

拓展



中国文化英语教程

Insights into Chinese Culture



Unit 12
Music: Govern the
Country, Nourish
the Mind



Content

- **Lead-in**
- **Text study**
- **Exercises**



Listen to two audio clips and see whether you can tell the name of the pieces music.



Three Stanzas of Plum Blossoms 《梅花三弄



Lofty Mountains and Flowing Water 《高山流水





- Introduction
- Governance Trough Music
- Consoling the Mind with Music



Introduction



- The tradition of Chinese music dates back to remote antiquity.
- Governing the country and nourishing the mind through music are two of the main functions of this tradition.



According to ancient Chinese culture:

- Rituals provided the norms of conduct for people. The goal to maintain social order.
- Music was for the mind's cultivation and expression.
- Its purpose was to enhance people's outlook on life and imbue (灌输) them with energy and creativity, such that they could enjoy a more harmonious and happier spiritual life.



Governance Through Music



The highest level of ancient Chinese music was to represent spiritual harmony with nature.



- ❑ Chime bells (编钟)
- ❑ Marquis Yi chime bells
- ❑ Function of music in ancient China



Chime bells (编钟)

- Chime bells were a typical musical instrument in the early times of ancient China.
- Chime bells were first used in the Shang Dynasty, and became quite popular during the Western Zhou Dynasty.





Marquis Yi chime bells

The fine set of chime bells was unearthed in Hubei Province in 1978, from the tomb of Marquis Yi, a local lord in a small state called Zeng during the Warring States Period.



曾侯乙墓出土编钟



The Marquis Yi chime bells consist of 65 bells arranged in three rows.

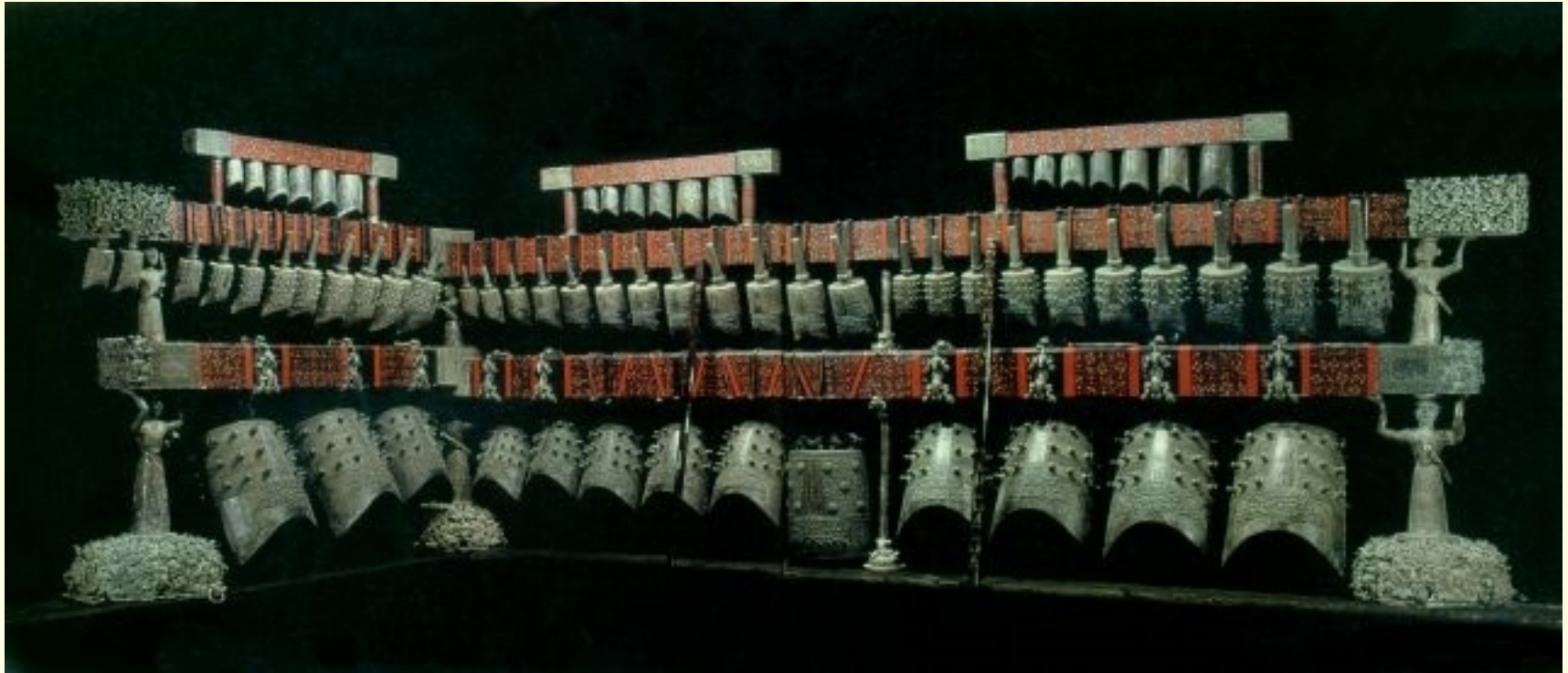
- The first row includes 19 *niu* bells (钮钟).
- The second and third rows include 45 *yong* bells (甬钟).
- There is a separate and much larger bell used to adjust pitch.



Governance Trough Music



The bells in each row differ from one another in shape and size, emanating (发出) different tones.





- The frame is made of bronze, weighing as much as five tons or more.
- The total weight of the bells is more than 440 kilograms.
- The bells bear inscriptions totaling more than 2,800 Chinese characters relating to music and the making of the instrument.
- The frame is carved with exquisite patterns in relief (浮雕) and fretwork (回纹细工).



Governance Through Music



Instruments of such a scale and such fine craftsmanship were quite rare in the world at the time.





- Five musicians were needed to play the instrument.
- Each bell produces two tones when struck at the respective sound points as marked.
- The entire set of chime bells is able to produce all the tones of a modern piano.



Function of music in ancient China

- Music is a means to promote personal cultivation and social harmony in ancient Chinese society.
- “Music brings harmony” is an important concept that has influenced Chinese culture for several thousand years.
- It stresses harmony as the culture’s core value. The tradition guiding rituals and music is that of a harmonious world order.



“Musical education enables people to purify their minds. Rituals are established to temper people’s conduct. With music and rituals, people are imbued with clearer, more intelligent and peaceful minds. They also improve their ways and manners. Thus the country enjoys peace, with beauty and compassion complementing each other.”

乐行而志清，
— Xunzi

礼修而行成，
耳目聪明，
血气平和，
移风易俗，
天下皆宁，

(c. 325-235 BC)
a great Confucian
thinker of the
Warring States Period



Consoling the Mind with Music



- One cannot discuss Chinese music without mentioning a seven-stringed musical instrument, the Chinese zither (琴).
- It represented the zenith (顶峰) of cultivated learning in ancient times, followed by go (围棋), calligraphy and painting.



The Chinese zither was more of an individual instrument for solace (安慰) and personal appreciation.

大圣遗音伏羲式琴 唐

Chinese zither (front and back), said to have been handed down from the Tang Dynasty





Consoling the Mind with Music



- As the most ancient instrument in China, the zither has long been a favorite of the literati (文人学士).
- Ancient Chinese literati considered the zither a prerequisite for their cultivation. Its beautiful melodies helped to maintain peace and balance of the mind.



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