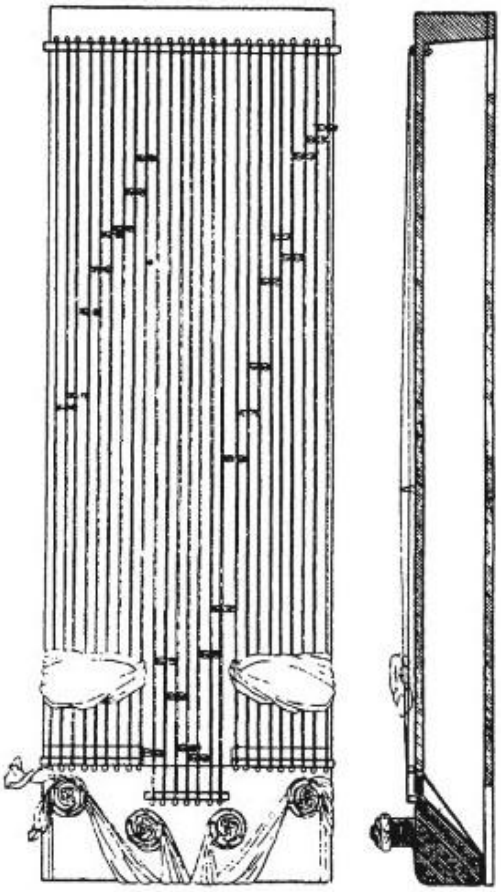

Figure 2. Zither se from Mawangdui Tomb, Changsha, Hunan Province, 168 BCE.

Each string passed through a movable (in the shape of an inverted V) stand to three short crossbars for the strings, located on the opposite edge of the instrument. These short crossbars were positioned as follows: the central one was closer to the edge of the instrument, and the two outer ones were lower than it. Behind each of the three crossbars were holes for threading the strings through them into the body. From here, they were tied in groups around the edge of the instrument to four clamps attached to the crossbars. The three crossbars divided the strings into three groups and, depending on the number of string holes, they were distributed as follows: 9-7-9, 8-7-8, or 7-5-7. In all cases, the outermost groups of holes were the same, i.e., they contained the same number of strings that have not been preserved (7, 8 or 9). The strings on the se zither were tuned by sliding movable stands along the soundboard to shorten each string to the pitch of a particular tone (Cardoso, 2023). On classical Chinese qín zithers, the pitch of the string was adjusted by shortening it by pressing it against the soundboard. The specific features of the shape and design of the se zither and the way it was tuned with the help of mobile stands indicate that this type of zither originated and was used in the traditional music of those ethnic groups that lived on the territory of the ancient Kingdom of Chu until its demise (221 BCE). The localisation of archaeological instrument finds (106 specimens), iconographic and written sources indicate that this type of zither was not recorded in other regions of Ancient China of the period.

At its peak, the Chu Kingdom's borders covered the territories of the modern southern provinces of Hunan, Hubei, Zhejiang, and partly Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Anhui, and the modern city of Shanghai (Figure 3). Despite its proximity to Chinese civilisation in the Chunqu period (722 – 476 BCE), the Chu Kingdom was long considered barbaric among other Chinese fiefdoms, and its inhabitants were called "southern Manchu barbarians". This name was based on the fact that the Chu population was ethnically and linguistically different from the Huaxia Chinese. At that time, it was based on the Miao people (the ancestors of the modern Vietnamese) and the Thai-speaking Zhuang. Therefore, the culture of the Chu Kingdom synthesised several cultural components and had its own traditions in art, literature, and religion, while retaining a powerful flavour of autochthonous beliefs. It is known that a part of the Miao people, who in ancient sources appear under the name Manmiao, moved to the northern regions of Vietnam in the 13th century. They also brought their se zither, which became the original prototype for the Vietnamese dantranh zither.

Figure 3. Map showing Chu and its neighbouring states in 260 BCE.

Starting in the 7th century BCE, se zithers, along with bianzhong bells and bianqing lithophones, played an important role in the official ceremonial bands of the Chu Kingdom. However, from the 4th century BCE onwards, se zithers were used mainly to accompany smaller, chamber ensembles consisting of drums and wind instruments (Furniss, 2019). Despite the demise of the Chu kingdom in 221 BCE, its cultural legacy, especially musical and instrumental, continued to develop during the Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE). Liu Bang (posthumous name Gao Zu, 247 – 195 BCE), who was the founder of the Western Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 24 CE), came from the Chu Kingdom. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Western Han court's tastes in clothing, poetry, and music came from the traditions of these southern territories. The Western Han imperial court favoured Chu music and musical instruments, including the se zither, as evidenced by the discovery of instruments in the tombs of Han rulers (Hu and Lim, 2021; Rui, 2023). This type of zither remained a popular instrument during the Han Dynasty, often depicted on stone and terracotta reliefs, as well as in small plastic and on figures of musicians (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Woman playing se zither.

Source: A. Koral (2017).

At the beginning of the first millennium CE, the se zither in its archaic form was no longer present in the palace orchestra, but it remained in the traditional instrumentation of the non-ethnic peoples living in southern China. The decline of the se zither in some areas, particularly in royal courts, can be attributed to a number of factors. Cultural transformations played a significant role in this decline, as new musical tastes and preferences emerged during the transition from the Han to the Tang Dynasty. These new musical preferences favoured instruments like the zheng zither, which was more versatile and easier to play. Technological advancements in instrument-making led to the development of improved zithers, such as the guzheng, which featured simpler string-tuning mechanisms and enhanced sound projection. Furthermore, the sociopolitical changes that occurred during this period, including the consolidation of Chinese imperial power and the subsequent standardisation of court music, resulted in the decline of certain traditional instruments, including the se zither. As the focus of court music shifted towards instruments that were better suited to

large orchestral performances, the se zither, with its more complex tuning system and limited range, was unable to adapt to these changing requirements.

From the 2nd century BCE, documents of the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE) mention the cheng (箏) zither (gucheng). Researchers consider it a later modification of the se zither. During the Jin (265-420), Tang (618-907), and Song (960-1276) dynasties, cheng zithers with 12 and 13 strings were widespread (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Guzheng.

Source: H. Deng (2006).

There is a legend about the origin of these instruments. It says that originally there was a 25-string zither in se, the sound of which was considered perfect. When the instrument came to the Qin Kingdom, known for its barbaric customs, two brothers could not share the instrument and in the midst of a dispute broke it into two unequal parts. This created two instruments – 12 and 13 string zithers, which were also called "qínzheng", or zithers of the Qin Kingdom, after the place of their origin. They retained the rectangular body in the form of a resonator box, the method of tuning the strings with movable stands, which is the main difference from the Chinese zither qín (Figure 6), and a simplified method of fixing the ends of the strings. These instruments were not used in Chinese official music and have long existed in ethnic folk traditions (Hung, 2021; Volkov, 2017). This is also evidenced by their deliberate neglect in Chinese written sources.

Figure 6. Zitherqin.

Source: Do you know the difference between Qin and Se? (2017).

References to zheng are found mainly in written sources dating from the Qin dynasty (221 – 206 BCE) (Gaywood, 1996). Sima Qian (145 – 86 BCE), in his Historical Notes (Shiji), notes the following: “Playing the zheng, slapping the thighs, and singing a song pleasing to the ear is the true music of the Qin” (Zhang and Knobloch, 1983). In view of the migration of this zither type, the brief information preserved in written sources from the Han Dynasty is fascinating. They mention the Chenhan region, which was located on the territory of modern South Korea. One of the sources states that its inhabitants were refugees from Qin, i.e., from China during the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE), and their language was similar to Qin. This source also mentions that they “sing, clap their thighs, and dance to the sound of the se, on which they play their melodies”. Researchers believe that the term “se” was originally used as a general name for instruments that had movable tuning stands, including the 12- and 13-string zithers derived from se. It was only later that they were called zheng . Therefore, Chinese authors who saw the zither in Chenhan with their own eyes, based on its similarity to the instrument they knew, called it 'se' (Jiangli, 2021).

It should be noted that the Qin Kingdom, which was originally a fiefdom from 771 to 221 BCE, later united fragmented China into a single empire (221 – 206 BCE). During the existence of this principality, a significant part of its population was made up of the proto-Mongolian and proto-Turkic nomadic tribes of the Zhun and Di, which is why it was considered semi-barbaric. It is known that the Zhun and Di tribes were nomads who inhabited Central Asia in the 12th – 11th centuries BCE. Later, they were referred to as 'hu', meaning 'foreign' or 'barbaric'. Chinese written sources mention that the Hu people had zithers used in the music of the Eastern Han (25 – 220 CE), CáoWèi (220-266 CE) and JìnCháo (265 – 420 CE) periods. Archaeological, historical and ethnographic sources show that the Yue and Di tribes were the ancestors of the Huns, who inhabited

the territories of Southern Siberia and Mongolia from the first millennium BCE. In the 3rd century BCE, the Huns formed a strong alliance of tribes led by a Chányú ruler. The Hun state at that time extended from Mongolia, Southern Siberia, and Manchuria in the east to the Pamirs in the west. Written sources from the early 3rd century BCE mention that during various celebrations, the Huns sang and danced to the accompaniment of two types of zither – the 7-stringed yatgalig and the 13-stringed jatga, which had movable stands under the strings (Zhou, 2021).

It is known that the orchestras of the Hun rulers also used exclusively Chinese musical instruments, which were given to them as gifts from the Chinese emperors. In ancient China, there was a widely cultivated practice of cultural relations with the "northern barbarians". Among many other cultural events, the emperor of China donated musical instruments to the rulers of neighbouring states and sent musicians to them. According to the Chinese rulers, this tradition was supposed to contribute to their gradual civilisation. Music served as a cultural mechanism capable of stabilising the spiritual needs of the "barbarians" (Hasanov, 2016). In Ancient China itself, music was part of the arsenal of ideological tools that contributed to the development of state consciousness and strengthening the organisation of the state (Doszhan, 2023; Afonina and Karpov, 2023). This was the traditional concept of "state music" in Confucian China. Historical chronicles show that the Chinese emperor presented the Hun ruler with a set of musical instruments and a timpani. At that time, the Huns had not yet produced their own musical instruments for the court orchestra, including metal bells and various types of drums. It is also known that among the donated stringed instruments in the orchestras of the Hun rulers was the oldest traditional Chinese zither qīxiánqín called toriynyatga. It did not have movable string rests, and the desired sound was produced by pressing the string against the soundboard in a certain place. This classical Chinese type of zither, which is mentioned among the instruments of court orchestras, was not preserved in the Turkic-Mongolian musical and instrumental culture. Instead, the zither with movable stands remained as the traditional and court instruments of the medieval Turkic and Mongol peoples even after the collapse of the Hunnish state in the 2nd century CE. Each of these ethnic cultures, in accordance with its national identity, changed only the number of strings and the tuning of the instrument depending on the features of its intonation system (Markova, 2023; Xie, 2023).

The ancient Turks called the zither buchi or buchikobuz, and later chathan or jetigan. Researchers believe that most of the common terms for musical instruments among the Turks are related to the Chinese language. The buchi instrument itself, as well as its name (bučï: bu+čï (chi. chu-se)), has

its genesis in a single original prototype: se→chu-se→zheng. This ancient zither is still preserved in the traditional instrumentation of the Khakass, a Turkic-speaking people of Southern Siberia, called the chathan (Figure 7). The Khakass chathan instrument is a flat, double-bottomed resonator body, usually made of spruce or cedar. Seven strings of different thicknesses are attached along the resonator body. A stand was inserted under each individual string, which, when the string was pulled, shifted so that the short right part sounded like a discordant and the left part sounded like a bass. The string stands were made from the bones of a ram's joints (Figure 8).

Figure 7. Zither of the ancient Turks – buchi (chathan Khakass).

Source: C. Pegg (2001).

Figure 8. Zither of the ancient Turks – buchi (jetigen Kazakh).

Source: C. Pegg (2001).

In the spiritual culture of the Khakass, chathan had an extremely important magical and ritual significance. It was used by shamans during their prayers. It was also accompanied by a haiji singer who performed heroic narratives that reflected historical events and sang the main characters of the epic. During the performance of the narratives, recitative recitation was combined with throat singing hai, which was given an important sacred and magical meaning. The chathan zither was used in rites of passage, including funeral rites. The Khakass had a custom of playing the chathan near the body of the deceased for several days while it was in the house. It was believed that only the soul of the deceased could hear the guttural singing of the hai, unlike verbal speech, for three days. The sound of the chathan enhanced the dramatic expressiveness of crying. A haiji singer was always invited to the wake, who performed heroic tales to the accompaniment of chathan throughout the night. It is worth noting that lament songs still exist in the ritual tradition of the Khakass of Siberia (Lee, 2023; Campbell, 1991).

The name of the instrument, chathan literally means “seven strings”. The Khakass consider the number seven to be magical. According to Khakass legends, the instrument was named after its creator, a shepherd named Chathan, whose name means “Seven-stringed”. He hollowed out a long resonator body from a piece of wood and strung strings made of horsehair over it. When Chathan played the instrument, nature stood still from its magical sounds, and people felt peaceful. Another Khakass legend tells of the magical power of the chathan and the first singer, the haiji. It tells of an old shepherd who, to facilitate his shepherding work, once took a piece of ringing cedar, hollowed out the body of an instrument in the shape of a long box, pulled hair strings over it and began to play. His playing made birds and animals freeze, and people’s hearts trembled with happiness. One day, the one-eyed giants, the cyclopes, found out about the shepherd’s instrument. At night, they killed the old shepherd and took his musical instrument to a high mountain to their house, near which they hid the cattle stolen from the shepherds in a cave. Since then, they have not been in poverty, luring their cattle to them with the sounds of the instrument. Meanwhile, in a nearby village, a brave boy grew up, the grandson of the shepherd Chathan, who was killed by the giants. He became a skilful hunter, and one day, while hunting, he found himself at the door of the cyclops’ house, where wonderful music was coming from, and cattle from the lowland pastures began to gather to the sound of it. Having found out where the cattle from the village pastures were disappearing, the clever hunter boy used tricks and chathan sounds to trap and kill the cyclopes.

He returned the rescued cattle to the villagers and took the musical instrument for himself, playing a song about good, powerful heroes. Since then, the magic instrument has been called chathan in honour of the old shepherd Chathan, and the boy who returned the instrument to the people became the first singer, haiji.

In the traditional instrumentation of the Turkic-speaking Kazakhs, there is a similar instrument called Jetigan, which means "seven strings" (jeti means seven). As with the Khakass instrument, the strings are tuned using stands made from the bones of a ram's joints. The Kazakhs have their own legend about the origin of the seven-stringed jetigan. According to the legend, in ancient times, an old man lived in a village with his seven sons. When hard times came, his sons began to die one by one. After the death of his eldest son, the grieving father hollowed out the body of an instrument from a piece of dry wood, strung one string on it, put a stand under it, and played the kuyu. After the death of his second son, he strung another string and thus added one string to the instrument after the death of each of his sons. By extracting sounds of grief from the instrument, the father embodied the images of his children in the melodies. These improvised melodies were further developed and have come down to us in the form of instrumental pieces called "Seven Kyivjetygans".

References to the chathan zither have been preserved in the folklore of all Turkic peoples; among Mongolian peoples, they appear under the name jetigen. It is known that the court orchestras of Khan Hubilai (1260 – 1294) used zithers with movable stands of two types – with 13 (yatga) and 7 (yatgalig) strings. Hubilai, the grandson of Genghis Khan, the founder of the Mongol Empire, founded the Yuan Dynasty (1271 – 1368) in 1271, which ruled China, Mongolia, Korea, and the surrounding territories. He became the first non-Chinese emperor to conquer the whole of China in the Middle Ages. The chronicles of the Yuan Dynasty state that Hubilai highly valued the art of music. At his court, there were orchestras consisting of more than 21 different types of wind, percussion and stringed instruments. Among the stringed instruments were: The toriynyatga, the Chinese zither qīxiánqín with one, five, and seven strings that were pressed against the body, as well as the 13-string yatga and the 7-string yatgalig with movable stands.

The Flemish monk Willem Rubruck (1220 – 1293), who travelled through Mongolia in 1253 – 1255, was received by the high-ranking Mongolian official Batu. During the banquet, the musicians played zithras, which Rubruck called completely different from European ones). After the fall of

the Mongol Empire (1368), the 7-stringed zither has survived in the Mongolian folk instrumentation (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Mongolian yatga.

Source: E. Luvsannorov (2013).

In Inner Mongolia (Northern China), the 12-stringed yatga zither was considered a sacred instrument, and playing it was perceived as a taboo rite. There is a legend that tells how Bayanhuu, the son of the royal official Tsering, saved his father from execution after a court banquet. During the banquet, Bayanhuu played the zither. When he finished playing, everyone present was amazed and touched by the magical melodies they heard. The father was pardoned on the condition that his son would pass on the secrets of his art. Bayanhuu agreed, warning that anyone who wanted to master the magic zither had to observe six taboos: not to drink intoxicating drinks, not to think of evil thoughts, not to lie, and not to play during strong winds, rain, or thunderstorms. The yatga zither was also used by monks in monasteries, and its twelve strings symbolised the twelve levels of the palace hierarchy. An ancient sutra called the Yatag Sutra has survived, with a musical notation of a melody intended to be played on the yatga zither. Thus, a comparative analysis of archaeological specimens of se and zheng zithers found in China with similar medieval and traditional instruments of Turkic and Mongolian ethnic groups suggests that the characteristic structural feature of the archaic prototype, movable string stands, has been preserved in a virtually unchanged form. These instruments have not only typological but also genetic affinity, as zithers with movable stands have been of great sacred importance in the spiritual culture of Turkic and Mongolian peoples since the beginning of the formation of these ethnic groups. This is evidenced by the legends about the origin of the instrument, its magical properties and the first epic singers, as well as the use of the instrument in shamanic chanting and rites of passage, including funeral rites, which have remained unchanged for centuries in each ethnic tradition.

Since the 10th century, the Chzurchen, ancient Tunguska-Manchu tribes that lived in Manchuria, Central and North-East China and the modern autonomous region of Inner Mongolia (China), as well as Primorye (Russia) and North Korea, have been on the historical scene. In 1115 – 1234, the Jurchens created the powerful Jin (金朝) state. After long wars with the Mongols (1210 – 1234) led by Genghis Khan, the Jin state ceased to exist. The historical chronicles of the Jurchens contain information about the musical instruments that were part of their court orchestra. In particular, it is mentioned that during the celebrations that took place in 1125, musicians played drums, reed flutes and whistles, and zithers with 12 and 25 strings. The number of strings on the zither may indicate that in addition to the 12-string zither, the Chzurchen instrumentation could have used the archaic se zither, which had long since fallen out of use in Chinese court orchestras.

The data from chronicle sources, which provide a list of the Chzurchen court instruments, are confirmed by archaeological finds. In 1976, a bronze mirror was found at the Shaigin settlement in Primorye (Russia), on the back of which is a picture of 11-string, wind, and percussion instruments of the Chzurchen court ceremonial orchestra (Figure 10). The depictions of some instruments are to some extent conventional and can be identified only by the outline of the shape.

Figure 10. Jurchen musical instruments (reverse side of a bronze mirror from the 12th and 16th centuries).

Note: 1 – harp; 2 – huluisi; 3 – lute; 4 – large pan flute; 5 – multi-pipe pan flute; 6 – drum; 7 – stringless zither; 8 – small pan flute; 9 – Turkic drum; 10 – guzheng.

Source: Y.I. Sheikin (2002).

Since ancient times, there has been a practice of using the court bands of the conquered states by various victorious rulers. In this way, the court orchestra of the Jurchens was formed. It is also known that after the Mongols' victory over the Chzurchens (1234), Khan Hubilai, formulating the principles of the state music of his empire, not only requisitioned the full court orchestra of the Chzurchens, but also ordered all musical instruments to be collected from Chzurchen monasteries and houses, and to engage craftsmen who could make them. The mirror does not depict the specific composition of the Chzurchen court orchestra, but only the main types of instruments, which symbolise different types of drums, lithophones, lutes, zithers, harps, and wind instruments. The author identifies the conventional image of the zither with four types of outwardly similar but structurally different zithers that have survived in the musical and instrumental culture of the Manchus, who were descendants of the Chzurchens:

- zithers without movable bases, which are derived from the Chinese zither qín;
- zithers with movable stands, the original prototypes of which were se and zheng;
- percussion zithers, which produce sound with a stick, and bowed zithers.

The names of the Chzurchen zithers have not survived, but it is known that the court orchestras of the Manchus, descendants of the Chzurchens, used zithers called shentuhan and shetuhan. The names of the instruments indicate their Chinese original prototypes: šeŋtuqhan comes from šeŋ (zheng), and šetuqhan from še (se). The common root tuqhan is translated as "box", "case". This indicates the characteristic feature of the box-shaped bodies of these instruments. The zither was a temporary phenomenon in the musical culture of the Tunguska-Manchus, infiltrated from the culture of neighbouring Turkic peoples. Obviously, the names shentuhan and shetuhan are Manchu vocalisations of the Turkic names of the zithers chathan and tachadigan. The shentuhan and shetuhan zithers remained the prerogative of purely palace orchestras and were not preserved in the Manchu musical and instrumental tradition, as they had no folklore basis for music, unlike the Turkic and Mongolian traditions.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the earliest Chinese zither with movable stands, the se (4th – 2nd centuries BCE), became the original prototype of medieval and traditional zithers of Central Asia and the Far East. The analysis of archaeological specimens and medieval instruments from Turkic, Mongolian, and Tunguska-Manchu peoples traced the origins, adaptation, and modification of the zheng zither. This research also covered its spread across Central and Southeast Asia and its continued use in traditional instrumentation among Turkic and Mongolian peoples in Central Asia and the Far East. It is established that among the Tunguska-Manchus (ancient Chzurchen and Manchus), unlike the Turkic and Mongol peoples, this type of zither was a borrowed phenomenon and functioned only in court orchestras.

The shape, design, and string-tuning method of the se zither suggest it originated in the court and traditional music of the Chu Kingdom's ethnic groups. After the Kingdom's fall in 221 BCE, it was adopted by the Han Dynasty and later evolved in traditional instrumentation among foreign ethnic groups in ancient China.

A comparative analysis of Chinese archaeological specimens of se and zheng zithers with similar medieval and folk instruments of Turkic and Mongolian ethnic groups shows that the characteristic design feature of the archaic prototype, movable string stands, has been preserved unchanged. These instruments are related not only typologically but also genetically; their original prototype was the se zither (se→chu-se→zheng). Genetically related to the Chinese zither is the oldest Turkic zither, the buchi, which derives from the Chinese chu-se. Later, in folk traditions, these instruments were given Turkic names (chathan/jetygan, associated with the name of their legendary first creator, Chathan). In the spiritual culture of these peoples, the zither with movable stands had an important sacred significance, as evidenced by legends about the origin of the instrument, its magical power, the first epic singers, and its connection with rites of passage.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Çin zither se, Çin'deki en eski telli çalgılardan biridir ve en eski örnekleri MÖ 5.-4. yüzyıllara dayanır. Antik Chu krallığında ortaya çıkmıştır ve tellerin altında hareketli standlar kullanılarak tasarımı ve akort yöntemiyle klasik Çin qín zither'inden farklıydı. Se zither, yapısal özellikleri ve çalım tekniği bakımından günümüzdeki *qanun* enstrümanına benzemektedir. Genellikle hareketli standlar kullanılarak akort edilen 23-25 ipek tele sahipti. Güneydoğu Çin'de MÖ 5.-2. yüzyıllara ait arkeolojik buluntular, enstrümanın yapısı ve akort yöntemleri hakkında ayrıntılı bilgi sağlamıştır. MÖ 4. yüzyıldan itibaren se zither, Chu krallığının tören müziğinde önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Chu'nun MÖ 221'deki düşüşünden sonra Han hanedanlığı sırasında kullanılmaya devam etmiştir. Qin Hanedanlığı (MÖ 221-206) sırasında 12-13 telli zheng adı verilen değiştirilmiş bir versiyonu ortaya çıkmıştır.

Se/zheng zither komşu bölgelere ve etnik gruplara yayılarak benzer enstrümanların gelişimini etkiledi: Kore: Se adı verilen benzer bir zither MÖ 3. yüzyılda Chenhan bölgesinde kullanıldı; Hunlar: MÖ 3. yüzyılda 7 telli yatgalig ve 13 telli jatga zitherlerini kullandı; Türk halkları: Zitheri buchi/chathan/jetigan olarak benimsedi ve Hakas gibi grupların geleneksel müziğinde korudu. Şamanik ve destansı geleneklerde ritüel öneme sahipti; Moğollar: 13. yüzyılda saray müziğinde yatga (13 telli) ve yatgalig (7 telli) zitherlerini kullandı. Enstrüman Moğol halk geleneklerinde kaldı; Jurchens/Mançular: Saray orkestraları için shentuhan ve shetuhan adı verilen zitherleri benimsediler, ancak bunlar halk geleneklerinde devam etmedi. Se/zheng zitherinin yayılması ve uyarlanması, antik Çin ile komşu göçebe grupları arasındaki kültürel alışverişleri göstermektedir. Zitherin kökenleri, çeşitli kültürel etkileri sentezleyen çok etnikli Chu krallığındadır. Bu durum, Çin imparatorlarının komşu hükümdarlara diplomatik olarak müzik aletleri hediye etmesiyle kolaylaştırılmıştır. Türk ve Moğol halkları tarafından benimsenip benimsenmiş, kendi müzik ve manevi geleneklerine entegre edilmiştir. Bu, köken efsanelerinin yaratılması, şamanik uygulamalarda ve destansı hikaye anlatımlarında kullanılması, geçiş ayinlerinde bir ritüel haline gelmiş olan kullanımı ile kanıtlanmıştır. Ayrıca, özellikle hareketli tel standları olmak üzere temel tasarım öğelerinin, tel sayısı ve akort yöntemleri değiştirilse bile korunmuş olması bu adaptasyonun bir diğer önemli yönüdür. Moğol Yuan Hanedanlığı gibi çeşitli müzik geleneklerini bir araya

getiren imparatorlukların saray müziğine dahil edilmiştir. Se zither'in evrimi ve yayılımının incelenmesi, antik ve orta çağ Orta/Doğu Asya'daki kültürel etkileşimler ve müzik alışverişleri hakkında içgörüler sağlar. Müzik aletlerinin kültürler arasında hareket ederken nasıl uyarlanabileceğini ve yeniden yorumlanabileceğini, temel tasarım öğelerini korurken yeni anlamlar ve işlevler üstlenebileceğini gösterir. Se/zheng zither'in ve torunlarının çeşitli kültürlerde kalıcılığı süregelen kalıcılığı da enstrümanın çok yönlülüğünü ve çekiciliğini vurgular. Temel tasarımı, farklı müzik gamlarına, icra tarzlarına ve kültürel bağlamlara uyarlanabilmesine olanak sağlıyordu. Türk ve Moğol geleneklerinde köken mitleri, şamanik uygulamalar ve destansı hikaye anlatımıyla ilişkilendirilmiş olup, bunların kültürel kimliğin ve maneviyatın temel unsurlarıyla bütünleştiğini göstermektedir. Bu araştırma, müzik aletleri gibi maddi kültür unsurlarının diplomatik değişim, fetih ve kademeli kültürel temas gibi mekanizmalar aracılığıyla nasıl yayılabileceğini göstererek kültürel yayılma süreçlerine ilişkin anlayışımıza katkıda bulunmaktadır. Ayrıca, yerleşik tarım toplumları ve göçebe gruplar arasında hareket eden enstrümanlar ve müzik uygulamalarıyla bu tür değişimlerin karmaşık, çok yönlü doğasını da göstermektedir. Se zither ve onun soyundan gelenlerin incelenmesi, Orta ve Doğu Asya'daki antik ve orta çağ kültürlerinin birbirine bağlılığına dair somut bir örnek sunarak, izole kültürel gelişimin basitleştirilmiş kavramlarına meydan okumaktadır. Müzikal geleneklerin dinamik doğasını ve enstrümanların yüzyıllar ve coğrafi sınırlar boyunca kültürel hafıza ve kimliğin taşıyıcıları olarak nasıl hizmet edebileceğini vurgulamaktadır.