

Regulating the Heart through Music: Personal Cultivation in *Essays on Music*

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Abstract: As we all treat *Essays on Music* (Yue Ji, 樂記) is a great part on the self- or personal cultivation in the tradition of Neo-Confucianism (Lixue, 理學), scholars who have interests on the study of *Essays on Music* want to build up a rational system for people to follow in the process of cultivation. The rational system described in *Essays on Music* is sophisticated and can be operated step by step. Different stages in music education have different methods to achieve. “a superior man says: ‘Ceremonies and music should not for a moment be neglected by anyone.’ When one has mastered completely (the principles of) music, and regulates his heart and mind accordingly, the natural, correct, gentle, and honest heart is easily developed, and with this development of the heart comes joy. This joy goes on to a feeling of repose. This repose is long-continued. The man in this constant repose becomes (a sort of) Heaven. Heaven-like, (his action) is spirit-like. Heaven-like, he is believed without the use of words. Spirit-like, he is regarded with awe, without any display of rage. So it is, when one by his mastering of music regulates his mind and heart.” In this paper, I will show out the steps that may correspond to *Essays on Music*. And I will take use of the traditional text, such as *Great Learning* (Daxue, 大學), *Book of History* (Shi Ji, 史記), and the notations written by some famous Confucian master, such as Zhu Xi (朱熹), Yi Toegye (李退溪), to illustrate the study of *Essays on Music* in history.

Keywords: *Essays on Music, Personal Cultivation, Music Education, Zhu Xi, Yi Toegye.*

The second half of the 20th century was marked in music education by a tendency to supply philosophical foundations to this area of studies and teaching. This process took different forms in various countries. In North America it resulted in the emergence of a special sphere of study called “philosophy of music education” which assumed the task of providing a philosophical aesthetic basis for music education. From the perspective of cross-cultural study, music education should be taken into account. So, this topic in both Chinese philosophy and philosophy of music education deserves systematic and serious analysis.

On the other hand, music plays an important role in the Six Arts (Liu Yi, 六藝) education of primordial Confucianism. Music and music education are commonly accepted by ancient East Asia Confucianism as an approach to self-cultivation, education and governance. Nowadays, more and more scholars concentrate their efforts on the study of *Essays on Music* (Yue Ji, 樂記) and aim to explore the rich cultural and philosophical heritage in Confucian music education.

1. ORIGIN OF THE ISSUES

According to *History of Han Dynasty* (Han Shu, 漢書), *Essays on Music* was a book selected during the period of Emperor Wu and later included in the *Book of Rites* (Li Ji, 禮記). Because of

the complex process of selection and compilation, there are lots of ideas conflicting with each other. So, it is difficult for us to put *Essays on Music* into one elaborate system of music generation to have a coherent understanding.

Essays on Music argues that music rises from the human heart when it is touched by the external world, and hence music plays an excellent role in personal cultivation. Therefore, the book brought Confucians' much attention to music. In order to cultivate the personality of a superior man (Junzi, 君子), they worked hard to explore the functions of music education¹.

The process of formation of music is closely related to human heart and mind, and it is discussed deeply in *Essays on Music*. The following paragraph shows a particular type of this relation clearly.

A superior man says: "Ceremonies and music should not for a moment be neglected by anyone." When one has mastered completely (the principles of) music, and regulates his heart and mind accordingly, the natural, correct, gentle, and honest heart is easily developed, and with this development of the heart comes joy. This joy goes on to a feeling of repose. This repose is long-continued. The man in this constant repose becomes (a sort of) Heaven. Heaven-like, (his action) is Spirit-like. Heaven-like, he is believed without the use of words. Spirit-like, he is regarded with awe, without any display of rage. So it is, when one by his mastering of music regulates his mind and heart.²

The levels of personal cultivation are described here as joy, repose, long-continued, Heaven-like and Spirit-like. According to the annotations supplied to the above paragraph by ancient scholars³, there are also different stages in the process of mastering a piece of music, which will be mentioned later. The progressive process of personal cultivation of this kind accords with the relevant statement in *Great Learning* (Daxue, 大學), which goes as follows.

Things being investigated, knowledge became complete. Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified. Their hearts being rectified, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their States were rightly governed. Their States being rightly governed, the whole kingdom was made tranquil and happy.⁴

By reaching different stages in the process of music education, personal cultivation is completed, and the person is rectified.

There is a famous story about Confucius in the *Book of History* (Shi Ji, 史記).

Confucius practiced playing the lute for ten days without attempting anything new. Shi Xiang, his tutor, said, "You can go ahead now." "I have learned the tune but not the technique," said Confucius. After some time Shi Xiang said, "You have mastered the measure now, you can go on." But Confucius replied, "I have not yet caught the spirit." Sometime later the other said,

¹ Music education is a kind of education playing a role as much important as that of ritual education. The former is an inside-out process, but by contrast, the latter is an outside-in process.

² James Legge, ed., *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism* (London, Oxford University Press Warehouse, 1885), 125.

³ 《禮記正義(卷三十九)》(*Correct Interpretation of Rituals, Volume 39*)注云：“樂由中出，故治心。……致，謂深致詳審。易，謂和易。直，謂正直。子，謂子愛。諒，謂誠信。言能深遠詳審此樂以治正其心。”

⁴ James Legge, ed., *The Chinese Classic: with a translation, critical and exegetical notes, prolegomena, and copious indexes* (Taipei, SMC publishing inc., 1991), 385.

“Now you have caught the spirit, you can go on.” “I cannot yet visualize the man behind it,” answered Confucius. Later he observed, “This is the work of a man who thought deeply and seriously, one who saw far ahead and had a calm, lofty outlook.” He continued, “I see him now. He is dark and tall, with far-seeing eyes that seem to command all the kingdoms around. No one but King Wen could have composed this music.”⁵

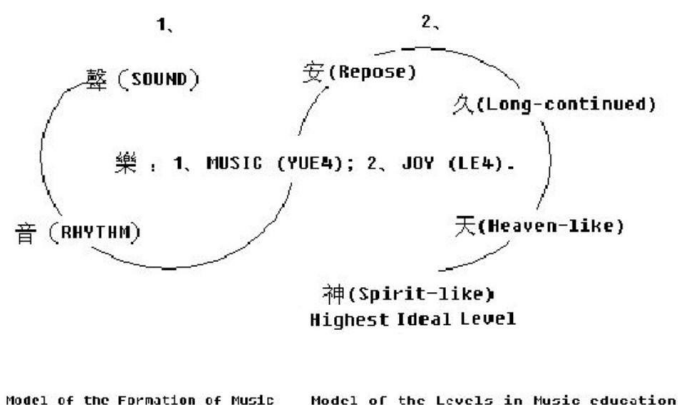
The plot that Confucius learned the lute from Shi Xiang, a famous musician, is a representative event which reflects how the Sage reached the highest ideal level in the process of mastering a piece of music through music education.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that, in Chinese culture, the word “joy” and the word “music” shares the same Chinese character “樂” though have different pronunciations.

The formation of music is divided into three stages, as the first paragraph of *Essays on Music* puts it.

The sounds echo, or combine with, one another and produce a rich variety, and when the various sounds become regular, and then we have rhythm. The arrangement of tones for our enjoyment in combination with the military dance is called music”, the stages described as sound, rhythm and music.

Those stages are sound, rhythm and music. So, the process of the formation of music starts with sound and ends with music. And as showed previously, the process of personal cultivation starts with joy and ends with Heaven-like or Spirit-like.



Obviously, the last stage of the former process overlaps with the first stage of the latter, and hence the two processes can be seen as a continuum. The transition from music to joy is very natural in Chinese culture, for they share one Chinese character. Thus, music has important influence on personal cultivation.

2. MUSIC EDUCATION & SELF-CULTIVATION

Essays on Music says

.....those who knew the essential nature of ceremonies and music could frame them; and those who had learned their elegant accompaniments could hand them down. The framers may be pronounced sage; the transmitters, intelligent. Intelligence and sage-hood are other names for transmitting and inventing.⁶

⁵ Sima Qian, Yang Xianyi Gladys Yang translated, *Selections from Records of the Historian* (Beijing, Foreign Languages Press, 2008) 247.

⁶ James Legge, *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism*, 100.

Confucians think that a man who understands music comes very near to understanding rituals and that, if a man has mastered both rituals and music, we call him virtuous, for virtue is mastery or fulfillment. In Chinese culture, the origins of rituals can be traced to ancestor worship, and the rituals were established by the ancient kings. The basic principles and origins of rituals are tied to the social hierarchy and infused with moral elements. So, traditional Chinese rituals have a clear social basis and are rich in moral meaning. It is worth noting that, the kings, because of their elevated hierarchical status, were almost deified in traditional Chinese culture, but Confucians thought that the kings, or even the sages, should work harder to grasp the nature of music and reach the highest level of self-cultivation.

In Chinese culture, this kind of hard work was well developed, especially in Song Dynasty by the so-called neo-Confucians (Lixuejia, 理學家). They defined the hard work of this sort as self-effort, or self-cultivation (Zuo Gongfu 做工夫). The process of self-cultivation is based on the discussion of human nature, and according to *Essays on Music*, the exhibition of human nature is in an inside-out way.

The first paragraph in *Essays on Music* displays, in the following metaphorical way, one aspect of human mind which is related to human nature,

All the modulations of the voice arise from the mind, and the various affections of the mind are produced by things (external to it). The affections thus produced are manifested in the sounds that are uttered. Changes are produced by the way in which those sounds respond to one another; and those changes constitute what we call the modulations of the voice. The combination of those modulated sound, so as to give pleasure, and the (direction in harmony with them of the) shields and axes, and of the plumes and ox-tails, constitutes what we call music.⁷

The form of music is a description of that of our mind. The music-mind relation consists of things, plots and feelings. Music arising from the mind is a kind of natural process which interacts with human nature.

Here it should be indicated that in *Essays on Music* human nature is not defined by means of good or evil. There are two points we should notice. Firstly, the selection and compilation of the book leads to the result that it contains different ideas from different schools of Confucianism, most of which are from the disciples of Mencius or Xunzi (Xun Kuang, 荀况). Secondly, regarding human nature, what the book mainly focuses on is the changes of it, and a theory about human nature provided by the book is the theory of motion and motionlessness (Dong-jing Shuo, 动静说).

In *Essays on Music*, we can easily find that human nature is a transcendental concept. As the book puts it,

It belongs to the nature of man, as from Heaven, to be still at his birth. His activity shows itself as he is acted on by external things and develops the desires incident to his nature.⁸

It agrees well with the statement “What Heaven has conferred is called the nature” in *Doctrine of the Mean* (Zhongyong, 中庸). And if we realize the developments or changes in human nature, we can understand that the theory of self-cultivation in *Essays on Music* is operates step by step.

There are several other statements similar to “It belongs to the nature of man, as from Heaven, to be

⁷ Ibid., p. 93.

⁸ Ibid., p. 96.

still at his birth” in *Essays on Music*. And master Zhu (Zhu Xi, 朱熹) spoke highly of this kind of statement as an excellent description of human nature. He said: “One of the qualities of the nature of man, as from Heaven, is to be still at his birth. If this quality does not move a bit, it will be the pure greatest good because of its origin, namely the Way (Dao, 道).” Motionlessness is an inborn quality of human nature. When there is no occurrence of pleasure, anger, sorrow or joy, the mind may be in the state of Equilibrium (Zhong, 中).

Yi Toegye (李退溪)’s thought on cheerfulness and his attitude towards the society is rooted in Confucius and Yan’s cheerfulness in the Pre-Qin period and influenced greatly by Zhu Xi. Toegye carried on and developed the theory of Confucius and Yan’s cheerfulness. In his opinions, “the cheerfulness from life may be divided into two parts: one is in combination with the goodness, while the other is in pure aesthetic consciousness.”⁹ Both have not only played the role of a bridge or media, but also displayed the purpose itself.

However, there must be a moment at which the motion of human nature happened. How to regulate the motion in a right way is a key problem to be solved in *Essays on Music*.

In conclusion, the hypothesis of human nature in *Essays on Music* can be divided into two states. Firstly, there is no value judgment when a feeling has not appeared. It’s a transcendental, quiet state. In other words, in this state the human nature is good for its own sake because it is part of the Way. Secondly, after the motion of human nature has happened, it contains the feelings and the good will; so, it is good at this time. However, if we do not have an appropriate method to regulate the feelings, the good will change and the evil will appear.

3. FEELINGS REGULATING IN MUSIC EDUCATION

The method for regulating the feelings is well developed in *Essays on Music*. From a Confucian point of view on human nature, the theory of motion and motionlessness shows that music is the best way to regulate the good will of human nature so as to make it move in a proper manner which obeys, or follows, the Way. “On this account the ancient kings were watchful in regard to the things by which the mind was affected.”¹⁰ And the ancient kings divided the political methods into several sorts, and music is one of the four main sorts used by the kings to lead their people to return to the state under the rule of the Way. “So (they instituted) ceremonies to direct men’s aim aright; music to give harmony to their voices; laws to unify their tendencies to evil. The end to which ceremonies, music, punishment, and laws conduct is one; they are the instruments by which the minds of the people are assimilated and good order in government is made to appear.”¹¹

As a result, the ancient kings were always careful about things that affected human nature or human heart. They tried, therefore, to guide the people’s ideals and aspirations by means of ritual, and establish harmony in sounds by means of music. We can easily realize that the four methods used by the ancient kings can be divided into two categories, namely the inside-out and the outside-in, and music is the only way that leads the people to follow the Way from the intrinsic value. And this is the best way to bring about unity in the people’s heart and carry out the principles of political order. So human nature starts with the quiet state which is part of the Way, and then, with all the feelings obeying the Way, proceeds further under the regulation of music education. When a man, through

⁹ MA Zheng-ying, *The Interpretation and Development of Confucius and Yan’s Cheerfulness* by Yi Toegye (Journal of GuiZhou University Social Sciences, 2012).

¹⁰ James Legge, *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism*, 93.

¹¹ Ibid., p.93.

music education and with the help of self-effort, reaches the highest level of music education as well as personal cultivation, he can comprehend the Way as a sage does and understand that all his feelings are part of the Way without conflicting with it.

All of the above is an ideal process described in *Essays on Music* and was well developed by the Neo-Confucianism (Lixue, 理學). It seems that all the famous Confucians have great confidence in this process. However, can it work effectively? And how does it work? Now, let us turn to the parts concerning the technicalities, i.e. the ones giving the essential requirements for a man who wants to get a music education.

What are the basic elements of temperament (pentatonic scale, etc.) described in *Essays on Music*? “.....the bell, the drum, the flute, and the sounding-stone; the plume, the fife, the shield, and the axe are the instruments of music; the curvings and stretchings (of the body), the bending down and lifting up (of the head); and the evolutions and numbers (of the performers), with the slowness or rapidity (of their movements), are its elegant accompaniments.”¹²

What is the aim of music described in *Essays on Music*? “When we speak of music we do not mean the notes emitted by Huangzhong, Dalü, (and the other musical pipes), the stringed instruments and the singing, or the (brandishing of the) shields and axes. There are but the small accessories of the music; and hence lads act as the pantomimes”¹³. For this reason, truly great music shares the principles of harmony with the universe, and through the principles of harmony restored in the physical world, we are able to offer sacrifices to Heaven and Earth. Through harmony, all things are influenced. So, music rising from heaven is accordant to the principles of the Way as much as human nature coming from the heaven.

What is the principle of music composition described in *Essays on Music*? “When the (ancient) kings had accomplished their undertakings, they made their music (to commemorate them); when they had established their government, they framed their ceremonies. The excellence of their music was according to the greatness of their undertakings; and the completeness of their ceremonies was according to the comprehensiveness of their government. The dances with shields and axes did not belong to the most excellent music, nor did the sacrifices with cooked flesh mark the highest ceremonies. The times of the five TIs were different, and therefore they did not each adopt the music of his predecessor.”¹⁴ If the moral condition is established through rituals and music, then we have a continuity of culture through the rise of different wise rulers. Different generations have different rulers, thereby leading to different politics. So the rituals and music used to eulogize the politics in different generations are given different names appropriately in order to suit different rulers’ achievements and virtues. However, rituals teach piety under different circumstances, and music teaches love in varying forms.

As a result, a man who wants to get music education must know all the elements of music and he should be familiar with the sophisticated, complex system in which every pitches, movements and so on represented a particular kind of meanings. “Hence, even beasts know sound, but not its modulations; and the masses of the common people know the modulations, but they do not know music. It is only the superior man who can really know music.”¹⁵ So, to be a superior man, we must

¹² Ibid., p.100.

¹³ Ibid., p.115.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.102.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.95.

develop our abilities to discriminate between different atmospheres when listening to different sounds, to discriminate between different music when being in different atmospheres, and to discriminate between different government when hearing different music. Therefore, to be a superior man, we have to learn basic technicalities of music.

Since *Essays on Music* is not a book teaching techniques of music, there is not long length discussing them. The following paragraph is a typical excerpt showing us the examples of how a superior person is able to understand the particular meanings of music. This is also a reason why music education can work in a direct way.

(The note) Gong represents the ruler; Shang, the ministers; Jiao, the people; Zhi, affairs; and Yu, things. If there be no disorder or irregularity in these five notes, there will be no want of harmony in the state. If Gong be irregular, (the air) is wild and broken; the ruler of the state is haughty. If Shang be irregular, (the air) is jerky; the offices of the state are decayed. If Jiao be irregular, (the air) expresses anxiety; the people are dissatisfied. If Zhi be irregular, (the air) expresses sorrow; affairs are strained. If Yu be irregular, (the air) is expressive of impending ruin; the resources (of the state) are exhausted. If the five notes are all irregular, and injuriously interfere with one another, they indicate a state of insolent disorder; and the state where this is the case will at no distant day meet with extinction and ruin.¹⁶

Now we should turn to the discussion of human nature in *Essays on Music* to check out how music education works effectively.

It belongs to the nature of man, as from Heaven, to be still at his birth. His activity shows itself as he is acted on by external things, and develops the desires incident to his nature. Things come to him more and more, and the knowledge is increased. Then arise the manifestations of liking and disliking. When these are not regulated by anything within, and growing knowledge leads more astray without, he cannot come back to himself, and his Heavenly principle is extinguished.¹⁷

As this paragraph shows, human nature is quiet at the beginning of one's birth, and the quiet human nature can be easily affected by the external world and then begins to have desires. When the mind becomes conscious of the impact of the material world, we begin to have likes and dislike. No one can judge if it is good or evil at this moment. However, if the feelings containing likes and dislikes are not regulated properly and our consciousness or natural mind is distracted by the material world, we will lose our true selves and the principle of reason in pure nature is destroyed. If a man is constantly exposed to the things of the material world which affect him and does not regulate his likes and dislikes, then he becomes overwhelmed by the material reality and becomes dehumanized or materialistic. When a man becomes dehumanized or materialistic, then the principle of reason in pure nature is destroyed and he is submerged in his own desires. From this arises rebellion, disobedience, cunning and deceit, and general immorality.

So, feelings, the likes and dislikes, are the key points to regulate human nature in order to make it move in obedience to the good will.

4. FURTHER DISCUSSION ON MUSIC EDUCATION: DETAILS & EXAMPLES

If music education can work on the feelings directly, it must be effective.

¹⁶ Ibid., p.94.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.96.

Music is (thus) the production of the modulations of the voice, and its source is in the affections of the mind as it is influenced by (external) things. When the mind is moved to sorrow, the sound is sharp and fading away; when it is moved to pleasure, the sound is slow and gentle; when it is moved to joy, the sound is exclamatory and soon disappears; when it is moved to anger, the sound is coarse and fierce; when it is moved to reverence, the sound is straightforward, with an indication of humility; when it is moved to love, the sound is harmonious and soft. These six peculiarities of sound are not natural; they indicate the impressions produced by (external) things. On this account the ancient kings were watchful in regard to the things by which the mind was affected.¹⁸

It's easy to understand that the feelings can influence the sound in an obvious way. For example, our voice will be soft when we talk with our lovers; our voice will be sharp when we quarrel with others. The same sound can cause different feelings, if we are in different conditions. The pitch "A" can be serious for the choirs or be boring for a normal person. No matter which kind of feelings influence us in a particular situation, a feeling must exist. No matter whether the sound is caused or heard by a man, the sound must build in relation with the mind through the feelings.

Hsu Fook-kuan had argued for this hypothesis that music has a noticeable impact on feelings. He said

When the children were moved by great music, and has reflection in the body and mind, this means music education has had an effect on the children. These kinds of phenomena were the exact evidences of the possibilities of music education.¹⁹

However, this theory is faced with a problem, that the same song may makes the members of the audience have different feelings at the same moment, that is to say, regarding music education, the effect of the same song on an individual may vary from person to person.

In *Essays on Music*, man is gifted with blood, breath and a conscious mind, but his feelings of sorrow, happiness, joy and anger depend on circumstances. His definite desires arise from reactions toward the material world. Therefore, when a somber and depressing type of music prevails, we know that the people are distressed and sorrowful. When a languorous, easy type of music with many long drawn-out notes prevails, we know that the people are peaceful and happy. When a strong and forceful type of music prevails, beginning and ending with a full of sound, we know that the people are hearty and strong. So, everything belongs to the nature and is part of the nature. Everything obeys the same rule. When the soil is poor, things do not grow, and when fishing is not regulated according to the seasons, fishes and turtles do not mature. We find then a type of music that is rueful without restraint and joyous without calm. Therefore, the superior man tries to create harmony in the human heart by a rediscovery of human nature, and tries to promote music as a means to the perfection of human culture.

When such music prevails and the people's minds are led toward the right ideals and aspirations, we may see the appearance of a great nation. And character is the backbone of our human nature; music should be the flowering of the character. The metal, stone, string and bamboo instruments are the

¹⁸ Ibid., p.93.

¹⁹ “而當一個兒童受到《韶》樂的感動，‘其視精，其心端’的時候，可以說這是樂對於一個兒童純樸心靈所能發生的感動作用。”——Hsu Fook-kuan, *the spirits of Chinese art* (Shanghai, East China Normal University Press, 2001), 11.

instruments of music. The three arts, the poem, the song and the dance, take their rise from human soul, and then are given further expression by means of the musical instruments.

In the light of Confucianism, the relation of feelings to human nature cannot be discussed separately or dividedly. As there are motive and motiveless parts of human nature mentioned before, feelings can also be divided into the stirred and the unstirred. As *Doctrine of the Mean* says, “While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be in the state of Equilibrium. When these feelings have been stirred, and they act in their due degree, this ensures what may be called the state of Harmony.”²⁰ The Equilibrium and Harmony (he, 和) are the great root and universal path of the Way. Music can influence feelings directly. As discussed before, music can regulate the feelings which have been stirred, making them be in the state of Harmony, and let the feelings which have not been stirred obey the principle of Equilibrium. It is exactly the aim of music education.

Thus, a superior man is able to differentiate between music and then understand different meanings of music. By means of music, a superior man can regulate his feelings so as to return to his real nature.

Therefore, when the music has full course, the different relations are clearly defined by it; the perceptions of the ears and eyes become sharp and distinct; the action of the blood and physical energies are harmonious and calm; (bad) influences are removed, and manners changed; and all under heaven there is entire repose. Hence we have the saying, ‘where there is music there is joy.’ Superior men rejoice in attaining to the course (which they wish to pursue); and smaller men in obtaining the things which they desire. When the objects of desire are regulated by a consideration of the course to be pursued, there is joy without any disorder. When those objects lead to the forgetfulness of that course, there is delusion, and no joy. It is for this purpose that the superior man returns to the (good) affections (proper to his nature), in order to bring his will into harmony with them, and makes extensive use of music in order to perfect his instructions. When the music has free course, the people direct themselves to the quarter (to which they should proceed), and we can see (the power of) his virtue.²¹

The above paragraph shows that music plays a rational role and it can change emotional feelings into rational ones. And this view may be the opposite of the one who regards Chinese music education as just a kind of emotional creature, although it can affect, induce, and elevate one’s emotions.²² According to Confucian theory of music education, all music is stories which can be comprehended by superior men and the stories teach lessons to the audience who receive the music education.

There is a short conversation discussing about the Dance of Wu between Binmou Jia (賓牟賈) and Confucius in *Essays on Music*.

Binmou Jia was talking one day with Confucius, and they began to discuss music, and Confucius asked, ‘Why is it that at the beginning of this Dance of Wu, the Dancers stand a long time holding themselves in readiness before they begin, while the drum is being played?’

²⁰ James Legge, *The Chinese Classic: with a translation, critical and exegetical notes, prolegomena, and copious indexes*, 384.

²¹ James Legge, *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism*, 112.

²² Prof. Aphrodite Alexandrakis thought that the role of music played in Chinese culture was different from the role played in ancient Greek in *the Role of Music and Dance in Ancient Greek and Chinese rituals: From Versus Content* (2006 Journal of Chinese Philosophy).

‘Because it symbolizes the fact that King Wu waited a long time and did not launch out on the conquest of the Shang King (Zhou, whom he overthrew) until he was assured of the support of the other rulers,’ replied Binmou Jia. ‘What is the meaning again of the singing and the sighing of the dancers, with the movements slowly and gradually growing in intensity?’ ‘King Wu was still waiting to assure himself of the support of the other rulers.’ ‘What is the meaning again of the dance and the stamping on the ground early in the dance?’ asked Confucius again. ‘It was a time to act.’ ‘Why is it that the dancers then begin to squat on the ground, with their right knees touching the ground and the left knees lifted?’ ‘They should not squat on the ground in the Dance of Wu.’

In this paragraph, Binmou Jia, a famous musician in pre-Qin Dynasty, replied Confucius’ questions on the meanings of the Dance of Wu. The changes in the music reflect the meanings of the music and express the thoughts of King Wu. However, this is not the excellent part which reflects sophisticated music education; it is the next paragraph that shows how music education works in Confucianism.

Binmou Jia rose from his seat and said, ‘We all understand the meaning of that long preliminary waiting. But, may I ask, why the delay and waiting of the dancers at the start, and such a long delay?’ ‘Sit down and I will tell you,’ said Confucius. ‘This music is a symbolic interpretation of the historical events. That the dancers stand in long lines with their shields like a solid wall (literally ‘like a mountain’) symbolizes the events of King Wu.

Then, Confucius discussed the great events which achieved by King Wu with the model of clear one-to-one correspondence. Although this part is just a short example of music education, it reflects the different stages in music education and the achievements of the music education in a rational way.

So, “a superior man says: ‘Ceremonies and music should not for a moment be neglected by anyone.’ When one has mastered completely (the principles of) music, and regulates his heart and mind accordingly, the natural, correct, gentle, and honest heart is easily developed, and with this development of the heart comes joy. This joy goes on to a feeling of repose. This repose is long-continued. The man in this constant repose becomes (a sort of) Heaven. Heaven-like, (his action) is spirit-like. Heaven-like, he is believed without the use of words. Spirit-like, he is regarded with awe, without any display of rage. So it is, when one by his mastering of music regulates his mind and heart.”²³ The rational system described in *Essays on Music* is sophisticated and can be operated step by step. Different stages in music education have different methods to achieve.

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- [1] A kind of education played the role as same important as the role of ritual education. And music part is an inside out process, on contrary, the ritual one is an outside in process.
- [2] James Legge, ed., *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism* (London, Oxford University Press Warehouse, 1885), 125.
- [3] 《禮記正義（卷三十九）》(*Correct Interpretation of Rituals, Volume 39*)注云：“樂由中出，故治心。……致，謂深致詳審。易，謂和易。直，謂正直。子，謂子愛。諒，謂誠信。言能深遠詳審此樂以治正其心。”
- [4] James Legge, ed., *The Chinese Classic: with a translation, critical and exegetical notes, prolegomena, and copious indexes* (Taipei, SMC publishing inc., 1991), 385.

²³ James Legge, ed., *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism* (London, Oxford University Press Warehouse, 1885), 125.

- [5] Sima Qian, Yang Xianyi Gladys Yang translated, *Selections from Records of the Historian* (Beijing, Foreign Languages Press, 2008) 247.
- [6] James Legge, *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism*, 100.
- [7] *Ibid.*, p. 93.
- [8] *Ibid.*, p. 96.
- [9] MA Zheng-ying, The Interpretation and Development of Confucius and Yan's Cheerfulness by Yi Toegy (Journal of GuiZhou University Social Sciences, 2012).
- [10] James Legge, *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism*, 93.
- [11] *Ibid.*, p. 93.
- [12] *Ibid.*, p. 100.
- [13] *Ibid.*, p. 115.
- [14] *Ibid.*, p. 102.
- [15] *Ibid.*, p. 95.
- [16] *Ibid.*, p. 94.
- [17] *Ibid.*, p. 96.
- [18] *Ibid.*, p. 93.
- [19] “而當一個兒童受到《韶》樂的感動，‘其視精，其心端’的時候，可以說這是樂對於一個兒童純樸心靈所能發生的感動作用。”——Hsu Fook-kuan, *the spirits of Chinese art* (Shanghai, East China Normal University Press, 2001), 11.
- [20] James Legge, *The Chinese Classic: with a translation, critical and exegetical notes, prolegomena, and copious indexes*, 384.
- [21] James Legge, *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism*, 112.
- [22] Prof. Aphrodite Alexandrakis thinks the role of music played in Chinese culture was different with the role played in ancient Greek in *the Role of Music and Dance in Ancient Greek and Chinese rituals: From Versus Content* (2006 Journal of Chinese Philosophy).
- [23] James Legge, ed., *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism* (London, Oxford University Press Warehouse, 1885), 125.
- [24] Theodor W. Adorno, Robert Hullot-Kentor, ed., *Philosophy of new music* (U.S.A, University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

「致樂以治心」

——《樂記》的「涵養工夫」

摘要：理學以降，儒家學者們將《樂記》作為儒家「心性論」系統下個人修養工夫的重要文本。而每個學者在研究《樂記》時，都希望能從中找到一個可以遵循的一套工夫進而完成對自我涵養工夫的助成。而《樂記》也確實嚴謹地展示出一套可以步步進逼的涵養工夫。「禮樂不可斯須去身。致樂以治心，則易、直、子、諒之心油然而生矣。易、直、子、諒之心生則樂，樂則安，安則久，久則天，天則神。天則不言而信，神則不怒而威。致樂以治心者也。」「致樂以治心」絕非憑空，它建立在「動靜」心性論基礎上的，通過學習、體會“樂”，而達到認識、踐行「治心」的工夫。我們會在本文的論述中，將此涵養精進之路通過傳統文本（如《大學》、《史記》等）及歷代名家注疏（如朱熹、李退溪等）的解讀一一展示出來。

關鍵字：《樂記》，做工夫，樂教，朱熹，李退溪。

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