

Tea, Fragrance, and Music

*Ephemeral Arts and the Formation
of Scholar-Artist Communities in
Northern Song China*

Kin Sum (Sammy) LI



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Cover Illustration: Scroll painting, copy after Li Gonglin's *Mountain Villa (Longmian shanzhuang tu)*, featuring the Cave of Extending Blossoms. Collection of the Beijing Palace Museum.

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Contents

Acknowledgements	IX
List of Maps, Figures, and Tables	XI
Abbreviations	XIII
Chronology, Dating, Protagonists, and Conventions	XIV
Introduction	1
1	Cultures of Tea, Fragrance, and <i>Qin</i> Music Today 1
2	Key Terms, Main Arguments, and Approaches 3
3	Community Formation and Scholar-Artists 6
4	Community Formation Involving People, Materials, Experiences, and Ephemeral Practices 9
1 Cultural Construct	12
1	Relationship between Tea, Fragrance, and Music 12
2	Tea 26
2.1	<i>Motivations for Appreciating Tea</i> 26
2.1.1	Not Merely Religion 26
2.1.2	Not Merely a Matter of Health 27
2.1.3	Not Merely Preservation 30
2.2	<i>Tea as a Cultural Construct</i> 32
2.2.1	Tea Preparation and Appreciation 32
2.2.2	Preparation of Tea-Drinking Materials 33
2.2.3	The Appearance of the Tea 35
2.2.4	Taste, Texture, and Fragrance of the Tea 39
2.2.5	Special Functions of Tea Utensils in the Tea-Tipping Process 42
2.2.5.1	<i>Bowl and Color</i> 42
2.2.5.2	<i>Ewers and Subtle Sensations</i> 44
2.3	<i>Regulated Tea Practices and the Politics of Tea Culture</i> 45
3	Fragrances and Aromatic Substances 47
3.1	<i>Identification of Aromatic Substances</i> 49
3.2	<i>Formulae for Mixing Aromatic Substances</i> 51
3.3	<i>Incense Burners, Containers, and the Use of Aromatic Substances</i> 52
3.4	<i>Narratives on the Burning of Aromatic Substances</i> 55
4	Music from the <i>Qin</i> and the Prosody 55
4.1	<i>Qin</i> 56
4.1.1	Motivations 56
4.1.2	Appreciating the <i>Qin</i> 58

4.1.3	<i>Qin</i> Music	62
4.1.4	<i>Qin</i> Playing Techniques	66
4.1.5	Audial Distinctiveness and Finger Feelings	70
4.2	<i>Prosody</i>	71
4.2.1	Perceptions of Rhymes and Tonal Patterns	71
4.2.2	Melodies in the Three Poetic Colophons	73
2	Economic Construct	75
1	Tea and Utensils	75
1.1	<i>From Raw Tea to Consumable Tea</i>	75
1.1.1	Tea Gardens in Today's Fujian	75
1.1.2	Tea Gardens in the Northern Song	80
1.1.3	Cultivating, Picking, and Processing Tea	81
1.1.3.1	<i>Picking Tea Buds and Leaves</i>	81
1.1.3.2	<i>Processing and Preserving Tea</i>	81
1.1.3.3	<i>Manpower</i>	86
1.1.3.4	<i>Ownership of Tea Gardens</i>	87
1.2	<i>Tea Policies</i>	88
1.2.1	The Eternal Problem of Supply and Demand	88
1.2.2	Punishment and Rebels	92
1.2.3	Why Reforms?	94
1.2.4	Adding Value to Tea and Product differentiation	96
1.2.4.1	<i>Diversifying Features</i>	96
1.2.4.2	<i>Differentiation</i>	97
1.2.4.3	<i>Creating New Brand Names</i>	98
1.2.5	Exportation and Tea-Horse Trade	98
1.3	<i>Production and Distribution of Tea Utensils</i>	100
1.3.1	Ceramic Vessels	100
1.3.1.1	<i>Types</i>	100
1.3.1.2	<i>Regional Distribution</i>	102
1.3.1.3	<i>Production</i>	103
1.3.2	Dragon Kilns	104
2	Aromatic Substances	109
2.1	<i>Geographical Sources of Aromatic Substances</i>	109
2.2	<i>Trade Routes for Aromatic Substances</i>	110
2.3	<i>Preservation of Aromatic Substances</i>	111
2.4	<i>Government Control</i>	111
3	<i>Qin</i>	113
3.1	<i>Acquisition of Raw Materials</i>	113
3.1.1	Boards of Wood	113
3.1.2	Lacquer Surface	117

3.1.3	Silk Strings	118
3.1.4	Metal and Stone Components	118
3.2	<i>Assembly</i>	119
3.3	<i>Qin-Making Workshops</i>	120
4	Transportation	121
4.1	<i>Geography</i>	121
4.2	<i>Means of Transportation</i>	121
4.3	<i>Porters and Their Sensory Experiences</i>	123
4.3.1	Working Conditions	123
4.3.2	Food and Accommodation along the Roads	125
4.3.3	Loss	125
4.3.4	Sensory Experiences of the Porters	125
3	Artistic Construct	128
1	Literati Gatherings as Constructed in Paintings	128
1.1	<i>The Implied Sequence of Artistic Activities</i>	128
1.2	<i>Tea Gatherings in Other Paintings</i>	134
1.3	<i>Tomb Murals</i>	140
2	Forming Their Own Visual Language	142
3	Tea in Literary Works	143
3.1	<i>Allusions</i>	143
3.2	<i>Reclusiveness</i>	148
3.3	<i>Exchanges among the Scholar-Artists</i>	152
4	Aromatic Substances in Literary Works	158
5	<i>Qin</i> in Literary Works	164
	Conclusion	171
1	Summary	171
2	The Formation of Scholar-Artist Communities	172
3	Methodological Reflections on the History of Art	175
4	Impact on Contemporary Issues	176
	Bibliography	179
	Appendix 1: Tea Utensils	209
	Appendix 2: Images of Water at Different Temperatures	211
	Appendix 3: Process of One of the Simulation Experiments of Tea-Tipping	212
	Appendix 4: Length of Time, Whisking Frequency, and Angle of Inclination of Whisking	217
	Glossary	219
	Index	227

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List of Maps, Figures, and Tables

Maps

- 1 Southern Chinese regions including Fujian, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, Hubei, Hunan, Guangxi, Guangdong, and Hainan 77

Figures

- 1a (Attributed) Song Huizong. *Literati Gathering (Wenhui tu)* 15
- 1b Detail of *Literati Gathering* 16
- 1c Detail of *Literati Gathering* 16
- 2a (Attributed) Song Huizong. *Listening to the Qin (Tingqin tu)* 22
- 2b Detail of *Listening to the Qin*: a *qin* player, a *qin*, and an incense burner 23
- 2c Detail of *Listening to the Qin*: a seven-stringed *qin* 23
- 3 Processes of whisking tea 37
- 4 Jian ware with hare's fur pattern 43
- 5 Three *yōhen-tenmoku* bowls 44
- 6 Dark-green glazed ewer 46
- 7 Green-and-white porcelain incense burner 54
- 8 Back and front views of the *qin* in the name of "Kumu longyin" (Withered wood, dragon's roar) 61
- 9 X-ray computer tomography scan images of the Dragon's Roar *qin* 62
- 10a Different views of the tea garden in Neiguidong Canyon, Mount Wuyi, Fujian 78
- 10b Neiguidong Canyon 78
- 11a Different views of the tea garden in Daoshuikeng Canyon, Mount Wuyi, Fujian 78
- 11b Daoshuikeng Canyon 78
- 12 Bronze incense burner 101
- 13 Tea bowl and support 103
- 14 View of the remaining foundation of Yulinting Kiln 1 105
- 15 Photograph of the Yulinting kiln site covered by a modern-day building 105
- 16 Image captured from a 3D model of potter Sun Jianxing's kiln 106
- 17 Foundation of Yulinting Kiln 1 107
- 18 End of Yulinting Kiln 1 108
- 19a Cave of Extending Blossoms, section of a copy after Li Gonglin's *Mountain Villa (Longmian shanzhuang tu)* 135
- 19b Detail of *Mountain Villa* 136
- 19c Detail of *Mountain Villa* 136

- 19d Detail of *Mountain Villa* 137
 19e Detail of *Mountain Villa* 137
 20a A tea shop; detail of Zhang Zeduan's *Qingming* scroll (*Qingming shanghe tu*) 138
 20b Detail of Zhang Zeduan's *Qingming* scroll 139
 21 Detail of the mural paintings of the tomb of Zhang Kuangzheng, M10, Hebei Xuanhua 141

Tables

- 1 Tea-related state revenue by period (compiled by Qi Xia) 91
 2 Profit by tea types 97
 3 Properties of the different types of timber 114
 4 Tonal patterns of the even-numbered characters of the five poem sets 162
 5 List of literary works and musical pieces inspired by Ouyang Xiu's *Note on the Pavilion* 165

Abbreviations

cm.	centimeter
d.	diameter
g.	gram
h.	height
l.	length
m.	meter
ml.	milliliter
t.	thickness
w.	weight
wid.	width

Chronology, Dating, Protagonists, and Conventions

1 Chronology of Chinese Textual History

Shang 商		17th cent. BCE–1046? BCE	
Zhou 周	Western Zhou 西周	1046?–771 BCE	
	Eastern Zhou 東周 Spring and Autumn Period 春秋 Warring States Period 戰國	770–256 BCE 770–476 BCE 475–221 BCE	
Qin 秦		221–206 BCE	
Han 漢	Western Han 西漢	206 BCE–8 CE	
	Xin 新	9–23	
	Eastern Han 東漢	25–220	
Three Kingdoms 三國	Wei 魏	220–265	
	Shu 蜀	221–263	
	Wu 吳	222–280	
Western Jin 西晉		265–317	
Eastern Jin 東晉		317–420	
Northern and Southern Dynasties 南北朝	Southern Dynasties 南朝	Song 宋	420–479
		Qi 齊	479–502
		Liang 梁	502–557
		Chen 陳	557–589
	Northern Dynasties 北朝	Northern Wei 北魏	386–534
		Eastern Wei 東魏	534–550
		Northern Qi 北齊	550–577
		Western Wei 西魏	535–556
		Northern Zhou 北周	557–581

(cont.)

Sui 隋		581–618
Tang 唐		618–907
Five Dynasties 五代	Later Liang 後梁	907–923
	Later Tang 後唐	923–936
	Later Jin 後晉	936–947
	Later Han 後漢	947–950
	Later Zhou 後周	951–960
Song 宋	Northern Song 北宋	960–1127
	Southern Song 南宋	1127–1279
Liao 遼		907–1125
Jin 金		1115–1234
Yuan 元		1206–1368
Ming 明		1368–1644
Qing 清		1616–1911

In this book, all years refer to the Common Era (CE) period, unless noted otherwise.

2 Emperors of the Northern Song Dynasty

Title	Dates	Reign dates (with selected reign periods)
Taizu 太祖	927–976	960–976
Taizong 太宗	939–997	976–997
		Taiping Xingguo 太平興國 period, 976–984
Zhenzong 真宗	968–1022	997–1022
		Jingde 景德, 1004–1007
Renzong 仁宗	1010–1063	1022–1063
		Qingli 慶曆, 1041–1048
Yingzong 英宗	1032–1067	1063–1067

(cont.)

Title	Dates	Reign dates (with selected reign periods)
Shenzong 神宗	1048–1085	1067–1085 Xining 熙寧, 1068–1077
Zhezong 哲宗	1076–1100	1085–1100
Huizong 徽宗	1082–1135	1100–1125 ... Chongning 崇寧, 1102–1106 Daguan 大觀, 1107–1110 Zhenghe 政和, 1111–1117 ... Xuanhe 宣和, 1119–1125
Qinzong 欽宗	1100–1156	1125–1127 Jingkang 靖康, 1126–1127

3 Important Protagonists Mentioned in This Book

Name	Dates	Selective regional affiliations
Lu Yu 陸羽	ca. 733–805	Hubei Jingling 湖北竟陵 (Tianmen 天門)
Lu Tong 盧仝	?–835	Henan Jiyuan 河南濟源
Zequan 則全	?–1045	?
Ding Wei 丁謂	966–1037	Jiangsu Suzhou Changzhou 江蘇蘇州長洲
Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹	989–1052	Jiangsu Suzhou Wuxian 吳縣
Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣	1002–1060	Anhui Xuancheng 安徽宣城
Wen Yanbo 文彥博	1006–1097	Shanxi Fenzhou 山西汾州
Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修	1007–1072	Jiangxi Ji'an Luling 江西吉安盧陵
Cai Xiang 蔡襄	1012–1067	Fujian Xianyou 福建仙遊
Shen Zun 沈遵	active 1040s– 1060s or 1070s	Jiangsu Wuxi Jiangyin 無錫江陰
Sima Guang 司馬光	1019–1086	Shanxi Xiaxian 夏縣
Wang Anshi 王安石	1021–1086	Jiangxi Fuzhou Linchuan 撫州臨川
Su Shi 蘇軾	1036–1101	Sichuan Meishan 四川眉山
Su Che 蘇轍	1039–1112	Sichuan Meishan
Zhu Changwen 朱長文	1039–1098	Jiangsu Suzhou Wuxian
Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅	1045–1105	Jiangxi Hongzhou Fenning 洪州分寧 (Jiujiang 九江)

(cont.)

Name	Dates	Selective regional affiliations
Cao Zhi 曹摅	active 11th century	Henan Kaifeng 開封
Cai Jing 蔡京	1047–1126	Fujian Xianyou
Li Gonglin 李公麟	ca. 1049–1106	Anhui Shuzhou Tongcheng 舒州桐城
Mi Fu 米芾	1051–1107	Jiangsu Suzhou Wuzhong 吳中
Hong Chu 洪芻	ca. 1064–?	Jiangxi Nanchang 南昌
Ye Tinggui 葉廷珪	active ca. 1115	Fujian Jian'ou 建甌
Chen Jing 陳敬	?, active Southern Song period	Sichuan
Lu You 陸游	1125–1209	Zhejiang Shaoxing Shanyin 浙江紹興山陰
Fan Chengda 范成大	1126–1193	Jiangsu Suzhou Wuxian
Xin Qiji 辛棄疾	1140–1207	Shandong Ji'nan Licheng 山東濟南歷城

4 **An Exemplary Table and Notes on Interpreting the Prosody of Chinese Literary Works with Attention to Rhyme, Euphony, and Tonal Patterns (*ping/ze*)**

Author, title, content, tonal pattern(s), and rhyme(s) of the Chinese literary work (where indicated)	English translation	Line
蘇軾《汲江煎茶》	Su Shi, <i>Brewing Tea by Drawing Water from the River</i>	
活水還須活火烹 (-aeng) — — —	...	1
自臨釣石取深清 (-aeng) (l) — — —		2
...		...
坐聽荒城長短更② (-aeng) — — (—) —		8

[Further explanations of the rhyme scheme(s) of the poem are provided in this grid.]

①, ②, ...: these numbers indicate words and phrases of the original Chinese literary work, which will be further explained underneath the table. Readers who are not interested in the technical analysis of classical Chinese language, literary allusions, and prosody may choose to skip these sections.

Every such table contains an original Chinese literary work alongside its English translation. Most of the Chinese characters used in this book will appear in these tables, the Glossary, and the Appendix, but not in the main text. The above literary work put in a table is one of the examples cited in the main text. It is a heptasyllabic regulated-verse poem (*lüshi*), which is composed of two quatrains of equal length (lines 1–4 the first quatrain, and lines 5–8 the second quatrain), with every two lines considered a unit, or “couplet.” The grammatical structure of the second and third couplets (lines 3–4 and 5–6) should be parallel. The final character of every even line should rhyme with the level tones (*pingsheng*). There are several types of Chinese poems presented in this book.

The prosody of the poems:

Symbols of “—” and “|” indicate the level tone and oblique tone (*zesheng*; including *shangsheng*, *qusheng*, and *rusheng*), respectively, of individual characters. A level tone typically presents a longer sound or beat, while an oblique tone generates a shorter beat, characterized by a relatively shorter or abrupt ending sound. These tonal differences are still noticeable, at the present time, to people who have acquired sufficient training in southern Chinese topolects, such as Cantonese and Hokkien. Specific tonal patterns (tones divided into these two registers of *ping/ze*) have been well developed since the Tang period for the quatrains (*jueju*), of five or seven characters per line, and for the regulated verse (*lüshi*), which comprises eight lines of five or seven characters per line. There is, accordingly, a specified tonal requirement for each character in a poem.¹ Alternating clusters of level and oblique tones present unique rhythms. We can read aloud the first tonal cluster “| | — —” in line 1 of the above poem as “*ze ze ping ping*” and interpret its rhythm as “short short long long,” while the subsequent cluster “| | —” can be read as “*ze ze ping*” and interpreted as “short short long.” Certain variations are allowed, provided that they do not interfere with the tonal beauty of the entire literary work.² A position that should be filled with what should be a level-toned character in a given pattern but which is instead filled by one with an oblique tone appears in the following sections in the format: (|); conversely, a position that should be filled with a level-toned character where an oblique tone is called for appears in the format: (—). The rhymes I refer to are based on the Middle Chinese transcription list in the appendix of the

1 See Wang Li 1979, 1–97. See also Cai Zong-qi 2008b, 169–72; 2008c, 387–92; 2014; 2015c.

2 Wang Li 1979, 63–71.

Baxter-Sagart Old Chinese reconstruction.³ William Baxter and Laurent Sagart aim not for exact reconstructions of the sounds of individual characters, but attempt to demonstrate the phonetic relationships of their pronunciations as recorded in the *Expanded Rhymes* (*Guangyun*) and the *Explanations of the Classics* (*Jingdian shiwen*).⁴ Thus, in the main text of this book we should not take their reconstructed rhymes as exact sounds. Occasionally their reconstructions are inconsistent, but such reconstructions and the identification of the rhyme categories (*yunbu*) will indicate groupings of perfect or imperfect rhymes that were intended by the original writers. Groups of words with slant rhymes, assonance, and euphonic qualities, which share similar sounds, frequently appear in poems that do not require strict prosodic patterns, and it is evident that writers often mixed these groups to construct melodically pleasant patterns, which were not strictly rhymed in their own times.⁵

3 Baxter and Sagart 2014, 327–78. For a more updated and comprehensive list, see the list in Baxter-Sagart Old Chinese reconstruction, version 1.1 (September 20, 2014).

4 See Baxter and Sagart 2014. Wang Li 1981, 55–75. Tang Zuofan 1991, 75–202. Goh 2015.

5 Cai Zong-qi 2008a, 6.

Introduction

1 Cultures of Tea, Fragrance, and *Qin* Music Today

Tea, or *cha* in Chinese (botanical name *Camellia sinensis*), is one of the world's most widely consumed beverages. Over many centuries and all over the world, diverse cultures of preparing and enjoying tea have developed. These varied tea cultures include the cultivation of tea bushes, drying, blending, and tasting of leaves, preparing and serving tea using a variety of vessels, cups, and other utensils, and creating the atmosphere for enjoying tea. Today, most of the world's tea is grown in China, Japan, India, Sri Lanka, and East Africa. Some of these plantations have existed for hundreds of years. Tea bushes have also been successfully cultivated in other areas, including in Southeast Asia and northern Europe.

The consumption of tea has been shown to have health benefits. Scientists have discovered that tea contains caffeine, tannic acid, vitamins, theaflavin, minerals, iron oxide, and carbohydrates, all of which have valuable nutritional qualities.¹ These elements can quench thirst, aid digestion, cure hangovers, soothe pain, improve circulation and digestion, and help drinkers stay calm but alert.² The many different types and treatments of tea also contribute to a wide variety of tea flavors and styles. Tea consumption has significantly shaped humanity's culture and health for more than a thousand years.

This book charts a sophisticated culture of tea making and drinking, accompanied by *qin* music and the burning of fine fragrances, that developed and was canonized during the Northern Song dynasty. Tea culture in East Asia can be traced back well over a thousand years. Lu Yu composed the first canonical text on tea, the *Classic of Tea (Chajing)* in approximately 780.³ The *Classic of Tea* laid the theoretical and practical foundations for preparing and drinking tea and thus established Lu Yu as the founder of tea culture in the Sinosphere. Numerous classic texts on tea were written and published in subsequent periods. Authors and readers of these texts included emperors, officials, scholars, and merchants—members of every political, social, cultural, and economic elite class. For over a thousand years, trade in tea and horses between settled populations and nomadic peoples was of crucial political and military importance

1 Zhu Chongsheng 1985, 4; Blofeld 1985, 185–94; Yamamoto et al. 1997; Lee and Kader 2000; Cabrera et al. 2006.

2 Xie et al. 2009; Xie et al. 2012; Jia et al. 2015; Huang et al. 2019.

3 ZLCH, vol. 1: 5.

throughout multiple dynastic periods.⁴ Furthermore, the nutritional content of tea made an essential contribution to people's health in areas where vegetables were scarce.

In modern China, elites and the general populace alike continue to enjoy a great variety of tea, including renowned types as green tea, *wulong/oolong* tea, red tea, and Puer tea.⁵ Popular ways of serving tea can reveal regional preferences, including *gongfucha* in Chaozhou; *yumcha* (tea with *dim sum*) in Guangzhou and Hong Kong; and in Japan, tea ceremonies (*chanoyu*) that use tea-whisking with powdered green tea (*matcha*), which can be traced back to their roots in twelfth-century China.⁶ Artefacts related to tea have long occupied a high status in the material cultures of East Asia. Tea bowls with the "heaven's eyes" pattern (*yōhen tenmoku*—patterns that formed unpredictably during kiln firing) that date to between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, for example, constitute a significant part of art collections in Japan, while their roots can be traced to the Fujian area in China.⁷

The appreciation of fragrance is another global phenomenon. In modern times, one of the most popular artificial forms of generating fragrance is applying perfume, while in the past, cultural elites in China preferred burning aromatic substances (*xiang*), such as frankincense or sandalwood, to generate pleasing fragrances.⁸ They treated this practice as a type of art and composed texts to promote the cultural and artistic significance of generating fragrance. Although the generation of fragrance is not deemed an art form in the context

4 Zhu Chongsheng 1985, 72–73.

5 Zhang Jinghong 2014.

6 James Benn 2015, 145.

7 Three exhibitions, which took place in 2019 and presented three tea bowls that are identified as Japanese national treasures, are deemed to be among the most important events in that year's Japanese art world: "Living in Zen and the Daitokuji Ryūkōin Heritage," March 21 to May 19, 2019 at Miho Museum; "Bizen Swords—The Flower of Japanese Swords," April 13 to June 2, 2019 at Seikadō Bunko Art Museum; "Masterpieces from the Fujita Museum: A Brilliant Universe Reflected in A National Treasure—Yōhen-Tenmoku Tea Bowl and Buddhist Art," April 13 to June 9, 2019 at Nara National Museum. There are also two fragmentary *yōhen tenmoku* bowls in private collections in China, which were reportedly found in Hangzhou. See Deng Heying 2012, 22–23; Kobayashi 2018.

8 *Xiang* is translated as "aromatic substances" in this book as there is no exact equivalent term in English. "Incense" may connote incense sticks that are commonly used nowadays. Many of today's incense sticks are artificial chemical products that do not produce a pleasing fragrance. The Northern Song *xiang* is different from today's incense sticks and the *xiang* could consist of many types of aromatic substances. Their differences and the application contexts will be explained in the following chapters. However, for the containers of the aromatic substances, the popular translation of *xianglu* as "incense burners" will be retained in this book.

of traditional art history, it may be seen as such in the larger global context. Cultural elites in China particularly welcomed aromatic substances imported from exotic places, including Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East.⁹ The substances were costly, due to their rarity and high transportation costs; moreover, their fugitive nature through burning, a rapid form of consumption, made them even more costly. In the past several decades, the burning of aromatic substances in China was limited primarily to the religious practices of offering incense to the deities,¹⁰ but its historical use in scholarly circles is significant.

The music of the *qin*-zither has been an art form distinct to East Asia, as compared to the global acceptance of the cultures of tea and aromatic substances.¹¹ Archaeologically excavated *qin* in China can date to as early as the sixth century BCE.¹² From then on, this type of musical instrument, which underwent changes in design and production, occupied an important place in the lives of scholar-artists and political elites. The *qin* has remained an essential musical instrument in traditional Chinese music concerts and has survived the impact of Western music over the recent centuries.

The cultures of tea, aromatic substances, and *qin* music have played important roles in Chinese culture in both historical and modern periods. They reflect widely adopted practices that are of interest in their performative and material aspects. Tea cultures gained popularity in Tang dynasty China, reached a climax in the Northern Song dynasty, and later constituted one of the most important beverage traditions in the world. Tea was culturally, economically, and artistically related to the production of fragrance and music in communities of traditional scholar-artists, which established artistic pursuits in the Northern Song dynasty laying the aesthetic foundations that later generations of Ming and Qing scholars were to follow. In the coming chapters we will adopt diverse perspectives to examine how they informed the lives of the Chinese.

2 Key Terms, Main Arguments, and Approaches

Our approach will first stress the three connected processes of tea preparation, the burning of aromatic substances, and the playing of the *qin*, as ephemeral practices. The “ephemerality” of all three lies in the short-lived nature of their

9 SS 13:186.4539.

10 Habkirk and Chang 2017.

11 The *qin*-zither, or *guqin*, is different from the *se*- and *zheng*-zithers.

12 Yang Yuanzheng 2015b.

actions and effects, limited to the time and space in which they were practiced and enjoyed.¹³ The artistic products generated from the practices were short-lived or rapidly consumed, making the retrieval of historical records very challenging. No matter the complexity of the process that led to its creation, a cup of tea, unlike an art object that could endure through the centuries, was usually made to be consumed then and there. In the Northern Song period, the foam generated from whisking the tea was made the focus of artistic contests. Tea makers competed for the whiteness and durability of the foam, which could last from mere seconds to several hours. Secondly, we consider the five sensory experiences: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch, also ephemeral, through the examination of how people created, appraised, and enjoyed these three ephemeral arts,¹⁴ experience of which helped constitute enduring cultural memories or beliefs that became the mental driving forces in forming communities. Thirdly, this book argues that the three practices were cultural, economic, and artistic constructs. In this context, “construct” refers to the result or effect of the scholar-artists’ mental activities, their conceptualizations, perceptions, impressions, and thoughts.¹⁵ A “construct” also refers to a set of artificial processes of the creation of these mental activities, aided by people’s perception of physical actions and results and concrete materials involved. It is not a natural and/or necessary phenomenon, but needs human participants’ active and intentional creation. We caution against taking the records left by the scholar-artists at face value and their descriptions of themselves and their activities as unalloyed truths. As their textual and visual records of these thoughts and activities are all that is left to us, we must not forget that any evidence they might provide was itself a construct.

In constructing the cultures, economies, and arts of tea, fragrance, and music, Northern Song scholar-artists strengthened their community bonds by sharing sensory experiences and emotions and performing these ephemeral practices together. The appearance of foamy tea, its taste, fragrance, and texture, the feelings brought by the movement of body parts when whisking the tea, the smell from the burning aromatic substances, the melodic and euphonic sounds of *qin* music, the chanted rhymed literary works, as well as the tactile sensations of the *qin* player’s fingers, comprised the commingled sensory expe-

13 For a dictionary definition of “ephemeral,” see Simpson and Weiner 1989, v:322.

14 Simpson and Weiner 1989, XIV:977. Cf. Howes 1991; 2005; 2018. Mark Smith 2007. Jiang Yuanxin 2019. Karmon 2021.

15 In the Oxford English Dictionary, the term “construct” can be a verb or a noun. See Simpson and Weiner 1989, III:794.

periences intimately associated with these practices. Sharing this unique atmosphere and perfecting the associated arts set the scholar-artist communities apart from the rest of society. The scholar-artists' ideals were formulated and regulated in the many material and textual sources that we can further elaborate upon through deduction and experimentation today.

The raw materials related to tea, aromatic substances, and *qin* instruments were produced and distributed in large networks connecting tea farm owners, peasants, artisans, scholars, artists, officials, musicians, and commoners living in various states throughout East Asia. Production and distribution of the materials form "an economic construct" because, while such materials did not constitute daily necessities, they were construed as necessary in the consumption economies. Their networks enabled active and frequent exchanges between peoples and states of East Asia. The production and distribution of these raw materials played a role in decisions made by policymakers in these states. Through these exchanges, tea, fragrance, and music were made into essential elements of their economies. To the scholar-artists living in metropolitan areas, the raw materials were precious due to both their fine quality and high transportation cost. The raw materials brought down from the mountains and transformed into culturally and economically consumable products were exchanged among the scholar-artists and became objects of their artistic constructions. In this way, tea garden owners, laborers, the state, governments at the central and local levels, artisans, merchants, porters, and scholar-artists—all had a hand in jointly constructing the economic value of the products.

Represented in various media, including verbal and visual media, the three types of ephemeral practice contributed significantly to the shared values and imagination of particular scholar-artist communities. Scholar-artists participated in literati gatherings and represented their elegant artistic activities in paintings. Their predilection for reclusiveness, calm, tranquility, and peace was reflected in these paintings and literary works, and such values came to be accepted by scholar-artists of certain groups and passed down through the generations. Literary works produced in communal settings were sometimes written as direct self-expression or as a medium of exchange by which scholar-artists could share their views with their fellows and peers, consolidating their sense of belonging to a group in the process. While scholar-artists expended great effort in expressing their emotions, beliefs, and aspirations through artistic creations, the properties of these three ephemeral processes also shaped how they were imagined. Scholar-artists' shared sensory experiences and cultural practices back reinforced the cohesion of their communities. In this way, interactions occurred between humans, materials, and the ephemeral arts.

3 Community Formation and Scholar-Artists

The formation of communities and groups has received much attention from social scientists,¹⁶ who have focused on how and why human beings form groups and the factors that draw group members together. The formation of specific communities has aroused the interest of modern sociologists whose insights this book will borrow. Gustave Le Bon's perception of crowd psychology was the starting point for theorizing this area of inquiry.¹⁷ Later scholars in this field began to debate over structure and agency. As some see it, a structure imposes social norms upon individuals and binds them together, while others argue that agency is an intrinsic element embedded in the minds of individuals and that individuals possess the free will to form or reject groups.¹⁸ Anthony Giddens proposes "structuration theory" to account for both structure and agency and consider the two as mutually interactive.¹⁹ Bruno Latour devised the idea of the "actor-network theory (ANT)" to integrate additional elements vital to the formation of the social.²⁰ Human beings and objects, especially products of technology and science, are considered actors, whose interplay is essential in network formation. People involved in community formation are certainly crucial actors, with objects also playing a role. The agents that bring people together may thus be divided into the physical and the mental. The physical includes the objects and the environment or spaces that house the community, while the mental includes the social norms and thoughts that bind people together.²¹

Latour's ANT argues that there is "no group, only group formation" and that "objects too have agency."²² In this schema, groups are in constant flux, and actors do not enjoy a stable and solid status. Rather, they mutually change and shape each other. Albena Yaneva expands Latour's theory and opens a new dimension for it in the study of design.²³ From Yaneva's point of view, objects

16 Le Bon (1895) 1960. Bourdieu 1977. Giddens 1984. Hurrelmann 1988. Archer 1988; 1995. Ritzer and Goodman 2004, 378–407. Latour 2005. Yaneva 2009.

17 Le Bon 1960, 23–34.

18 See a summary of the debate in Ritzer and Goodman 2004, 378–407.

19 Giddens 1984, 25. See also Bourdieu 1977. Archer 1988; 1995. Ritzer and Goodman 2004, 379–85.

20 Latour 2005, 1–17.

21 Benedict Anderson (1983) 2006, 6–7.

22 Latour 2005, 27–42, 63–86.

23 Yaneva 2009. Yaneva raises an example of designs on her university campus. She defines "design" as "what makes the social diversity of a university world hold together, as a way to produce, adjust and re-enact the social" (Yaneva 2009, 280).

and designs are empowered with human-like agency to enact and connect the social. These theories have inspired our study of the formation of Northern Song scholar-artist communities.

The specific nature of the art historical study of Northern Song scholar-artists presents an interesting case study for applying these sociological theories and opens new fields for research. First of all, regarding the debate between structure and agency, it is too difficult to determine which of the two dominated the formation of scholar-artist communities. Instead, as Giddens suggests, it may be wiser to admit the mutually-shaping mechanisms of free will and social norms.²⁴ The formation of such communities relies not only on the connections within the social and geographical networks of scholar-artists (see groups of regional affiliations of people who appeared in the table of the “Important protagonists mentioned in this book” at the front of this book), but also on the materials they created and used. Occasionally the formation of groups depends on the group members’ regional affiliations, sometimes on their sharing of the same political stance, and on other reasons that are to be explored. In the case of this book, tea, tea bowls, aromatic substances, and the *qin* are analyzed within this framework to explore the processes of community formation in the Northern Song. The tea-related objects should be considered to be empowered with agency as they played a vital role in enacting and connecting the social.²⁵ Secondly, rather than seeing people and objects as unchanging, stable agents, we should accept the fluidity and ephemerality of mutually interactive practices, whereby people and objects constantly respond to outside forces, in order to understand the ever-changing nature of community formation.²⁶ In consequence, there were no fixed communities, but communities were constantly in the process of being formed, shaped, and changed. This concept is essential to understanding the activities of the Northern Song scholar-artists discussed in this book.

Particular attention will be paid to two specific communities. The first featured Emperor Huizong and his subordinates; the second included Ouyang Xiu, Su Shi, and Huang Tingjian. Huang was a disciple of Su, who was, in turn, a disciple of Ouyang. Cultural and artistic transmission frequently took place among these individuals. Their friends, disciples, teachers, and colleagues formed a

24 Giddens 1984, 25. Ritzer and Goodman 2004, 379–87.

25 Latour 2005, 63–86. Yaneva 2009.

26 This book adopts the definition of “formation” in the Oxford English Dictionary as a process or action. The fluid process aptly describes community formation. See Simpson and Weiner 1989, vi:85–86.

large group and played a vital role in the political, economic, scholastic, and artistic sectors of the Northern Song period.

After due consideration of the definitions of scholar-artist or literati artist provided by modern art historians,²⁷ we adopt “scholar-artist,” a term suggested by Susan Bush and Robert Harrist,²⁸ to refer to Ouyang, Su, Huang, and their circles, who were both literati-officials and artists in various senses. Occasionally, this book uses the terms “literati” and “scholar-officials.” Traditionally, scholar-artists were expected to learn from Confucian classics, govern with philosophies acquired from the classics, read, paint, write, drink tea and/or alcohol, burn aromatic substances, play chess, and play the *qin* ...²⁹ These mental and physical pursuits defined them as scholar-artists. “Literati painter” or “scholar painter” merely accounts for part of their identity, since they also prepared and drank tea, and burned aromatic substances. Their social interactions were frequent and close. Consequently, the scope of this study is broader than that of studies of more traditional art in the comparatively more permanent forms of painting and calligraphy, as we will consider art forms that usually do not leave traces in the material and textual record.

The term scholar-artist is also applied to Huizong and Huizong’s Grand Councillor Cai Jing. As an emperor, Huizong should perhaps not be identified as an official. But he was very erudite and skillful in almost every type of literati art. Whether Cai Jing was the “Cai” named in the original list of “the four great Song calligraphers” has been controversial,³⁰ but he demonstrated artistic abilities that could rival those of Cai Xiang, who was also a renowned scholar-artist. The sociological theories proposed by Latour and Gidden similarly provide new insights into the cases of Huizong and Cai Jing. While the emperor and his min-

27 Loehr 1961a. Bush 1971, 1–13, “scholar-artist.” Murray 1993, 1, “literati artists,” 2, “painter official.” Murray described Ma Hezhi as a “painter and scholar” (1993, v). Harrist 1995, 3–4, “scholar-artist.” Bickford 1996, 3–4, “scholar-painting.” McNair 1998, xiv. Murck 2000, 3, “scholar art,” 4, “literati painting.” Silbergeld 2015. Descriptions of the artistic activities of *shidafu*, by Harrist (1995, 4) and Sturman (1997, 1), also lay the groundwork for defining scholar-artists. See also Bush’s citation and discussion of definitions for literati painters, given by T’eng Ku, Aoki Masaru, and James Cahill in Bush 1971, 1–2.

28 Harrist 1995, 3–4.

29 McNair 1998, xiv. Besides these cultural activities, the scholars also engaged in making concrete objects. For example, scholar-artists made ink and inkstones in the Song and Ming dynasties (Kelly 2020; Ko 2017, 5–9). Dorothy Ko (2017) astutely proposes that “artisan-scholars” as a concept should serve as a means to correct the long-held assumption of the great distinctions between artisans and intellectuals.

30 See how Dong Qichang, in the Ming dynasty, defined the “Songsjia” in his calligraphic scroll titled *Dong Qichang xingcao shu lin Songsjia juan*, collected by the Beijing Palace Museum (accession no. Xin-00130655). See also Shui Laiyou 1984, 34, 38–40.

ister may not fit into the long-held definitions of scholar-artists, if we take the formation of the scholar-artist communities as a process characterized by interactive and changing elements, it is worth exploring how Huizong and Cai Jing shaped the formation of their particular scholar-artist community.³¹ This study focuses on what these cultural elites actually did insofar as they performed artistic activities and engaged in scholarly pursuits.³² It does not adopt a fixed and static view of the scholar-artist communities and does not readily exclude those traditionally not identified as scholar-artists, because this would limit the investigation of how such communities formed and evolved.

4 Community Formation Involving People, Materials, Experiences, and Ephemeral Practices

Beyond the mental and the physical factors that bind communities, there is a third element to investigate: the ephemeral, including actions/practices and sensory experiences. How ephemeral practices and sensory experiences connected scholar-artists to each other is a central question of this study. For example, the art historian Max Loehr offered an excellent summation of Su Shi's social circle, including Wen Tong, Li Gonglin, Wang Shen, Huang Tingjian, and Mi Fu:

Regarding their social relations, Su Tung-p'o [Su Shi] and his friends—Wen T'ung, the bamboo painter, the whimsical and antiquarian Li Lung-mien [Li Gonglin], the wealthy and gifted Wang Shen, the tremendous calligrapher Huang T'ing-chien [Huang Tingjian] or Mi Fu who as a painter outshone them all—clearly formed a coterie of scholars and officials.³³

How and why the formation of this coterie or community took place, however, involved a variety of reasons. For instance, factional or partisan politics compelled officials with similar interests to bind together as they faced the same enemies.³⁴ Officials who shared the same objectives, out of their own concern for the public good, would choose to bond and cohere in groups.³⁵ Communities that connected people through the shared sensory experiences and actions of making tea, burning incense, and playing the *qin* together, also merit study.

31 Bickford 2006, 454, 513; Ebrey 2006.

32 Silbergeld 2015, 490, 493.

33 Loehr 1961a, 153.

34 He Zhongli 2007, 171–250. Bol 1992, 32–75, 212–53.

35 Murck 2000, 28–50. Powers 2015, 362.

The formation of Northern Song scholar-artist communities involved much more than the concept of an imagined community as articulated by Benedict Anderson.³⁶ Although Anderson is primarily concerned with modern history and politics, especially nationalism, his concept of an imagined community has been extensively applied in studying other periods.³⁷ The study of scholar-artist communities poses challenges to the imagination of community because non-imaginative elements such as the body, materials, the ephemerality of actions and practices, and sensory experiences were essential factors, though hard to monitor. However ephemeral such elements were and however scant their traces in textual records may be, they were nonetheless concrete agents of the community formation process and, as such, should pique our interest. From learning how the scholar-artists prepared and enjoyed tea, we will discover that studying a community involving people, materials, experiences, and ephemeral practices can lead to an alternative approach to current, standard art historical methods of research on the Northern Song.

Instead of placing an emphasis on the ways in which social norms shape people, this book adopts the approach that the very formation of a community provides standards, requirements, expectations, and inspiration to its members.³⁸ For example, we do not know if Su Shi really liked the smell of the popular aromatic substances used in his time, but we do know that he and his disciple Huang Tingjian exchanged numerous poems about the fragrance of aromatic substances. Su's mentor Ouyang Xiu did play the *qin*, but we do not know how well Su played. These questions are perhaps unanswerable, but whether Su enjoyed these practices or not, an individual who wished to be labeled as a scholar-artist did what other people of his community did, and fulfilled what the community required and expected of him. The sense of belonging to a community and the satisfaction of being recognized as a member of it would compel one's shaping of it. Internalization of a community's expectations would lead any member of it to embrace such expectations in turn. This is why community formation is a process, characterized by social relations, power exertion, and mutual change.

The idea of individual creativity is challenged herein along these lines. When we credit the Northern Song painters, calligraphers, and poets for their original aesthetic pursuits and their individual voices,³⁹ we must re-examine

36 Benedict Anderson 2006, 6–7.

37 Desai 2008, 183. Ge Zhaoguang 2005.

38 Cf. Le Bon 1960, 79–116. Giddens 1984, 25. Murck 2000, 28–50. Powers 2015, 364.

39 Egan 1994; 2006b. See also Murray 1993, 1–2, “unique personal expression.” McNair 1998, xiv, “outward manifestations of inner character.”

the sources of their inspiration and re-consider in what sense their personal expression was original and unique. Many paintings, calligraphic works, and poems served as art for the sake of correspondence; *qin* music and the burning of aromatic substances were not purely for personal enjoyment but incorporated into protocols of guest reception. Hosts and guests alike would participate in the creation of these art forms. Materials, shared sensory experiences, and the performance of related actions served as inspiration for those involved in the art creation process. Over-emphasis on individuality and the authentic expression of individual freedom in the Northern Song here faces theoretical challenges in our study of the formation of scholar-artist communities.

Sensory experiences and ephemeral practices, when shared among the same group of people using a common vocabulary, became a collaborative construct. This shared vocabulary of sensory experiences would invoke similar associative and imaginative thoughts among group members. Ephemeral practices, if approved of and conducted by a group, would correspondingly incorporate everyone in the group in performing the same series of actions. For instance, the taste of the same bowl of tea might render any individualized experience to every single person, but if the vocabulary for that experience is shared among group members, they are collaboratively constructing the expressions of the taste of the tea, whether it is astringent-sweet or bitter. In another term, they are collaboratively constructing “the shared experiences” of tasting the tea. The practice of whisking the tea would also imply the repetitive turning of wrists and fingers to control the whisk in stirring the tea, and thus the shared experiences of controlling the whisk. We treat these repetitive experiences and practices as part of the shared, collaborative agency of the group.

Cultural Construct

1 Relationship between Tea, Fragrance, and Music

Northern Song cultural and political elites treated tea, fragrance, and music as significant interrelated elements.¹ Textual and visual evidence dating to this period attests to this. The emperor Huizong was himself a renowned tea lover. His Grand Councillor Cai Jing helped him reform state policies regarding tea production and trade and they both contributed significantly to the creation and development of Northern Song tea cultures. Though of different ages (Cai was older than Huizong), they generally maintained a very close and good relationship until Cai's death. As recorded in the *Comprehensive Collection of Essays of the Song Dynasty* (*Quan Songwen*) and Zhuang Zhuo's *Anthology of Chicken Ribs* (*Jilei bian*), Huizong honoured Cai by visiting his house several times.² In an anecdote recalling a visit by Huizong to Cai's house in the ninth lunar month of 1119, Huizong personally prepared tea for Cai and others after they drank alcohol. Huizong liked serving tea to his subjects.³ With subordinates he composed a classic tea text, *Treatise of Tea during the Dagan Reign* (*Dagan chalu*; hereafter *Dagan Treatise*), between 1107 and 1110. It laid the theoretical and practical foundation for tea aesthetics in the Northern and Southern Song dynasties. The earliest version of the *Dagan Treatise* appeared in Tao Zongyi's *On the Outer City* (*Shuofu*).⁴ The text was attributed to Huizong, but more likely

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- 1 The Buddhist monks also shared very similar practices. See Liu Shufen 2004; 2006; 2007. James Benn 2015, 117–44. I will focus on the scholar-artists' practices in the secular world.
 - 2 QSW 109:2364.177–78 or JLB 2.43–44. See also Ebrey 2014, 327–28.
 - 3 See Ebrey 2014, 29, 298, 327–28. See Zhu Chongsheng 1985, 46–53 for how other emperors bestowed tea on their subordinates.
 - 4 *Shuofu* 93a.45–55. ZLCH, vol. 1: 103. See also You Xiuling 2003. Zheng Peikai and Zhu Zizhen reject the notion put forward by some scholars who claim that Huizong himself did not compose the *Dagan Treatise* on the grounds that the doubting scholars present no definitive evidence (ZLCH, vol. 1: 116). The Northern Song author Xiong Fan claimed in his *Xuanhe Beiyuan gongcha lu* that Huizong composed twenty chapters that were collectively known as the *Chalu* (*Treatise of Tea*). We can believe that the *Chalu* text was related to the Northern Song royal court, but currently available literature does not provide a definitive answer to the authorship problem of the *Dagan Treatise*. Whether the entire *Dagan Treatise* was written by Huizong or was the result of a collaboration remains a mystery. For the purpose of this discussion, I tentatively attribute the creation of the text to Huizong and authors under his patronage. See also Cheng Guangyu 1976, 432–33. You Xiuling 2003, 262–65.

it was created by a group of his subjects who were very familiar with the highly detailed tea preparation processes.

Cai Jing, in his *Note on A Banquet in the Extended Blessings Palace* (*Yanfu-gong quyan ji*), records eight types of luxury items and elegant entertainment available at the Joined Calm Palace, including *qin*, *weiqi*, calligraphic works, paintings, tea, elixirs, classics, and aromatic substances.⁵ These luxury items reflect the significance of the link between the *qin*, tea, and aromatic substances, along with other items treasured by scholar-artists, among the highest echelons of society.

The association of *qin* music with drinking tea and burning aromatic substances also prevailed among scholar-artists of lower ranks. They enjoyed *qin* music, tea, and fragrances from burning aromatic substances and recorded their enjoyment in various formats. The title of a poem by Mei Yaochen, a famed scholar, artist, and official, is *Intoning the Same Rhymes, Resonating with Shao Buyi, After the Rain, Gathering of Brewing Tea, Viewing Paintings, and Listening to the Qin* (*Yiyun he Shao Buyi yi yu zhi pengcha guanhua tingqin zhi hui*).⁶ The first line of this poem reads, “Playing the *qin* and viewing the ancient paintings, time is still needed to brew the tea.” The sequence of the three activities is: while they played the *qin* and viewed the paintings, the water was heated, part of the time-consuming process in tea-brewing. Eventually, they drank the tea together. Even if the scene described by the poem is imaginary, its title at least alludes to the procedure of a tea gathering. On another occasion, Su Shi

I agree with the claim of You Xiuling that the current version of the *Daguan Treatise* was composed during the period when tea contests were very popular. The *Treatise* authors were familiar with the tea preparation processes, knowing well how to create a layer of foam on the tea, select the best crushers, and use ewers with specially designed spouts, among other things, all of which are elaborated on in the following sections of this book. This could not have been possible in periods when tea was prepared in other ways. However, the last three chapters of the current version of the *Daguan Treatise* merit further discussion.

For a partial English translation of the text, see Blofeld 1985, 34–37 and Ebrey 2014, 299–300. There is an annotated English translation of parts of the *Daguan Treatise*, although the translator is not specified (see Global Tea Hut 2016, 35–48, <http://archive.globalteahut.org/article/694>, last accessed on September 19, 2020). Although this is not a philological interlinear translation and occasionally omits difficult-to-translate phrases, the translator(s)’ interpretations of some key words in the original text are worthy of consultation. For a scholarly annotated Japanese translation of the *Treatise*, see Nunome and Nakamura 1976, 193–226. Fukuda 1974, 108–21.

5 Cai’s essay is anthologized in the *Huizhu lu, yuhua*, 1.577. See also QSW109:2364.178–79. Huang Zien 2015, 18. The Extended Blessings Palace, built in 1113–1114, was primarily used for hosting imperial banquets (Huang Zien 2015, 1).

6 QSS 5:257.3172.

recorded a gathering at his friend Sun Shujing's house where they drank beer, brewed tea, burned aromatic substances, and used a special brush called *Zhuge bi* (to paint and/or write calligraphy).⁷ Su's association of tea drinking with the burning of aromatics also reflected the popularity of these activities among scholars, artists, and officials, which is evident in numerous anecdotes, notes, prefaces, and in the titles of literary works of these cultural elites.

Paintings collaboratively created by Huizong, Cai Jing, and other court painters are evidence of the constructed relationship between the three types of practices.⁸ Huizong and Cai, who jointly prescribed reforms to practices surrounding the preparation and consumption of tea, also collaborated on two paintings depicting scenes of tea consumption, accompanied by fragrances and the playing of the *qin*. One of the works is the *Painting of A Literati Gathering* (*Wenhui tu*; hereafter *Literati Gathering*), attributed to Huizong and housed in the National Palace Museum in Taipei (hereafter this museum is referred to as the "Taipei Palace Museum" to distinguish it from the "Beijing Palace Museum"), depicting a gathering of literati with tea being served (Fig. 1a and Fig. 1b). We may not know whether this painting captures an actual historical gathering, but we can treat it as an idealized scene depicting a gathering of literati. The painters and the composers of its poetic colophons constructed a gathering that would take place among the literati. A *qin* painted in black lacquer, a *ding*-tripod, and several books are laid on a table under a willow tree at the center of the painting (Fig. 1c). The unattended *qin*, lying aside what is likely its white cloth wrapping, may suggest that the banquet is taking place after the playing of the *qin*. The tripod may be an incense burner used during the concert, or an antique presented for the guests' viewing.⁹ The main protagonists around the large square table are probably high-status scholar-officials, although it is unclear whether Huizong in fact appears among them. There are numerous utensils on the large table, including tea bowls, saucers, cups, and ewers, as well as containers for fruits, flowers, and probably aromatic substances. The presence of these materials suggests that the fragrance from the tea, flowers, fruits, and possible burning of the aromatic substances must have spread throughout the banquet.

Near the large table are sets of tea utensils on two smaller tables (Fig. 1b). We can easily identify two ewers on the table to the right with conspicuously

7 QSW 91:1973:35.

8 See the definition of Huizong's collaborative paintings in Bickford 2006, 490–96.

9 The fumes above the tripod are vaguely depicted. They may be the fragrance from burning aromatic substances inside the tripod. See Li Kongzhao 2018, 105.



FIGURE 1A (Attributed) Song Huizong, *Literati Gathering (Wenhui tu)*. Hanging scroll. Ink and color on silk. 184.4 × 123.9 cm. Probably made before 1110 THE NATIONAL PALACE MUSEUM, TAIPEI, CC-BY-4.0 @ WWW.NPM.GOV.TW (RETRIEVED ON AUGUST 24TH, 2023). ACCESSION NO. GU-HUA 000836N000000000



FIGURE 1B Detail of *Literati Gathering*. Brightness and contrast degree adjusted in Adobe Photoshop by the author



FIGURE 1C Detail of *Literati Gathering*. Brightness and contrast degree adjusted

special spouts and, between them, a ladle. On the table to the left are several light-colored tea bowls on saucers or pedestals of a darker color. One servant in blue picks up something from a jar with a ladle in his right hand, while he holds a bowl and saucer in his left. These bowls probably have thinner walls and do not hold heat well. Tea drinkers hold the saucers with both hands to avoid touching the hot bowls directly. To the left of this table is a large charcoal stove with two ewers for heating water; beyond this is a young servant drinking from a bowl he holds in his left hand.

The painting depicts a sophisticated and elegant tea gathering for the elite, as suggested by the utensils, settings, participants' clothing, *qin* music, and even the manner in which the saucers are held. The activities of this gathering may have followed this sequence: the playing of the *qin*, followed by the drinking

of alcohol, enjoyment of a fine banquet, and, finally, the imbibing of tea. But it is also plausible that tea, alcohol, and fruits may have been served simultaneously. The composing and chanting of poetry may have punctuated every phase of the gathering. During Huizong's visit to the Cai household in 1119 mentioned above, Huizong not only prepared tea for all those present, but he also gave an olive to Cai and a cup of alcohol (possibly beer) to Tong Guan, while his consort served pieces of fruit.¹⁰

There are debates about who created the painting and when. Art historian Chen Jiejun suggests that the painting may be a Ming dynasty copy of a Northern Song model, because of the presence, at the bottom of the painting, of a servant holding a large blue-and-white porcelain basin, a type of vessel that only emerged in the fourteenth century.¹¹ However, another art historian, I Lo-fen, questions whether this object might be something other than a blue-and-white porcelain.¹² I Lo-fen claims that the painting accords with the style of the imperial painting academy during Huizong's time and sees it as directly related to Huizong. Chen echoes this point, suggesting that the painters might have consulted earlier model paintings of the Northern Song. Chen argues that the trees and rocks in the background, the arrangement of the human figures, tea utensils, and the tea preparation process depicted in the painting all attest to the painting's Northern Song vintage. Despite his doubts as to a Northern Song date, Chen admits that this work must be based on an earlier painting depicting similar content. It is also the consensus that the original version of *Literati Gathering* is one of the most important paintings attributed to Huizong, although Huizong might have merely painted a small portion of the painting or contributed a poetic colophon to it.

Two poetic colophons are inscribed at the top of the painting, suggesting that Huizong and Cai collaborated on the painting. The presence of the colophons indicates how well-received Cai's poetry and calligraphic work were at the time—ordinarily, a subordinate's work would not have been placed in as prominent a position as that of the emperor, whose composition is on the painting's right side:

10 QSW 109:2364.177–78 or JLB 2.43–44. See also Mair 2016, 311. Victor Mair suggests translating the term “*jiu*” from this period as beer, brew, or ale, instead of “wine.” See also Charles Benn 2002, 140–43.

11 Chen Jiejun 1996, 89.

12 I Lo-fen 2006, 253–78; 2008, 358–59. I Lo-fen cites other scholars' arguments that the servant is not holding a blue-and-white porcelain basin but possibly an object made of crystal, agate, or large white porcelain (2008, n56).

徽宗《題文會圖》

Huizong, *Inscription on Literati Gathering*¹³

儒林華國①古今同 (- <i>uwng</i>) — — — —	Confucian scholars glorifying the state is common in both ancient and modern times.
吟詠飛毫醒醉中 (- <i>uwng</i>) — — — ¹⁴	Sober or inebriated, they chant, sing, and brandish the writing brush.
多士作新知入彀② (—) () — —	Numerous talents, innovative in cultivation [educating the public], know that they would be recruited [by the emperor].
畫圖猶喜見文雄 (- <i>uwng</i>) () — (—) — —	How delightful to see that this painting reveals the superior literary power!
	The words “同,” “中,” and “雄” belong to the <i>-uwng</i> rhyme (<i>dongyun</i>) group. ¹⁵

① *Guoyu* 4.61. The character “hua” 華 is read as an oblique tone.

② *Ru gou* 入彀, literally means being within the shooting range of the arrows, here it means being controlled by the emperor himself, see *Tang zhiyan* 1.3. This phrase originated from Tang Taizong.

The poetic colophon to the left, by Cai, reads:

蔡京《臣京謹依韻和進》

Cai Jing, *Intoning the Same Rhyme, Minister Jing Resonated and Submitted [this Poem]*

明時不與有唐①同 (- <i>uwng</i>) — — — —	This enlightened reign [of ours] is different from [that of the ancient emperors] You [Yu] and [Tao] Tang.
八表人歸大道中 (- <i>uwng</i>) — — —	The talents from distant places all come to congregate on the main avenue.
可笑當年十八士② — — ()	Pitiful were the eighteen scholars of former times.

13 For a different version of the translation of the two poetic colophons, see Ebrey 2014, 210.

14 The pronunciation of the first character of this line, “yin,” is very complicated. In most cases, it is read with a level tone, JY 4.279, meaning “chanting” as a verb. However, in rare cases, it can also be read with an oblique tone, JY 6.444, also meaning “chanting” as a verb. For the beauty and tidiness of the tonal pattern of the poem, which was probably intended by Huizong, I choose the oblique tone here.

15 GY 1.21 to 1.26.

(cont.)

蔡京《臣京謹依韻和進》

Cai Jing, *Intoning the Same Rhyme, Minister Jing Resonated and Submitted [this Poem]*經綸誰是出羣雄 (-*uwng*)

— — (—) || — —

Which of them, with their discourses on the classics, would come out on top of other eminent scholars?

The words “同,” “中,” and “雄” belong to the -*uwng* rhyme group (*dongyun*).¹⁶

- ① You 有 and Tang 唐, refer to the ancient legendary emperors You Yu and Tao Tang, who are said to be enlightened and sage rulers. *Shiji* 1.24a–b.
- ② When Tang Taizong established the Academy of Literacy and Learning (Wenxueguan), he commissioned eighteen scholars including Du Ruhui, Fang Xuanling, and Lu Deming to be fellows of the Academy, and ordered Yan Liben to produce portraits of the eighteen scholars. These paintings were called the *Portraits of the Eighteen Scholars* (*Shiba xueshi xiezhentu*). *Jiu Tangshu* 72.11a.

Huizong recognized Cai as a prominent figure in poetry and calligraphy, while the emperor himself was also considered one of the best artists for his calligraphy, painting, and other cultural pursuits.¹⁷ Huizong so admired Cai's poetry that he could recall one of Cai's poems composed two decades earlier. For Cai's calligraphic works to appear on Huizong's steles would have been considered an immense honor. Huizong collected some of Cai's calligraphic works and preserved them carefully in a box wrapped in silk.¹⁸ It therefore comes as no surprise that their inscribed poems might appear together on the same painting.

The two colophons are closely related. Both express similar concerns about recruiting new talent.¹⁹ Huizong's poem hints that poems and songs were chanted and sung (probably with the playing of the *qin*), and calligraphic works were written, even though the painting does not depict all of these activities. The audial elements of the literati gathering thus include not just the *qin* music,²⁰ but also the chanting of poems. Cai's poem shares the same rhyme

16 GY 1.21 to 1.26.

17 Ebrey 2014, 327.

18 Ebrey 2014, 327.

19 Ebrey suggests that the painting was used by Cai to flatter Huizong. Ebrey 2014, 210. See also Chaffee 2006, 32, 47.

20 For a recent comprehensive study of how the *qin* was related to literati culture, see Zhang Meimei 2019; 2023. See also Egan 1997.

group as Huizong's; the basic tonal patterns are also the same, with only minor variations. In this way, Cai's poem resonates with Huizong's in terms of the content, rhythm, and rhyme, which listeners would easily recognize when the poems were chanted aloud.

It is not clear when precisely *Literati Gathering* was created. The light-colored tea bowls in the painting suggest, however, that it might have been painted before the compilation of the *Daguan Treatise*, in which Huizong and his subordinates regulated tea practices and recommended the use of dark-colored bowls.²¹ The painters were not intentionally creating a painting to reveal Huizong's favorite tea preparation process. Rather, they were interested in the banquet scene depicting a literati gathering in which the literati converse, imbibe alcohol and tea, and enjoy a moment of leisure in a beautiful garden with trees and rocks. The alcohol makes them tipsy, but the tea energizes them, and these changing states are referred to in Huizong's poem.

Another colophon poem composed by Cai, which shares the same rhyme scheme but not the same tonal patterns, appears on another painting also attributed to Huizong:

蔡京《聽琴圖》

Cai Jing, *Painting of Listening to the Qin*

吟徵調商竈下桐① (-uwng)

(—) | (|) — || —

[A *qin* melody with] chanting in the key of *zhi*, [a *qin* melody called] *diao* in the key of *shang*, the parasol-wood [*qin* played on].

松間疑有入松風② (-uwng)

— — ||| — —

A surging wind seems to be sweeping through the pine grove.

仰窺低審含情客

(|) — (—) | — — |

[One guest] gazes upward, [another] glances down in contemplation, their [hearts] filled with sentiments.

以聽無絃③ 一弄中 (-uwng)

|| — — || —

There listening to a melody played on a stringless [*qin*].

臣京謹題

Minister Jing respectfully inscribed.

The words “桐,” “風,” and “中” belong to the -uwng rhyme group (*dongyun*).²²

21 ZLCH, vol. 1: 105.

22 GY 1.21 to 1.26.

- ① If the character 吟 is read as “yín” in its nominal sense meaning “[a *qin* melody with] chanting,” this should be contrasted with an alternate *qin* melody type called “yīn” 引, read in an oblique tone. The reconstruction of the Middle Chinese pronunciation of 吟 is “ngim,” while 引 is “yinX.” See Baxter and Sagart 2014. Their two sounds are not identical, but euphonicly similar (“im” and “in”). Examples of these *qin* melodies are *Zuiweng yin* and *Lienü yin*. For various names of the *qin* melodies, see the *Twelve Qin Melodies (Gucuo shierzhang)*, by an anonymous author, in QYYL, 1–17; and the *Book of the Qin (Qinshu)*, by an anonymous writer, in QYYL, 93–99. These texts date roughly to the Song period. *Zaoxia tong* 竈下桐 refers to the *qin* made of *wutong*, or Chinese parasol wood retrieved from the bottom of a stove, in a story of Cai Yong of the Eastern Han dynasty, who once heard the cracking sound of burning timber coming from the bottom of a stove. Thinking this piece of timber would be an excellent material for a *qin*, he rescued it from the fire, and had it made into a *qin* that produced beautiful tones. *Soushenji* 13.167.
- ② *Songfeng* 松風 can be literally taken as the wind passing through a pine forest. Here it can allude to two layers of meaning: in the first layer it implies a *qin* melody,²³ *Wind Entering the Pine Forest (Feng ru song)*, *Tongzhi* 49.6. Titles of poems and lyrics bearing these characters *Feng ru song* are numerous, see, for example, monk Jiaoran’s *Song of Wind Entering the Pine Forest (Feng ru song ge)*, *Yuefu shiji* 3:60.876. In the second layer the term signifies the sound of water boiling in the making of tea. For the origins of this expression, see the Tang dynasty monk Pi Rixiu’s poem, *Brewing Tea (Chazhong zayong—zhucha)*, QTS 2:611.1548; See also Su Shi’s poem in QSS 14:791.9160; and another poem attributed to Su Shi, *DPXJ* 3.21a.
- ③ *Wuxian* 無絃 refers to the stringless *qin* purportedly collected by Tao Qian, which came to stand for his elegant and sophisticated taste that could only be appreciated by cultural elites but not by ordinary persons. *Jinshu* 94.21a.

Fig. 2a reproduced the *Painting of Listening to the Qin (Tingqin tu; hereafter Listening to the Qin)* housed in the Beijing Palace Museum. Although controversies about the authorship and dating of this painting persist,²⁴ scholars such as Zhu Jiajin, Xie Zhiliu, and Xu Bangda believe that this is a work from Huizong’s time and that Huizong might have played a role in its creation.²⁵ Xu Bangda specifies that the painting was created during the Xuanhe period.²⁶ This book treats both *Listening to the Qin* and *Literati Gathering* as works by Northern

23 This layer of meaning is evinced in Wang Cheng-hua 1998, 89–90. Zheng Minzhong 2003, 28. Huang Jie 2019, 17–18.

24 Since the 1930s, Huang Binhong, Zhu Jiajin, Ma Heng, and others have been debating whether *Listening to the Qin* is an authentic Northern Song painting or a forgery. See CCTV 2004–2019; CCTV 2019. Unfortunately, I cannot locate that many relevant publications made by these scholars, connoisseurs, and critics in this regard before the 1950s. For textual discussions about the authenticity of the painting, see Xie Zhiliu 1957 (Northern Song); Ecke 1972, 96–199, especially 151 (the eighteenth century); Xu Bangda 1979 (Northern Song); Yang Xin 1980 (Northern Song); Zheng Minzhong 2003 (Northern Song); Huang Jie 2019 (problematic).

25 CCTV 2004–2019; CCTV 2019. Xie Zhiliu 1957. Xu Bangda 1979. Wang Cheng-hua 1998, 82–83.

26 Xu Bangda 1979, 63.



FIGURE 2A
 (Attributed) Song Huizong. *Listening to the Qin* (*Tingqin tu*).
 Hanging scroll. Ink and color
 on silk. 147.2 × 51.3 cm. Probably
 made in 1119–1125

COLLECTION OF THE BEIJING
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 NO. GU-00005873. IMAGE
 PROVIDED BY THE PALACE
 MUSEUM; PHOTOGRAPHER:
 SI BING



FIGURE 2B Detail of *Listening to the Qin*: a *qin* player, a *qin*, and an incense burner
IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE PALACE MUSEUM; PHOTOGRAPHER: SI BING

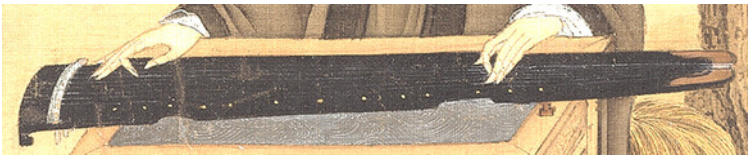


FIGURE 2C Detail of *Listening to the Qin*: a seven-stringed *qin*. Brightness and contrast degree adjusted in Adobe Photoshop by the author
IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE PALACE MUSEUM; PHOTOGRAPHER: SI BING

Song court painters.²⁷ Huizong may have contributed a small portion, or perhaps not at all, to the two paintings, even though he is still credited with their creation. He may be depicted as a protagonist in the paintings, but we cannot clearly ascertain his role.

Art historian Wang Cheng-hua has provided a detailed analysis of the political meanings and iconography of the painting.²⁸ She suggests that the *qin* player is Huizong, while the two seated officials might be members of the court. She further describes the incense burner on a high table next to the *qin* player (Fig. 2b) and identifies the flower contained in the *li*-container on the rock as white jasmine, which blossoms in the summer.²⁹

The two paintings are closely related in depicting and alluding to tea, aromatic substances, and the *qin*.³⁰ The presence of music is overt in its posi-

27 New discoveries may emerge in the future that may overturn today's connoisseurial and art historical standpoints that *Literati Gathering* and *Listening to the Qin* are genuinely Northern Song paintings. When I mention and cite *Literati Gathering* in this book, I refer to the original model painting, if it exists at all, of the current painting that is stored at the Taipei Palace Museum, but, one must allow the possibility that the Taipei version is already the original one.

I take *Listening to the Qin* as a genuine Northern Song court painting because its rich details are so convincing that it would be very difficult for any forger of later periods to create. The extensive studies by the scholars mentioned above demonstrate that a forger must master a wide and rich body of knowledge about the Northern Song to produce a painting like *Listening to the Qin*, which was unlikely before the twentieth century. First, a forger would need to know about Huizong's physical appearance based on portraits of Huizong, which ended up in the Nanxundian collection in the Qing dynasty (see Yang Xin 1980. Wang Cheng-hua 1998, 83, and n27 to n31). Very few painters would have access to these portraits. Second, the forger would also need to be aware of Huizong's preference to be shown as a Daoist or his preference that the *qin* player be represented in Daoist robes because he favored Daoism (Yang Xin 1980. Zheng Minzhong 2003, 26). Third, the forger needed to be familiar with the inscriptions of Huizong and Cai Jing (Xie Zhiliu 1957, 20–21). Although Huang Jie casts doubt on Cai's signature (2019, 17), he still admits that the calligraphy on *Listening to the Qin* resembles Cai's other genuine works. Fourth, the forger would need to be familiar with the appearance of garments, incense burners, *li*-containers in an antique fashion, black-lacquered *qin*, furniture, vegetation, rocks, and the seat pads made of monkey fur from Sichuan, favored by the political elites at the time (Wang Cheng-hua 1998, 83–85, 88–89. Zheng Minzhong 2003, 25–27). Fifth, the forger would have to possess very sophisticated painting skills. A highly skillful and knowledgeable forger before the twentieth century might have fulfilled one or two criteria mentioned above, but fulfillment of all five would be highly unlikely.

28 Wang Cheng-hua 1998.

29 Wang Cheng-hua 1998, 83, 88. In this book the “incense” in the phrase “incense burner” refers to the aromatic substances, which include incense sticks and other materials that can generate fragrance.

30 Regarding the validity of these sources of evidence, the textual sources cited at the begin-

tioning in *Listening to the Qin*, as is the conspicuous placement of fragrance due to the depiction of the incense burner and the blossoming jasmine. In *Literati Gathering* the association of music and fragrance is also reinforced by the depiction of the *qin* and the tripod incense burner in close proximity in that painting. Tea, through the use of the phrase *songfeng*, is indirectly alluded to in Cai's poetic colophon to *Listening to the Qin*. Most scholars focus only on the first layer of what is implied by "pine wind" sweeping through the pine forest, which could be taken as a *qin* melody or perhaps as simply the sound of the wind.³¹ For our purposes, the second layer of implication, a more oblique reference to the sound of boiling water used to prepare tea, is the more interesting one (see the literary references, above).³² Cai's repeated use of the character "song" (pine) and mention of the *qin* sound do not indicate the poet's poor literary skills,³³ but instead point to a sequence of activities in a typical literati gathering. As suggested by the painting *Literati Gathering*, the serving of tea came after playing the *qin*, when alcohol was taken during the banquet. Could the *qin* player and the seated officials, depicted in *Listening to the Qin*, be drinking tea after the concert, with the young servant making tea for them? We can so infer, based on the allusion to the sound of the pine wind in Cai Jing's poem, which held complex and multiple layers of meaning. Recalling the line in Mei Yaochen's poem cited earlier, "time is still needed to brew the tea," we can imagine that the guests could hear the faint sound of boiling water for making tea during the *qin* concert.

All in all, the music from the *qin* and the chanting of the poems with measured and euphonic tonal patterns and rhymes, the fragrance from the aromatic substances, flowers, fruits, and tea, the visual enjoyment of all the assembled luxury items, the tactile sensation of items with soft and delicate surfaces such as seat pads and utensils,³⁴ and the taste of tea, fruits, and other delicacies—all

ning of this chapter are very reliable because they were marked with clear dates and authorship. For the two paintings, the current academic consensus is that they can date to the Northern Song and were created under Huizong's patronage. Although this view may be overturned in the future, they can be integrated into a large pool of materials incorporating many other types of evidence that the cultures of tea, fragrance, and *qin* music were interrelated in the Northern Song. The paintings are not isolated pieces of evidence.

- 31 Wang Cheng-hua 1998, 89–90. Zheng Minzhong 2003, 28. Huang Jie 2019, 17–18.
- 32 The allusion of the *qin* melody *Feng ru song* was possible, but it also raises doubts. Why did the poet use the third character of the second line, "yi" (seemingly or doubtfully), to describe there was a *qin* melody, while there was actually a *qin* being played? I thus believe that the second layer of implications that the water-boiling sound for making tea was more likely the intended message.
- 33 Huang Jie 2019, 17–18.
- 34 For a discussion of the seat pads, see Wang Cheng-hua 1998, 84–85.

constituted important symbols and hints of the sensory experiences portrayed in the two paintings. They revolved around the themes of idealized tea cultures and literati gatherings. Tea, aromatic substances and their fragrances, and the *qin* were closely related, as they represented the material sources of almost all the sensory experiences perceived by cultural and political elites at these exclusive gatherings.

2 Tea

2.1 *Motivations for Appreciating Tea*

We now know the benefits of drinking tea and can easily understand why people drink it. The process of drying the tea leaves helps preserve the Vitamin C they contain, and tea provides an essential ingredient for those who lack fresh vegetables and fruits in their diet.³⁵ Scurvy, an illness common among nomadic peoples and sailors before the modern age, is known to cause emotional instability, physical weakness, fatigue, bleeding, sores, gum disease, poor healing of wounds, dental problems, and even death. All of these symptoms can be alleviated by drinking tea.

While people in the Northern Song period did not have our knowledge of the nutritional and medicinal value of tea, they had their own sources of medicinal knowledge. Why was tea a beverage of choice compared to the many other beverages available at the time? They could have drunk pure water to quench their thirst or a robust and intoxicating beverage such as beer or medicinal or non-medicinal decoctions. What was so enticing about tea? Was it because of its perceived medicinal benefits? Other scholars have also given explanations of the popularity of tea because tea was helpful in religious functions and tea could be preserved for long. Apart from the health benefits and preservation conditions, we should also consider the role of tea in the eyes of elites and commoners of the Tang-Song period and seek additional explanations for its popularity. Drinking tea was not merely a conscious health choice in the Northern Song people's own terms, but also a cultural, economic, and artistic construct, all of which led to the popular reception of tea. These aspects will be discussed in the following chapters.

2.1.1 Not Merely Religion

The scholars Zhu Zizhen, Victor Mair and Erling Hoh, James Benn, and George van Driem argue that Buddhists, Daoists, and other religious personages played

35 Yamamoto et al. 1997; Lee and Kader 2000; Cabrera et al. 2006.

an important role in turning the act of appreciating tea into a fashionable trend.³⁶ While accepting these scholars' perspectives, however, we must remember that the religious figures referred to maintained a certain distance from the secular world. It would appear that the spread of tea cultures to a broader public came about through the actions of scholars, officials, and artists who interacted with religious people and adopted their tea-drinking habits. As Ronald Egan observes, tea was limited to a small circle of literary writers, including recluses, immortals, and Buddhists in the Tang dynasty.³⁷ Tea became universally popular in the Northern Song period when it came to be consumed often by people from various walks of life, including scholar-artists in office, royal family members, recluses, religious persons, and commoners.

2.1.2 Not Merely a Matter of Health

Tea was not an essential health drink in people's lives, unlike many scholars have presumed. There were many substitutes for tea in the Song times. We will investigate what the substitutes were, how they could well replace tea, and why tea was eventually chosen to symbolize an essential health drink.

In his *Classic of Tea*, Lu Yu mentions that the flavor of tea is of the cold energy (*han*), which can help quench thirst (*ke*) and cool one down when one is beset with hot energy (*re*).³⁸ People with headaches, dry eyes, and body aches can drink tea to alleviate discomfort.³⁹ However, Lu's promotion of drinking tea for the sake of drinking tea implies that doing so was not a universal custom enjoyed by the elites and commoners of his time. Had it been popular, Lu Yu would not have had to write his persuasive text to promote tea. Meanwhile, for their part, Cai Xiang's *Records of Tea (Chalu)* and Huizong's *Treatise* were not primarily concerned with the medicinal qualities of tea. Perhaps, by the Northern Song, drinking tea had become such an essential part of life that they saw no need to expend any effort in its promotion in medicinal terms (although they were still interested in promoting specific types and brands of tea). One avenue we can pursue is to investigate the historical connections between tea

36 Zhu Zizhen 1996, 43–47; Mair and Hoh 2009, 35–36; Benn 2015; Driem 2019, 59–61, 90. See also Fang Hao 1964 and Cheng Guangyu 1988a, 16–26 for the impact of religious persons on tea cultures. Mair and Hoh, and Driem find the origins of tea in the Himalayan area, Southeast Asia, and southwestern China. See Mair and Hoh 2009, 27–31; Driem 2019, 1–38. But these origins had no direct impact upon the Tang dynasty tea drinkers.

37 Egan 2013, 69.

38 These *han*, *ke*, *re*, and other symptom descriptions cannot be directly correlated with today's understanding. The tentative translations provided here are for the easy understanding of the English readers only.

39 ZLCH, vol. 1: 5.

and medicine to determine whether people during the Tang and Song drank tea for its benefits to physical welfare.

Tea was excluded from many traditional Chinese medicinal texts compiled before or during the Song.⁴⁰ It is not included in famous medical texts such as Zhang Zhongjing's *Treatise on Exogenous Febrile Disease* (*Shanghan lun*), Sun Simiao's *Essential Prescriptions Worth A Thousand Tael of Gold* (*Qianjin yaofang*), Wang Tao's *Arcane Essential Prescriptions from the Imperial Library* (*Waitai miyao fang*), Chen Shiwen and others' *Prescriptions from the Imperial Pharmacy* (*Taiping Huimin Hejiju fang*; hereafter *Imperial Pharmacy*), or the *Classified and Collected Materia Medica* (*Zhenglei bencao: Chongxiu Zhenghe jingshi zhenglei beiyong bencao*; hereafter *Materia Medica*) compiled by Tang Shenwei and others.⁴¹ It would appear that these Chinese medicine practitioners did not regard tea as a medicinal herb. Instead, they proposed numerous other herbs that provided health effects, which were very similar to those of tea,⁴² implicating that these other herbs could easily substitute for tea.

To neutralize the effects of hot energy, for example, a person could drink various decoctions made from such vegetal substances as herbs and roots. To traditional Chinese medicine practitioners, there were different types of discomfort associated with hot energy. These medicinal solutions were all well-known to the Song people. Zhang Zhongjing put forward a scenario in which a person might feel "hot energy of the ultimate positiveness" (perhaps a fever), in which his body is hot, he feels thirsty, and he may sweat and recoil from coldness. In

40 Lu Yu mentioned the medicinal functions of plants that he believed to be tea by citing medicinal texts from the *Tang bencao* (*juan* 13), *Zhenzhong fang*, and *Ruzi fang*, see ZLCH, vol. 1: 17. However, the authors of these medicinal texts used terms such as "ming," "tu," and "kucai," but not "cha." Lu Yu had to argue for associating "tu" and "kucai" with "cha." Since these texts are now lost or incomplete, it is very difficult to explore whether *cha*, or tea (*Camellia sinensis*), in our discussion, was regarded by these authors to be medicine. Except for these records, tea was hardly included in other medicinal texts. Guan Jianping argues that "ming" entered the perspective of medicine practitioners (2001, 103–4), but whether "ming" referred to tea is still in doubt.

41 *Shanghan lun* (ca. 200, see ZJSHL); QJYF (ca. 652); *Waitai miyao fang* (752); THHF (1078); and ZLBC (ca. 1083–1249). The compilation and re-compilation, annotation, and editing of the Chinese medicinal texts could range from several years to hundreds of years, but it is possible to trace the structures and foundations of the texts to the original authors and compilers. In this study, we focus on original authors and compilers prior to the Southern Song.

42 It is noteworthy that the Chinese did not make a sharp distinction between herbal medicine and ordinary daily beverages. The fuzzy separation continues to this day, for example, in the form of *liangcha* (a herbal cold energy decoction) that is consumed as an ordinary beverage like Coca-Cola in today's Guangdong and Hong Kong.

this scenario, he needs to drink “the decoction of cassiabarktree twig and others” (Chinese name *Guizhi tang*; Latin pharmaceutical name [LPN] of *guizhi*: *Cinnamomi ramulus*),⁴³ which makes him sweat. If still thirsty and anxious, he could take the white-tiger decoction plus *ginseng* and other ingredients (*Baihu renshen tang*). If he were to then suffer another set of symptoms, including chills, “slippery impulses,” and “hotness outside and coldness inside the body,” he should take the white-tiger decoction that consisted of common anemarrhena (*zhimu*, LPN: *Anemarrhenae rhizoma*), gypsum (*shigao*, LPN: *Gypsum fibrosum*), liquorice root (*gancao*, LPN: *Glycyrrhizae radix et rhizoma*), and rice (*gengmi*).⁴⁴ One should boil these ingredients with water until the rice became edible; then drink the warm decoction three times a day without consuming the herbal residue. Wang Shuhe, the compiler of Zhang’s *Treatise*, notes that the taste and energy of common anemarrhena are bitter and cold, those of gypsum sweet and cold, while those of liquorice root and rice sweet and neutral. If a Northern Song person desired to quench thirst and reduce his hot energy, he did not need to specifically choose tea but instead drink the liquorice root decoction, or even the common anemarrhena or gypsum decoctions.

Food and medicine are inseparable in the eyes of traditional Chinese medicine practitioners. Sun Simiao was among the early practitioners proposing to exploit ordinary food for its medicinal properties. Chapter 26 of his *Essential Prescriptions* is devoted to “Food Recipes as Prescriptions” (“*Shizhi*”).⁴⁵ In Chapter 21, Sun also introduces decoction prescriptions to quench thirst.⁴⁶ Some of these decoctions can quench thirst and remove the hot energy inside one’s stomach.⁴⁷ One of such prescriptions, the decoction of tuckahoe and others (*Fushen tang*), includes tuckahoe, common anemarrhena, and common lophatherum herb (*danzhuye*, LPN: *Lophatheri herba*).⁴⁸ The physical characteristics, taste, and energy of the dried and processed common lophatherum herb are similar to those of processed tea buds and leaves. Some of the herbs

43 ZJSHL 2.50–51, 2.57. The LPNs of the Chinese herbal medicines mentioned in this book are referenced from the website of the Chinese Medicinal Material Images Database created by the School of Chinese Medicine, Hong Kong Baptist University. See SCM, HKBU 2012. We must note that the medicine, herbs, and animals mentioned in the following cited texts may not exactly correspond to the substances that bear the same names today.

44 ZJSHL 4.116–17. These are literal English translations of jargon describing specific symptoms in Chinese medicine.

45 QJYF 26.498–99.

46 Prescriptions in the English context refer to the medical treatment, while in the Chinese context a *fang* can be understood as a medical prescription or a recipe. See QJYF 26.498.

47 QJYF 21.407–13, see examples in QJYF 21.407–9.

48 *Fushen* is a part of tuckahoe or Indian buead (*fuling*, LPN: *Poria*). QJYF 21.408.

included in the prescriptions are perfect substitutes for tea, as they serve highly similar functions and are occasionally superior alternatives.

During the Tang dynasty, Wang Tao proposed seventeen prescriptions to quench thirst and cited many others to both quench thirst and cure other illnesses.⁴⁹ Chen Shiwen in the Northern Song wrote many more similar prescriptions that were possibly known to medicine practitioners who were contemporaries of Cai Xiang, Huizong, and other late Northern Song figures.⁵⁰ Though some of these prescriptions might have been added in the Southern Song, the application of specific herbs such as lotus seed (*lianzi*, LPN: *Nelumbinis semen*) could have originated earlier. The nature of lotus seed is neutral (holding neither hot nor cold energy), while its taste is sweet and astringent.⁵¹ The lotus-seed decoction could help quench thirst, reduce anxiety and depression, and soothe one's stomach.

Materia Medica by Tang Shenwei and others was recompiled and re-edited at various times; but having in its title, *Zhenghe* (a name of one of the reign periods of Huizong), suggests that scholars in Huizong's time could have been aware of these medicinal theories and practices. Tang and others include in their discussions coastal glehnia root (*shashen*, LPN: *Glehniae radix*), whose energy is slightly cold and has an astringent taste.⁵² This plant-based medicine helps remove hot energy, ward off drowsiness, cure stomach troubles, headaches, and heart pain, and strengthen the energy of the lungs. The authors of *Materia Medica* also claim that long-term consumption of the root benefits one's health more generally; the raw roots in the Yellow River basin were believed to offer medicinal functions similar to those of tea. While tea grew in the deep south of China during Song times, *shashen* roots were more readily available, as they could readily be found in northern China.

2.1.3 Not Merely Preservation

There were other herbal medicines in the Northern Song that were easily transported and could be preserved for long periods. Methods of drying and processing (*paozhi*) Chinese herbal medicine can be traced back as early as the Western Han period and are still practiced today.⁵³ There are records of

49 *Waitai miyaofang* 11.194.

50 THHF 6.106–9, *Xixin san*, *Bazheng san*, and others.

51 THHF 5.100–101; see also SCM, HKBU 2012, lotus seed.

52 ZLBC 7.207.

53 For the traditional and modern techniques of drying and processing Chinese medicine, see *Leigong paozhilun*; Xu Chujiang 1985; Wang Xiaotao 1998; Li Chunxing 2000; Lu Yongxiang et al. 2004; Cao Hui et al. 2013; Gong Qianfeng 2016.

how medicine could be dried and processed in the Western Han medical text, *Fifty-two Prescriptions* (*Wushier bingfang*), excavated in 1973 from Tomb 3 at Mawangdui in Hunan province.⁵⁴ This text stipulates that one must select the appropriate parts of the raw herbal materials to be dried and processed. Some herbs could be dried only in direct sunlight, while others required shade. When the herbal materials had become desiccated, some needed to be ground or crushed into powder, while others needed to be baked, fried, or roasted to dehydrate them completely. Alcohol, vinegar, honey, milk, or other substances might be added to the baking, frying, or roasting process of a specific animal or herbal material. Since the Western Han period at least, drying and processing techniques were already in use, which could be applied to herbal medicine as well as to tea buds and leaves.⁵⁵

In approximately the fifth century, Lei Xiao and others wrote texts about the drying and processing of medicine, but these texts are either lost entirely or only available in scattered fragments that had been included in other medical texts. Extracts of their work are included in Tang Shenwei and others' *Materia Medica*. Ming and Qing medicine practitioners selected entries purportedly written by Lei and others and recompiled them as *Master Lei's Treatise on Drying and Processing* (*Leigong paozhi lun*; hereafter *Lei's Treatise*),⁵⁶ which became one of the foundational texts of Chinese medicine. The medical texts drafted by Sun Simiao, Tang Shenwei, and others at a later stage significantly enriched and elaborated on the drying and processing methods. These sophisticated methods were clearly useful references for tea makers in their quest to turn raw buds and leaves into preservable tea.

There were many substitutes for tea to quench thirst, reduce hot energy, and ward off drowsiness. One could drink decoctions made of lotus seeds, coastal glehnia roots, tuckahoes, anemarrhena, gypsum, liquorice roots, lophatherum herb and others. Some of these substitutes, like coastal glehnia roots, could be found easily in northern China and did not incur expensive transportation costs to reach the northern part of the realm. While tea could be preserved for a long time, other herbal medicines with similar health benefits could readily be treated in similar ways with the same result. Why did the decoctions of lotus seeds, coastal glehnia roots, or tuckahoes not become popular? Given the wide availability of substances providing parallel benefits, why then did tea come to stand out from these other healthy beverages? Other factors seem to have been at play.

54 Zhou Yimou 1994, 163–64.

55 Guan Jianping 2001, 30–50.

56 *Leigong paozhilun*, i–vi.

Lu Yu and his contemporaries can be credited as among the first authors to construct the popular cultural practice of tea appreciation. Out of the many possible substitutions, he and his contemporaries promoted tea, distinguishing it from other medicinal herbs. More importantly, they emphasized tea-making methods and utensils to codify the act of appreciating tea and transform it into a ceremonial practice, rather than merely arguing that tea had medicinal properties. Lu was the founder of Tang-period tea practices and the first recorded proponent of tea as a unique beverage. Drinking tea as a cultural act, rather than as a dietary one for health, began in Lu's time and reached a climax during the Northern Song, when it received further elaboration and codification at the hands of an ever greater number of scholar-artists, officials, royal personages, and commoners.

2.2 *Tea as a Cultural Construct*

2.2.1 Tea Preparation and Appreciation

Scholar-artists strengthened the cultural construction of tea in the formation of their own communities.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, our knowledge of how tea was prepared in the Northern Song is limited by tea's perishability: no identified tea buds or leaves from that period can be tested. However, we do have tea utensils, visual sources such as paintings and murals that depict tea or tea-drinking, and textual records including essays dating from that period such as Cai Xiang's *Records of Tea* and the *Daguan Treatise* to supplement our knowledge.⁵⁸ These utensils, textual records, and visual representations aided in the cultural construction of the practice of tea appreciation among scholar-artists.

We focus here on four aspects of tea practices and appreciation. The first is the tea preparation process. It involved preparing all the materials, including processed tea and utensils for tea ceremonies, contests, or ordinary tea-drinking activities. The second aspect emphasizes standards for the appearance, color, fragrance, and texture of tea and the shape of foam that came from whisking the tea, or *diancha* (tipping [water into the] tea; hereafter "tea-tipping"). Thirdly, we explore the functions of tea utensils and study how they were made to cater to the special needs of tea practices. Finally, we analyze how a new elite tea culture was constructed within the royal court according to specified aesthetics and standards.

57 Cf. Ko 1994, 5, and her citations; Dorothy Ko argues that gender, specifically in the Chinese context, could be conceived as a cultural construct. Cf. Ko 2017, 61–78, where Ko states that how scholars textualized stonecutters' knowledge and ranked inkstones represents a type of cultural construction.

58 See Cheng Guangyu 1976, 415–22.

From 2017 to 2020, my teammates and I conducted experiments in Hong Kong to simulate the tea preparation procedures mentioned in the *Daguan Treatise* (Appendices 1 to 4). We did not aim to reconstruct or re-enact the entire tea preparation process, nor did we regard our experimental simulation procedures as definitive versions of Huizong's style, nor propose standards for future reconstruction experiments. We simply needed, nevertheless, some carefully controlled examples to serve as complementary references for understanding the relevant tea preparation and appreciation process. The data obtained from these experiments contributed to the alleviation of the gap in available and reliable sensory references in modern scholarship on the preparation and appreciation of fine tea in the Northern Song.

2.2.2 Preparation of Tea-Drinking Materials

The first and foremost task for a tea maker is to select the best tea buds and leaves and transform them into drinkable tea. Tea in the Song period, including Huizong's prized "White Tea" (*Baicha*) from Jian'an, was unfermented and, in terms of today's categorizations, would be considered green tea.⁵⁹ Once the tea cakes reached the end consumer, it was time to gather the materials required to prepare the tea for drinking. This was no simple matter according to the idealized and standardized procedure specified in the *Daguan Treatise*. The tea drinker first slices an appropriate portion of tea from a tea cake. He then takes out a sieve with holes small enough to separate the smaller from the larger tea cake crumbs.⁶⁰ The sliced portion of tea is then placed onto a crusher (Appendix 1), where the tea is crushed repeatedly. The *Daguan Treatise* suggests that crushers made of silver are the best choice, followed by wrought iron. Cast iron is not favored because black dust is likely to be hidden in gaps in the crusher, which would change the desired color of the tea. In *Lei's Treatise*, Lei and others stipulate that some specific herbal materials should only be processed and treated in containers and with tools made of specific materials. For example, dried adhesive rehmannia root tuber (*dihuang*, LPN: *Rehmanniae radix*) should be steamed in a container made of willow wood, which is put

59 Unfermented tea includes green tea that is processed with a series of actions: withering, rolling, and drying. Partially fermented tea includes white tea (different from Huizong's *Baicha*), which is processed by heavy withering and slight fermentation. Fermented tea includes red tea that is processed by withering, rolling, fermenting, and drying. After rolling, post-fermentation can generate dark tea, like the Puer tea. See Zhang Jinghong 2014, 205–9.

60 I often use the pronoun "he" to refer to a tea maker, an artisan, or an anonymous producer or individual; however, I would like to clarify that such individuals were not necessarily male and could be of any gender.

on top of a porcelain pot. The dried *dihuang* should be kept away from copper or iron vessels.⁶¹ Lei and others believed that the close contact between the dried medicine and specific materials would alter their medicinal properties. The specification of the materials of tools and containers probably originated from the *paozhi* technical corpus, a set of methods of drying and processing.

The color of the tea bowls is important—the *Daguan Treatise* theorizes that, while dark and blue glazed porcelain bowls are often favored, bowls with “hare’s fur” (*tuhao*) patterns are the best, because this type of bowl would reveal the color of the tea most clearly. This idea came from Cai Xiang,⁶² but the authors of the *Daguan Treatise* paid particular attention to the depth, width, and overall volume of the tea bowls because their dimensions determined the amount of water to be poured into the bowls that would change the color and the foam of the tea. Requirements for the bamboo whisk, metal ewer, and ladle are all spelled out in detail.

The quality of the water is vital to the taste of the tea. Therefore, the *Daguan Treatise* provides specific criteria for good-quality water. Good-quality water should be “pure, light, having a lingering sweetness after astringency, and clean.”⁶³ The authors prefer water from mountain springs to water from wells, while water from rivers is the least desirable. The temperature of the hot water is crucial for making good tea. Terms such as “eyes of fish and crabs” and “grain patterns and crabs’ eyes” appear to be indicators of water temperature, according to the text.⁶⁴ The authors suggest that the water’s heat should be judged by “the rapid consecutive bouncing of eyes of fish and crabs.”⁶⁵ It is clear that the works of Lu Yu and Cai Xiang were consulted here; this metaphor might refer to the bubbles generated from boiling water. Appendix 2 shows the shape of the bubbles in the water at different temperatures in one of our water-boiling experiments.⁶⁶ From approximately 35°C to 60°C, there are only tiny bubbles. From 60°C to 85°C, bubbles increase and become larger, and the size of the bubbles compares to fish and crabs’ eyes. (We suppose the fish and crabs in question to be the freshwater fish and crabs found in China’s inland waters.) At

61 *Leigong paozhilun* 1.24. See also Lu Yongxiang et al. 2004, 37–38.

62 ZLCH, vol. 1: 78.

63 “*Qing qing gan jie*.” There is no equivalent in English for “gan” here. I follow Zhang Jinghong’s interpretation (2014, 221).

64 “*Yumu xieyan*” and “*suwen xieyan*,” ZLCH, vol. 1: 108. Prior to the invention of thermometers, this approach was a common way to describe water temperature.

65 ZLCH, vol. 1: 106.

66 This serves merely as one of the numerous references because the shape and size of the bubbles are determined by various factors including but not limited to the type of water, the capacity of the container, and the temperature of the surrounding environment. The temperature ranges listed here are for reference only.

this temperature range small bubbles appear and vanish quickly, while larger bubbles remain for a longer time. With temperature increased to about 90–95°C, the bubbles rise rapidly and continuously. At 97°C, when the water is not far from the boiling point, bubbles grow much larger than the size of fish eyes. We may surmise that when the authors of the *Daguan Treatise* describe the “rapid consecutive bouncing of eyes of fish and crabs,” they are referring to water heated to 80–90°C. The authors also suggest that some water be added when the water became old (i.e., too hot). The water thus mixed would be used after re-heating it for a while. In summary, the *Daguan chulun* does not favor water at boiling point. Instead, the text stipulates that the most appropriate temperature for water to make tea is in the 80–90°C range.

Lu Yu and Zhang Youxin of the Tang dynasty, as well as Ye Qingchen and Ouyang Xiu of the Northern Song, all discussed the type of water that would be the best for making tea. During the Tang dynasty, Lu Yu argued that mountain water was the best, river water second, and well water the least preferred.⁶⁷ He also proposed an ideal range of water temperature for making tea, using the fish eyes analogy. Although Lu Yu’s method of making tea was different from that of the Song period, he laid the foundation of theorizing the use of water. Zhang Youxin, Ye Qingchen, and Ouyang Xiu wrote about waters from different regions and listed their favorites among these local sources,⁶⁸ but did not specify the water temperature. Only Cai Xiang in his *Records of Tea* mentioned the difficulty of controlling water temperature in making tea.

The *Daguan Treatise* authors wanted to distinguish themselves from the famous tea writers of previous generations. Their focus on water quality implied that mountain and well water from any region could be used to make tea, as long as the water was pure, light, and clean, with a lingering sweetness after the initial astringency. This new analytical approach to water for brewing tea overturned the approach focusing on the water’s exact sources. The *Daguan Treatise* authors thus liberated tea makers to use water from their own regions. This empowering act enabled scholar-artists to promote their tea, thus strengthening their connection with the local community with the help of tea and local water.

2.2.3 The Appearance of the Tea

Tea appreciation means much more than the tasting of it. Tea appreciation requires the tea drinker to enjoy tea mainly with the four senses of taste, sight,

67 ZLCH, vol. 1: 13.

68 ZLCH, vol. 1: 35, 70–71, 73–74. See also Ceresa 1993a.

smell, and touch (as in listening to the sound of water boiling). Multiple layers of cultural values are also embedded in the proper appreciation of tea. The *Daguan Treatise* authors were the first to set up a complete tea-making procedure and to theorize and standardize the terminology for the aesthetic appreciation of tea (Appendix 3). Color and shape are the two focal areas in visual appreciation.

In the “Tipping” (“*Dian*”) chapter, the *Daguan Treatise* authors describe their preferred method for making tea with the term *diancha*. This “*dian*” should be understood as “tipping.”⁶⁹ In “*diancha*” it implies a change followed by a rapid reversion to the original. When people perform *diancha*, as described in the *Daguan Treatise*, they use a ewer to pour water into a tea bowl. They briefly lower the spout of the ewer, pouring in just a tiny amount of water at one time. They then quickly right the ewer and its spout back to the level position, so that the rest of the water remains in the ewer. Consequently, *diancha* can be translated as “tipping tea” or “tea-tipping,” as it implies the tea maker’s single action of rapidly pouring a light, thin stream of hot water into the bowl. A practiced tea maker, as described in the *Daguan Treatise*, would repeat this action of “tipping [hot water into the] tea” and whisking the tea paste with hot water for seven rounds until the tea generated a surface foam.

The *Daguan Treatise* is the first text to propose and standardize the seven rounds of water pouring and tea whisking in the tea-tipping process.⁷⁰ The text focuses primarily on the color and shape of the tea foam as it is stirred up by whisking the tea paste each time water is poured into the bowl, stating that the balanced control of the hand over the whisk is particularly significant to the color and texture of the foam. A new term, “water’s feet” (*shuijiao*), refers to incomplete coverage of the tea surface by foam. Our experiments demonstrate that if the tea is not well whisked, the foam does not last long or cover the entire tea surface (Fig. 3). The reason is that when the tea maker uses old water (water that is too hot) or when the movements of his fingers and wrist are not coordinated, the tea’s porridge-like surface (*zhounian*, the surface foam) does not coagulate, and the “power” of the tea fizzles out. Although the “mist and cloud” (*wuyun*) still spread, it is likely that water’s feet will emerge.

69 Li Kin Sum (Sammy) 2022. Cf. James Benn 2015, 122.

70 Cai Xiang’s *Records of Tea* mentions tea contests in the Fujian area but, unlike the *Daguan Treatise*, does not delineate any detailed procedure for the tea-tipping process nor does it attempt to create any standard. See Nunome’s discussion of the tea-tipping practices in the *Records of Tea* and *Daguan Treatise* (1995, 223–34).

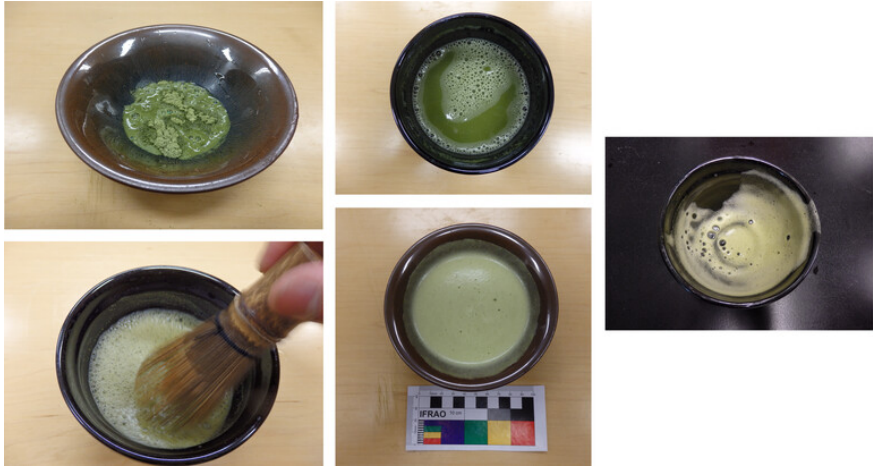


FIGURE 3 Processes of whisking tea. (Top left): preparing tea paste; (bottom left): whisking tea by adding water; (top center): foam not covering the full surface of the bowl and large bubbles; (bottom center): successful tea foam; (right): drinking up the tea.

IMAGES BY THE AUTHOR AND LAU KAI-YIU.

The general tea-tipping process, according to my reading, is as follows (see also Appendix 3):⁷¹

In order to set up the “foundation” of the tea’s [foamy] surface, a tea maker has to gently tip an appropriate portion of water into the bowl containing the ground tea powder, mixing these to produce the tea paste. Then he whisks the tea paste and gradually strengthens the power [of the tea]. Once the tea maker has stirred up the foam well, [the result] is like the fermentation of the yeast, the stars, and the moon. [We are not sure how the metaphors of stars and the moon are applied to the foam, but we know that the first whisking produces favorable conditions for the creation of the surface foam and forestalls the appearance of the water’s feet.]

The second pouring of hot water should circumscribe the tea surface once (water pouring onto the tea to make a full circle). [The tea maker] must pour quickly and then stop decisively, all without disturbing the surface of the tea. If the tea maker then whisks the tea energetically, the color will spread and the tea will resemble a cascade of pearl beads.

71 The English description of the process is based on the original Chinese text but is not a direct translation. I only aim at providing a summary.

The tea maker needs to use the same amount of hot water in the third pouring, but the whisking needs to be light and even. The “grain patterns and crabs’ eyes” will gradually emerge and by now the tea will have assumed 60–70% of its final color. [We postulate that the grain patterns and crabs’ eyes refer to the formation of the foam at this stage.]

Less hot water should be used in the fourth round, while the whisking slows down and generates “light clouds” (*qingyun*).

In the fifth round, more hot water can be added, while the whisking should be light but penetrating. If [the foam] is still not completely formed, the tea maker should whisk the tea harder. He can slow down and moderate his efforts if the foam is completely formed. In this stage, “mist and snow” (*ai, xue*), probably referring to the foam, are generated, and the tea reaches its full color.

The tea maker does not do much in the sixth and seventh rounds. If “milky dots” (*rudian*) are stirred up in the sixth round, he should slowly whisk the tea and extinguish them (until the “milky” bubbles burst). The tea maker can stop at any time during the seventh round. At this moment, the “milky fog” (*ruwu*) soars, spreads, and covers the entire tea surface as if “biting” the edge of the bowl. As compared to water’s feet that appear when the foam does not cover the entire surface, “biting” the edge of the bowl implies that the foam fully covers the surface. “Milky fog, light clouds, mist, and snow” imply that the desired tea color is white or milky white.

The color and shape of the tea foam receive far more attention in the “Tipping” chapter of the *Daguan Treatise* than in all previous tea texts. We know from Cai Xiang’s work that there were tea contests in the Fujian area in which people competed for the best color and shape of the tea foam, but the specific contest criteria and requirements were not laid out. There was no clear, detailed official rule to regulate the result of the tea contests until the publication of the *Daguan Treatise*.

The tea’s color was also very important to the general Northern Song tea makers. Cai Xiang once claimed that the most desirable color should be white, the second best a greenish white, and the least desirable a yellowish white.⁷² The *Daguan Treatise* theorizes that variations in natural conditions and human efforts would lead to different colors. It prioritizes pure white, then greenish white, then grayish white. Yellowish white was considered the least desir-

72 ZLCH, vol. 1: 77.

able.⁷³ It is evident that the *Daguan Treatise* authors followed Cai Xiang's prioritization, while Cai's criteria might have originated from Fujian local standards.

The Northern Song tea makers would have meticulously selected appropriate tea types, crushed and ground the tea powder, and determined the proportion of tea powder and hot water to be used and the frequency and length of time of whisking. These variations change the tea color, shape and thickness of the foam, and the duration of the foam covering the tea surface. The tea-tipping practices so far described might indeed have originated in the Fujian area, but the imperial court adopted them. Regarding the water temperature, Northern Song people did not have modern methods and instruments for measuring temperature, so they relied on visual clues such as the number and frequency of [the bouncing of] the bubbles. Cai Xiang complained in his *Records of Tea* that controlling the hot water was very difficult and that Cai and his fellow tea makers often had trouble deciding when they needed to stop heating the water. The *Daguan Treatise* authors suggested that "the rapid consecutive bouncing of eyes of fish and crabs" in the water should indicate the desired water temperature range. However, as Cai noted, the bubbling water, with its "eyes of fish and crabs," was heated inside a ewer, given that there were no translucent ewers in the Northern Song, how could one observe all of these bubbles?⁷⁴ Consequently, the Northern Song tea makers continued to grapple with numerous variations. Making tea foam that had the desired milky white color and thickness spread over the entire bowl and lasting for a long time was a complex challenge. There were so many variables that nobody could consistently achieve the best result in tea contests.

2.2.4 Taste, Texture, and Fragrance of the Tea

The taste, texture, and fragrance of tea were just as significant to tea drinkers. Taste and texture were measured by their *gan* (lingering sweetness after astringency or bitterness), *xiang* (fragrance in the mouth), *zhong* (heaviness or substance), and *hua* (smoothness).⁷⁵ It seems strange that the *Daguan Treatise* authors mention *xiang* in the "Taste" ("Wei") chapter, while having another chapter with the title "Fragrance" ("Xiang"), suggesting the *xiang* in the "Taste" chapter differs in some way from the *xiang* treated in the "Fragrance" chapter. As the "Taste" chapter primarily concerns the taste or flavor of the tea, we understand *xiang* in this chapter as the fragrance that lingers in the mouth.

73 ZLCH, vol. 1: 107.

74 ZLCH, vol. 1, 77.

75 See discussion of the *wei* of tea in Ceresa 1995, 269–84, especially 276–81 on the *wei* of tea during the Song period.

My teammates and I interpret “heaviness” as the density and substance of the flavor and “smoothness” as the degree of ease with which the tea passes from the lips, through the mouth, and down the throat. In our own experiments, we recruited five student volunteers to taste tea prepared with the tea-tipping process in various settings and invited them to comment on the taste, texture, and fragrance of the tea using questionnaires. They did not know how the tea was prepared prior to the test.⁷⁶ These blind tests yielded some interesting results.

We found that the tea-tipping process could significantly alter both *gan* and *xiang* when performed differently. Tea whisked more frequently and for a longer time had less *gan* and *xiang* to the taste, possibly because both dissipated easily. The density and substance of the flavor, *zhong*, might be primarily determined by the proportion of tea powder to water. Regarding the *hua*, the higher the whisking frequency was, the smoother the tea. These test results were subjective judgments made by the five volunteers in an air-conditioned room in the summer of 2020 in Hong Kong. Different tea drinkers in different circumstances will have different taste preferences. However, the whisking frequency, duration, force and speed of whisking, as well as the amount and temperature of the water, among other factors, definitely need to be considered when preparing to tip tea.

Similar to Lu Yu’s time, various tea-making methods became popular in different strata of society in the Northern Song. In *Classic of Tea*, Lu Yu criticized other tea drinkers for their “vulgar” practice of brewing tea with scallions, ginger, jujubes, citrus peels, *zhuyu* fruits, or peppermint to enrich the flavor.⁷⁷ In his *Records of Tea*, Tao Gu recorded a special tea brewed with lychees, pine cones, and duck feet.⁷⁸ Su Che wrote a poetic response to his older brother, Su Shi, in which he alleged that vulgar people in the north favored brewing tea with salt, milk, peppercorns, and ginger.⁷⁹ Putting aside the fact that Su Che’s principal intention was to ridicule northerners’ tea-drinking habits, his poem reveals that northerners could adopt methods of making tea completely different from the highly-acclaimed, purist tea-making methods of the south. Su Shi described how commoners (particularly older women and children) would add ginger and salt to the tea-brewing process.⁸⁰ Differences between north-

76 These volunteers’ ages ranged from 20 to 30, and they were accustomed to drinking tea.

77 ZLCH, vol. 1: 13. James Benn’s translation of these condiments is: “onion, ginger, jujube fruit, citrus peel, dogwood berries or peppermint” (2015, 9). It is unclear which type of *zhuyu* fruits are referred to here; possibilities include both *cornus officinalis* (dogwood berry) and *zanthoxylum ailanthoides* (crow prickly ash).

78 ZLCH, vol. 1: 67. The duck’s feet here would have been salted.

79 Qian Shilin 1989, 120–21.

80 QSS 14:796.9219–20.

erners and southerners, between the Chinese and non-Chinese, between elites and commoners, and even among groups within the elites came to constitute symbolic ways in which groups could differentiate themselves and form communities of like-minded individuals to the exclusion of others.

The authors of the *Daguan Treatise* represented one of the elite communities that prioritized one single taste—the taste of pure tea. The taste of tea, in their opinion, should not be adulterated by adding any other ingredient. Variations in taste could derive from subtle differences in the control of water and the whisking time, but not from additions like ginger or salt.

Their proper standard for fine tea was whether it preserved its pure fragrance. The *Daguan Treatise* authors argued that tea had a true fragrance, and other aromatic substances, such as camphor (*longnaoxiang*) and musk (*shexiang*), could not be compared to the fragrance of tea. This argument resonated with Cai Xiang's suggestion in his *Records of Tea* (different from Tao Gu's) that a Fujian local would never mix camphor with tea paste for fear that the fragrance of camphor would overpower the tea.⁸¹ For preserving the true and pure fragrance of tea, Cai advised tea makers not to add other aromatic herbs. In this he reiterated Lu Yu's position; both men emphasized the protection of tea's pure taste and fragrance. The *Daguan Treatise* authors followed these preferences and rejected all other alternative tea-making styles. We must note, however, that these preferences and inclinations were limited to one group of tea drinkers. Other groups would very much welcome the additional aromatic substances to tea. For example, makers of tribute tea would habitually mix camphor with tea paste.⁸² In tea brewing and whisking, the addition of rare fruits and aromatic herbs would also contribute to the fragrance that pervaded tea gatherings.

We should note that the *Daguan Treatise* authors created two new categories of tea appreciation. First, the fragrance/*xiang* mentioned in the "Fragrance" chapter most probably refers to the fragrance that infuses the air, distinct from the fragrance that lingers in the mouth. The authors described the rapid dif-

81 ZLCH, vol. 1: 77. The *Daguan Treatise* authors specifically stressed the importance of the pure and unadulterated fragrance of tea, an emphasis implying that the "vulgar act" of blending tea with other aromatic substances such as camphor and musk was a widespread practice in contrast (ZLCH, vol. 1: 106–7). It is important to note that "mixing tea with aromatic substances" was different from "mixing tea fragrance with the fragrances of aromatic substances." In the former case, the tea leaves were blended with powder of camphor to create a mixture. In the latter, the tea was separately prepared; and the ready-to-drink tea emitted its fragrance when camphor or musk was burned, thereby they altogether produced a mixed fragrance.

82 ZLCH, vol. 1: 77.

fusion of fragrance that soon follows the preparation of tea in the bowl and how this fragrance, in turn, pleasantly evokes the coming of autumn.⁸³ The authors clearly separated these two kinds of *xiang* and created new standards for appreciating the fragrance in both the mouth and the air. Secondly, the authors emphasized the texture of the tea foam, which was to be imbibed along with the tea. In the tea-tipping process, the milky white foam when stirred up resembles fog, mist, and clouds. The foam “bites” the edge of the bowl and covers the entire surface of the tea. The thick tea foam and the *zhong* and *hua* sensations introduced Northern Song tea drinkers to a very different sensory experience, one attainable only to tea drinkers who had mastered tea-tipping. The *Daguan Treatise* authors emphasized that one should drink the tea only once it has achieved the qualities of lightness, purity, floating, and blending (*qing qing fu he*). This probably referred to the tea being light and pure without sediment because the tea maker had thoroughly whisked the tea paste with water. The foam floats to the top but joins seamlessly with the tea below. The feeling of the texture of the foam, though the *Daguan Treatise* does not devote a chapter to it, was one of the principal concerns of the authors. They attempted to create innovative categories and standards for their preferred criteria.

2.2.5 Special Functions of Tea Utensils in the Tea-Tipping Process

Tea makers required special utensils in the tipping process. Lu Yu had proposed a set of utensils in his *Classic of Tea*, but since tea-making using the Tang method differed so from the Song tea-tipping method, Lu Yu’s descriptions of utensils were not helpful to the Northern Song tea makers. The Northern Song authors described in detail the advantages and disadvantages of the materials used in making sieves, crushers, bowls, whisks, ewers, and ladles, for the success or failure of tea-tipping rested on scrupulous attention to these details.

2.2.5.1 Bowl and Color

From our simulations of the tea-tipping method, we have a better understanding of why dark, blue glazed porcelain bowls are favored in the *Daguan Treatise*. Cai Xiang suggested the use of dark glazed bowls made in Jian’an (called *Jianzhan*, Jian ware, or Jian bowls), especially those with a hare’s fur pattern, because the thick walls of these Jian bowls could better retain heat (Fig. 4). The *Daguan Treatise* authors followed suit. Cai also stressed that bowls from other regions with thinner walls or a purple glaze were less desirable. Moreover, he argued that green or white glazed bowls were less suited to the purpose.

83 ZLCH, vol. 1: 106.



FIGURE 4 Jian ware with hare's fur pattern. Excavated from a kiln site at Shuiji, Jianyang, Fujian province. Exhibit at the Fujian Provincial Museum. Measurement unknown. 11th–13th century

PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR IN 2018

When a Northern Song tea maker put tea powder into a dark, blue glazed bowl, he could see clearly how much powder there was, which gave him better control. Next, he would tip a little water into the bowl and make the tea paste. Usually green in color, the tea's conspicuous color contrast with the bowl would be noticeable at the very beginning of the process. With each round of tipping water into the bowl little by little and whisking, the white foam stirred up would also stand out against the color of the bowl. We recall the literary descriptions in the *Daguan Treatise*, where the foam is given such metaphors such as stars, the moon, light clouds, mist, snow, and milky fog. These descriptions were possible only with the tea and bowl colors contrasting sharply. The drinker would immediately notice the white foam upon presentation of the bowl of tea, with foam covering the tea's entire surface. Then, with every sip he took, the tea line would retreat down the bowl, and more bowl patterns would come into view. The tea maker and drinker would thus interact with the bowl in a variety of ways. The maker, in particular, would use such interactions to amuse and entertain the drinker. We can well imagine how the foam and the patterns of the three Southern Song *yōhen tenmoku* bowls in Fig. 5, albeit of a later date, would match perfectly in the eyes of a Southern Song tea drinker.

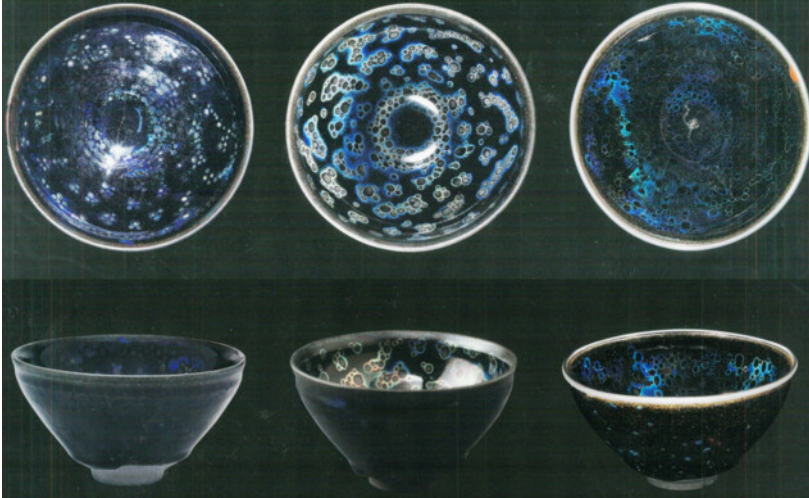


FIGURE 5 Three *yohen-tenmoku* bowls from the Ryūkōin Temple, the Seikadō Bunko Art Museum, and the Fujita Museum. Measurement: the Ryūkōin bowl, h. 6.5 cm, mouth d. 12.1 cm, w. unknown; the Seikadō bowl, h. 7.2 cm, mouth d. 12.2 cm, w. 276 g; the Fujita bowl, h. 6.8 cm, mouth d. 12.3 cm, w. 255 g. 12th–13th century

REPRODUCED FROM THE IMAGES ON A MIHO MUSEUM PLASTIC FILE, SOLD ALONG WITH THE 2019 “LIVING IN ZEN AND THE DAITOKUJI RYŪKŌIN HERITAGE” EXHIBITION

2.2.5.2 *Ewers and Subtle Sensations*

While Cai Xiang and the *Daguan Treatise* authors thought that ewers made of gold or silver were best, this preference reflected the inclination of the elites to draw attention to their power and wealth (inasmuch as only they possessed such objects). These materials had a more practical benefit, however—silver ions and nanoparticles indeed help reduce bacteria in the tea—but it is doubtful that tea drinkers could distinguish water with or without silver ions.⁸⁴ Blind tests conducted in the future may perhaps help answer this question.

The spout of an ewer is of paramount importance to the tea-tipping process. The *Daguan Treatise* authors were well aware of this and diligently discussed the benefits of an appropriate spout for a pouring vessel. They theorized that the mouth of the spout, or the nozzle, should be large and vertically oriented so that the hot water as it poured out would be dense and tight. The bottom of the spout, linked to the body of the ewer, was to be round, small, and steep,

84 Choi et al. 2008.

so that the tea maker could better control the amount of hot water poured out and would not splash extra drops onto the foam surface below. The authors explained that if the hot water was poured out in a dense and tight fashion, and if the speed was carefully controlled, the tea/foam surface would remain intact (i.e., no water's feet would emerge). This is one of the most remarkable observations in the *Daguan Treatise*, backed by numerous actual practices, providing guidance for tea makers in identifying the most appropriate ewers and tipping water.

From our simulations, it is clear that when a tea maker lacks adequate control of the flow of hot water to be tipped into the bowl, the water will seriously disturb the surface foam. There should be neither too little nor too much hot water. A tea maker needs to carefully control the amount of hot water by relying on his subtle feeling, and his control of hand and arm muscles. Since duration of the act of tipping is very short, and the tea maker has to then pull the ewer rapidly back to a horizontal position to stop the water flow, the shape of the ewer spout is critical, and the tea maker must gain a subtle mastery of the sensations that allow him to control the tipping action and the spout. The ewer shown in Fig. 6, excavated from a tomb in Fujian and housed by the Fujian Provincial Museum, features an interesting nozzle design. Unlike the spouts of ordinary ewers today, spouts like this are not straight. The front part, or nozzle, is curved, while the spout base that is linked to the body of the ewer is steep. These spouts are relatively long, circular in shape, thin and slender, making the stream of water that emerged also thin and slender in shape. This spout design gave the tea maker better control of the water flow.

2.3 *Regulated Tea Practices and the Politics of Tea Culture*

Huizong and his subordinates regulated the tea-tipping process with a complete set of procedures. They laid down standardized preferences concerning the color, fragrance, taste, and texture of tea and the utensils to be used. The *Daguan Treatise* was a politicized text in that it focused on the role of tea in establishing a new elite culture. Huizong's construction of this tea culture and other cultural pursuits re-situated royal elites at the center of the state.⁸⁵ The text's authors fostered a high political status for their tea standards and preferences to which they encouraged the rest of society to subscribe. They institutionalized tea-making practices and tea-drinking preferences through the dissemination of this seminal text.

85 Cf. Ebrey 2008, 351.



FIGURE 6 Dark-green glazed ewer. Excavated from a tomb at Shunchang Jiulongshan, Fujian province. Exhibit at the Fujian Provincial Museum. Measurement unknown. 11th–13th century
PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR IN 2018

3 Fragrances and Aromatic Substances

Going hand in hand with tea culture was appreciation for fragrances of aromatic substances. But it is difficult to study how people enjoyed these ephemeral fragrances because very little textual and material evidence is left to us on the matter. We are usually reduced to relying on synesthesia-based analogies, metaphors, and implications to describe smells, and related textual sources of olfactory experiences are not as plentiful as descriptions of visual ones. Actual aromatic substances from the Northern Song are scarce; whatever we find cannot be used today. Even if we were to burn them, the fragrance obtained would be different from how it was in the Northern Song because of their age and the fugitive nature of aromatic compounds. We thus have no choice but to rely heavily on textual descriptions of aromatic substances. There are two main types of textual source available—manuals of aromatic substances (*xiangpu*) devoted to descriptions of their types, sources, and applications, and fragmented descriptions of aromatic substances in medical texts.

The Northern Song period saw the emergence of the *xiangpu* genre for the first time in Chinese textual history. Ding Wei composed *Legends of the Heavenly Aromatic Substances* (*Tianxiang zhuan*; hereafter *Legends*), which laid the foundation for the composition and structure of later *xiangpu*.⁸⁶ Ding's knowledge sources were affiliated with the places where he served as a government official. As the fiscal commissioner (*zhuanyun shi*) of Fujian, Ding was in charge of producing the "Large Dragon-phoenix Tea" (*Dalongfengcha*), the tea-camphor mixture mentioned in Cai Xiang's *Records of Tea*.⁸⁷ We do not know whether Ding invented this mixture, but we can ascertain that it was enjoyed widely among certain tea drinkers. We can speculate that some royal family members and political elites welcomed this practice as well due to its use as tribute tea gifted to the royal family, re-distributed to other high elites, and enjoyed by all elites in due course. Ding's preference for aromatic substances originated here. During the reign of Renzong, Ding was banished to Ya county (Ya Xian) on Hainan Island, an area of primary importance in producing aromatic substances. It was there that he composed *Legends*.

The original edition of Ding's *Legends* has not survived, but it was incorporated into Hong Chu's *Xiangpu*.⁸⁸ Hong's *Xiangpu* was, however, much more widely circulated, winning him fame as an expert in aromatic substances. Hong Chu is of interest to us also because of his relationship with Huang Tingjian,

86 *Tianxiang zhuan*. Liu Jingmin 2004; 2007, 150–55.

87 ZLCH, vol. 1: 76, 77, 79, 83, 115–16. SHYJG 6:136, 5327. Liu Jingmin 2004, 158–62.

88 *Tianxiang zhuan*; *Xiangpu*. See also Liu Jingmin 2006; 2007, 186–97.

who took an active part in one of the most famous scholar-artist communities. Hong, a nephew of Huang, was born in Jiangxi Nanchang,⁸⁹ and died in exile on Shamen Island. Huang and Hong were well-known experts in aromatic substances. After Hong, Ye Tinggui,⁹⁰ Chen Jing,⁹¹ and others also wrote their *xiangpu*. Some of these texts have not survived, while others restated the main content of these previous works.

As for surviving material evidence, there are the actual aromatic substances and incense burners. Except for the well-documented substances, including those that are archaeologically excavated, we have no mature methods for dating the currently existing aromatic substances from this period. Some of these, such as musk skin from the Shōsō-in collection in Japan, are documented to date from the eighth century.⁹² The 1974 discovery of the remains of a Southern Song shipwreck in the Houzhu Harbor in Quanzhou, Fujian, yielded about 2,400 kilograms of aromatic substances, including sandalwood (*tanxiang*, LPN: *Santali albi lignum*), tambac or aloe wood (*chenxiang*, LPN: *Aquilariae lignum resinatum*), frankincense (*ruxiang*, LPN: *Olibanum*), rosewood (*jiangzhenxiang*, LPN: *Lignum dalbergiae odoriferae*), and ambergris (*longdanxiang*).⁹³ It is possible that the ship sank while transporting goods from Southeast Asia to Quanzhou. Fortunately, the shipwreck remains were buried in mud, slowing down the oxidization process and preserving these otherwise perishable substances.⁹⁴ They help us better understand the composition and use of aromatic substances in the Song period, but do not diminish the importance of textual sources regarding how Song elites enjoyed the fragrances from them.

Ding Wei described in his *Legends* the aromatic-substance burning practices of the Confucianists, Daoists, and Buddhists.⁹⁵ The Buddhists burned the “heavenly” aromatic substances to honor the descent of the Buddhas, while the Daoists burned them day and night in their rituals. Aromatic substances made of tambac, rosewood, frankincense, and camphor were mixed and burned to produce fragrance.⁹⁶ We know that Northern Song emperors and commoners

89 *Xiangpu*, “Appendix,” 271–72.

90 *Mingxiang pu*.

91 *Chenshi xiangpu*.

92 Fu Yunzi (1941) 2000, 27. See also Tōkyō National Museum 1999, 135–36, item nos. N112, N113, and N114.

93 Fujian Sheng Quanzhou Haiwai Jiaotongshi Bowuguan 1987, 26–27.

94 Fujian Sheng Quanzhou Haiwai Jiaotongshi Bowuguan 1987, 4, 14–15.

95 *Tianxiang zhuan*, 34–36.

96 *Tianxiang zhuan*, 34–36.

in the Zhejiang and Fujian areas were devoutly religious, and the burning of aromatic substances in religious settings is unsurprising.⁹⁷

People in China used numerous aromatic substances from the archaic times to the Northern Song. These had diverse origins, both domestic and foreign. Those widely consumed in the Northern Song mainly came from Southeast Asia and China's deep south, such as Hainan Island and Guangxi province. Ding Wei has traced the origins of appreciation for floral fragrances to the Shang-Zhou periods,⁹⁸ but these are more likely legends than reliable records. The enjoyment of fragrances from plant and animal sources seems to be a human universal. In Tang and Northern Song China, aromatic substances could also be used for medicinal purposes. Aromatic substances in the Shōsō-in collection, which might also have come from China and date to the eighth century, were found alongside medicine in the southern and western chambers of the Shōsō-in's Northern Storehouse.⁹⁹ Historian Wang Huifang notes that the medical use of rosewood as *jiangzhenxiang* was first recorded in Tang Shenwei and others' *Materia Medica*, while the use of sandalwood as *tanxiang*, tambac as *chenxiang*, and frankincense as *ruxiang* could be traced to Tao Hongjing's (456–536) *Supplementary Notes of Famous Medicine Practitioners (Mingyi biele)*.¹⁰⁰ Similar to tea, aromatic substances had secondary medical uses. Literary descriptions of the origins, identification, processing, and use of aromatic substances, and of the proper use of incense burners, contributed to a complex cultural construction centered around aroma appreciation.

3.1 Identification of Aromatic Substances

Ding Wei's *Legends* and Hong Chu's *Xiangpu* are representative of how scholars identified aromatic substances. Ding categorized four types of aromatic substances—*chenxiang*, *qianxiang* (a type of aromatic timber named “*qian*”), *shengjie* (“immaturely knotted”), and *huangshu* (“yellow and mature”).¹⁰¹ He also described the appearance of these substances, traced their botanical origins, and elaborated on their features.¹⁰² Since textual descriptions of the fragrances of the substances had been very limited before his time, Ding had to

97 SS 7:41.2177, 7:42.2210. See SHYJG 8:200.7875 (*juan* 14760); the compilation of the numbers of Daoists and Buddhists in Zhang Huaying 2013, 254–55, and Table 3.1. See also Ebrely 2014, 131–58.

98 *Tianxiang zhuan*, 34.

99 Fu Yunzi 2000, 27.

100 Wang Huifang 1987, 122–23.

101 *Tianxiang zhuan*, 36.

102 *Tianxiang zhuan*, 36–37.

utilize analogies and imaginative associations to refer to the features of the substances. These references signified the beginning of a long tradition of textual descriptions in the form of *xiangpu*. For example, Ding used the color and gloss of a type of timber called “dark-patterned timber” and “yellow wax” to describe the appearance of *chenxiang*. He cited other descriptions of *chenxiang* from indigenous people, such as “eyes of an ox,” “horns of an ox,” and “heads of chickens.”¹⁰³ In regard to the botanical origin of *huangshu*, he indicated a tree with a trunk like a poplar and leaves like holly.

In citing these descriptions, Ding showed how erudite he was. Another reason he recorded these strange terms to describe aromatic substances was to impress upon his readers the exotic provenance of his subjects. Supporting evidence comes in two forms. First, there was a long history of the medicinal use of aromatic substances, as mentioned in the medical textual tradition.¹⁰⁴ Lei Xiao and others, for example, mentioned *chenxiang* and musk among medicinal processing practices.¹⁰⁵ However, Ding did not consult this medicinal tradition. Second, describing the features of the aromatic substances in the form of animal parts conveyed a sense of exoticism and strangeness, which was further strengthened by the hybrid features of the botanical origins of the substances.¹⁰⁶ Readers were led to imagine the hybridized plants without really seeing them.

Ding emphasized the uniqueness of enjoying aromatic substances. Just as the authors of the *Daguan Treatise* and others separated tea practices from the medical tradition, Ding invented a “new” recreational tradition of using aromatic substances distinct from their medical use.¹⁰⁷ For Ding and followers, enjoying aromatic substances was as worthwhile and satisfying as enjoying tea. In this way tea and aromatic substances were “liberated” from the medicinal tradition and became objects of pleasure and enjoyment in their own right. Preparing and enjoying the aromatic substances also became a cultural construct.

Despite the numerous medical texts he cited, Hong Chu’s *Xiangpu* laid another essential foundation for the construction of a fragrance culture. Hong divided his *Xiangpu* into four sections: “Categories of Fragrance,” “Peculiarities about Fragrance,” “Matters about Fragrance,” and “Methods of [Produc-

103 *Tianxiang zhuan*, 36–37.

104 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.79; 3.98–99, 121. THHF 5.83; 8.128; 10.164–65.

105 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.79; 3.98–99, 121.

106 This can be likened to the creation of a chimera, combining the body parts of various animals into one entity.

107 Cf. Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983.

ing] Fragrance.” This division recalls Lu Yu’s, Cai Xiang’s, and Huizong’s construction of the cultural practices of enjoying tea, and renders the enjoyment of fragrances a sophisticated cultural act. The first two sections of Hong’s *Xiangpu* list numerous types of aromatic substances from botanical or animal sources. The third and fourth sections, “Matters” and “Methods,” however, elaborate on ways to elevate the cultural status of fragrance enjoyment. Elegantly designed incense burners, fragrance pouches, fragrant beds, “pavilions” [decorated by] four types of aromatic substance, and many other luxuriously decorated, fragrant objects helped heighten the enjoyment of fragrances. This is similar to tea appreciation, accompanied by beautifully decorated bowls, ewers, crushers, and other objects. Methods for producing aromatic substances appropriate for specific occasions are also laid out. Readers of Hong’s *Xiangpu* would know what fragrance to produce in a given context. From an olfactorial standpoint, this set them apart from other elites who did not use fragrance, and from ordinary people who likely gave off offensive odors after laborious work.

Hong’s approach made aromatic substances more akin to daily, user-friendly health products. Indeed, he cited historical and contemporary medical texts to support his claims about the medicinal functions of the substances, but he also indicated their everyday, non-medicinal applications. For one with blurry eyes and an agitated heart, Hong would recommend camphor to brighten the eyes and calm the heart.¹⁰⁸ The medicinal functions of other substances, such as tambac and musk, were not considered powerful enough to cure serious illnesses.¹⁰⁹ Like camphor, they were mainly indicated for their function of masking foul odors, relieving nausea, and reducing the frequency of nightmares. These uses were not medicinally powerful. Instead, they reflected Hong’s perspective that aromatic substances were products for daily consumption to help one live a physically and mentally better life, but existed relatively separate from the medicinal corpus. It is no wonder that his *Xiangpu*, which was probably a health guidebook, became one of this genre’s most widely circulated texts.

3.2 *Formulae for Mixing Aromatic Substances*

Health guidebooks on aromatic substances gave scholars formulae they needed to mix the substances to produce unique fragrances suited to various occasions and contexts. For example, in his *Xiangpu*, Hong Chu recorded the “Method

¹⁰⁸ *Xiangpu* 1.3.

¹⁰⁹ *Xiangpu* 1.4.

of Fumigating the Imperial Garments of the King of Shu” and the “Method of Scenting the Canopy of Li Yu, Ruler of the South of the River.”¹¹⁰ In these two entries, he specified the types and quantity of ingredients to mix. For the “Shu King’s Method,” one needed to mix tambac, sandalwood, musk, and other aromatic substances (one *tael* for each item), then grind them into powder, mix the powder with honey, and refine the mixture slightly. For “Li Yu’s Method,” one would grind one *tael* of tambac and ten pears in a silver container, then steam it three times until the pear juice dried up. After drying and processing, the mixed aromatic substances were ready for use. These treatments, like those for tea, originated from processes for medicine preparation.

In *Lei’s Treatise*, Lei Xiao and others provided clear guidelines for selecting and processing aromatic substances.¹¹¹ For example, they indicated that withered tambac simply did not make the grade; while tambac that sank to the bottom of a body of water was ranked higher, those that floated in the middle were considered of a lower grade.¹¹² During the seven hundred years between Lei Xiao and Chen Shiwen, medical texts developed greater precision in their guidelines. In *Imperial Pharmacy*, Chen Shiwen and colleagues include both aromatic substances mixed with other herbs to produce medicines and substances consumed in pure form.¹¹³ Those aromatic substances that were consumed in pure form were usually ground into powder, mixed with honey, and burned—following the established tradition of processing and preserving medicine.

If properly treated, aromatic substances could be preserved for a longer time and retained their medicinal properties and, most importantly, their fragrances. By recording these treatments in their *xiangpu*, Hong and his contemporaries made the formulae easily accessible. Fragrance lovers could follow the procedures to produce their own versions of fragrances to impress others.

3.3 *Incense Burners, Containers, and the Use of Aromatic Substances*

Elegant utensils were essential to the enrichment of fragrance culture. Hong Chu and his contemporaries listed many types, among which incense burners were, of course, the most important. The incense burner has a long history. One type, the *boshanlu*, was very popular in the Western and Eastern Han dynas-

110 *Xiangpu* 2.41. The names of these historical figures were used for commercial branding and promotion and had no necessary link with any real Shu king or Li Yu. Unless indicated otherwise, “the River” refers to Yangzi River.

111 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.79; 3.98–99, 121.

112 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.79.

113 THHF 5.83; 8.128; 10.164–65.

ties. The design of this type gave inspiration to the Northern Song designers.¹¹⁴ Northern Song incense burners were usually ceramic or bronze; glazed porcelain burners also were by no means rare.¹¹⁵ A green-and-white porcelain burner in the shape of a lotus, dating to around 1061 (Fig. 7), was excavated from the foundations of an iron pagoda at Dangyang Yuquan in Hubei province. When it was unearthed, there was still incense ash in the burner,¹¹⁶ a sign that this burner had actually been used by the living and was not simply a burial item. The lotus design of the Yuquan burner was probably drawn from the corpus of Buddhist lotus patterns. Designers of later generations referenced the gilt silver and bronze incense burners excavated at two Tang sites: the Temple of Dharma Doors and the Temple of Dharma Kings, in Henan and Shaanxi respectively.¹¹⁷

Food, flowers, and other materials also yield pleasing fragrances. Fragrance lovers could easily blend these to produce their own versions of fragrance. “Li Yu’s Method” tells us that fresh fruits such as pears, along with other botanicals, could be mixed with tambac.

On a rock shown in the lower foreground of *Listening to the Qin* is a container in the shape of a *li* in which we see a twig of blossoming jasmine.¹¹⁸ One can imagine the pleasant fragrance that pervades the air.¹¹⁹ We do not know what types of aromatic substances are burned in the container of this painting (the *li* could well be a container for aromatic substances to be burnt); nor is our limited olfactory vocabulary adequate to describe the mixed fragrance of jasmine and other aromas, but we can postulate that they must have been unique and pleasing. One of the non-medical functions of popular aromatic substances at the time was to repel insects that might otherwise have bothered the *qin* player and his two guests. As host of this gathering, the *qin* player succeeds in offering a unique sensory experience.

The scent of burning aromatic substances could also be used for fumigation. The “Shu King’s Method” mentions how fragrant substances were mixed but not how they were used in practice; yet “Method of Fumigating with Scent” describes the detailed process of fumigating clothes.¹²⁰ An incense cage allowed scented fumes to emerge through its slats. Clothes were laid atop the cage, while a jar of boiling water was placed beneath it. An aromatic cake was

114 Liu Jingmin 2007, 353–58; 2002.

115 Liu Jingmin 2007, 367–78; 2005a.

116 Hubei Sheng Yuquan Tietia Kaogudui 1996, 54–55, and the color plate of the incense burner, n.p.

117 Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiuyuan et al. 2007, 1:120–29; vol. 2, color pls. 58, 62–68. See also Liu Jingmin 2005b, 293.

118 Wang Cheng-hua 1998, 83, 88.

119 Wang Cheng-hua 1998, 88–89.

120 *Xiangpu* 2.48.

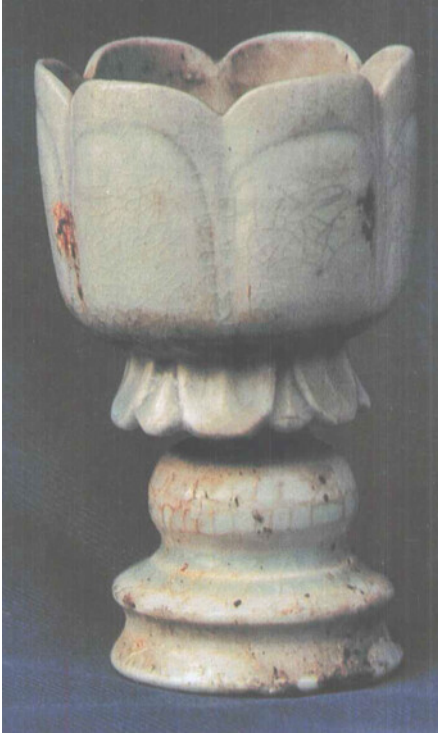


FIGURE 7
Green-and-white porcelain incense burner
from the foundation site of the iron pagoda
at Hubei Dangyang Yuquan. H. 11.7 cm.
Ca. 1061
AFTER HUBEI SHENG YUQUAN TIETA
KAOGUDUI 1996, COLOR PL., N.P. IMAGE
REPRODUCTION COURTESY OF THE CUL-
TURAL RELICS PRESS

then suspended above the boiling water, from which steam would heat the aromatic substances whose scent would rise to perfume the clothes. The clothes would then be folded and put away to be worn the next day. This scent would linger for several days, according to the text.¹²¹ The Southern Song poet Lu You recalls in his notes a practice in the royal palace during the Xuanhe reign of grinding powder of ambergris and tambac and mixing them with wax to make candles. Hundreds of these candles were lit, providing light and releasing a pleasing aroma that would pervade the entire palace.¹²² Another anecdote from the same source mentions that when women of noble families wanted to enter the royal palace, they would board ox-driven carts that carried two aromatic balls. While riding these carts the noblewomen's maidservants would stand beside them holding aromatic balls as well. The aroma would linger along the route of the carts for miles, even the dust and ground would become scented.¹²³ Though we cannot prove the authenticity of these anecdotes, they

¹²¹ *Xiangpu* 2.48.

¹²² *Bishu manchao*, 9.

¹²³ *Laoxuean biji* 1.14.

reflect how elites of the time perceived or imagined the application of aromatic substances.

The perfumed bodies and clothes of fragrance-loving royals, officials, scholars, and other cultural and political elites, who might well be the confident *xiangpu* followers, must have distinguished them sharply from commoners, functioning like a bonding agent among elite communities.¹²⁴ Whenever the *xiangpu* followers burned the fragrant substances mentioned therein, they reiterated their elite identity and reasserted their status through these powerful olfactory symbols.

3.4 *Narratives on the Burning of Aromatic Substances*

Hosts who produced fragrance and their guests who enjoyed it would have possessed shared cultural knowledge. Both preparation and enjoyment of aromatic substances were cultural acts performed, led, and maintained by officials, royalty, and cultural elites, who established olfactory standards and widely promoted them through the publication of *xiangpu*. Existing side by side with the practical medicinal functions of fragrant substances, such as removing feelings of nausea or improving sleep, were their impressive cultural powers that are comparable to those of tea.¹²⁵ Similar to the cultural construction of tea in the textual and painting traditions, aromatics were made the subjects of remarkable narratives in the *xiangpu* and other writings. Scholars created discourses on how aromatic substances were prepared and used in the texts, thus they controlled the power of discourse to signify the cultural functions of these substances. *Xiangpu* also offered guidelines for identifying and purchasing the suitable types. Paintings depicting the substances conveyed overt and covert narratives on how the substances were used to connect elites of the same community.

4 Music from the *Qin* and the Prosody

The scholarly consensus is that *qin* music was an important musical genre in the Northern Song, but rarely do contemporary scholars treat rhymes and

¹²⁴ Liu Shufen 2007, 660.

¹²⁵ Enjoying tea, especially for those advocating a pure, unadulterated tea fragrance, required the ability to distinguish fragrances of different types. Mixing tea with camphor or musk, for example, was to be avoided. For those who were not tea purists, the mixed aroma of tea, camphor, and/or musk, and other substances might provide pleasant smells at tea gathering. Distinguishing between types of fragrance was thus an ability exclusive to cultural elites, regardless of which way they preferred to take their tea.

melodies in literary works as a type of music.¹²⁶ In the following paragraphs, the rhythmic and melodic properties of poems will also be our chief focus. Study of the rhyming and tonal patterns of these poems will reveal how Northern Song elites appropriated music as a culturally constructed art. We shall also explore their pursuit of ideals for the production and appreciation of music that accompanied the cultures of tea and fragrance.

4.1 Qin

4.1.1 Motivations

For Northern Song political elites, music was produced for a variety of reasons. To emperors, whose primary concern was maintaining rulership, music was supposed to cultivate a compliant mindset in their subjects and was, naturally, incorporated into their political agendas. Musical instruments were thus constantly modified to conform to reform policies. The *qin* and bronze bells were the two types of musical instrument that most captured the attention of the Northern Song emperors. After the techniques for casting bronze bells to non-arithmetically achieve the twelve semi-tones of the chromatic scale (*shierlü*) were lost in the third century BCE, and before Prince Zhu Zaiyu of the Ming dynasty successfully demonstrated the relationship between arithmetic and the equal-tempered chromatic scale in the sixteenth century CE, the ways to attain the chromatic scale were constantly changing in China.¹²⁷ Musical theorists were obsessed with the arithmetic relationship between string lengths of the *qin* and musical intervals. In the Northern Song, they believed that chromatic scales could be calculated along similar lines to Pythagorean ratios. Until the sixteenth century, the twelve equal semi-tones of the chromatic scale were never successfully calculated and consequently remained elusive, causing a need to constantly adjust the tonality of musical instruments that could produce favorable absolute pitches. Bronze bells and stringed *qin* were among those instruments that could produce absolute pitches and as a result, were often applied to such re-adjustment schemes. A traditional belief traced to the compilation of the *Annals of Lü Buwei* in approximately 239 BCE claimed that absolute pitches and the chromatic scale were associated with cosmic harmony, the seasons, weather, agricultural cycles, and political stability.¹²⁸ This belief prevailed as an imperial ideology in China; the Northern Song emperors would spare no effort in attaining the “perfect” chromatic

126 See the discussion of rhythm in Cai Zong-qi 2008c; 2014; 2015c.

127 Kuttner 1975. Cho 2003, 147–207, 234–38. See also Bagley 2005, 87; 2015, 57–61.

128 *Lüshi chunqiu* 1:26.258–60; for an English translation, see Knoblock and Riegel 2000, 136–39.

scale in pursuit of political stability. In this way, bronze bells, stringed *qin*, arithmetic, and measurement were all harnessed to produce “harmonious” music.

Adjusting the lengths of strings on instruments was believed to be useful in adjusting incorrectly calculated musical intervals of the chromatic scale. Before Huizong’s time, the basic unit of measurement was the length of a grain of millet.¹²⁹ Lining up a certain number of grains of millet one by one determined the length of a string, which eventually defined the musical intervals. It was found that plucking various ratios of the lengths of the string set by the positioning the bridges of the *qin*, such as 1:2, 2:3, or 3:4, would produce pleasing intervals. Ratios other than these could not be easily calculated. As issues increased in complexity, theorists were led to rehearse their calculations repeatedly. In Huizong’s time, along with Cai Jing, musical theorist Wei Hanjin proposed using the lengths of Huizong’s fingers as basic units of measurement.¹³⁰ The length of a grain of millet was believed to be from nature; so, too, were the dimensions of august body parts of the sons of the heaven, i.e., the emperors. Initially, the measurements of Huizong’s fingers were not revealed to the musicians themselves because a servant of Huizong thought that data pertaining to the emperor’s body was a tightly held secret and should not be made public knowledge.¹³¹ To safeguard this secret, incorrect data was given to theorists, who therefore failed, purportedly, to attain the pleasing intervals they had hoped for. Eventually Huizong’s actual finger lengths were revealed, and pleasing intervals were thus said to have been attained.

Since the music chapters of the *History of the Song Dynasty* (hereafter *Song History*) are primarily concerned with the political implications of music and ritual,¹³² the actual processes of the adjustment of the string lengths and ratios are not specified and are difficult to reconstruct. Yet it remains certain that Northern Song musical theorists would have attempted to calculate the musical intervals of the chromatic scale and modify the related musical instruments accordingly.

The Dasheng (Grand Brightness) symphony (*Dashengyue*) was composed in this context.¹³³ It is recorded in *Song History* that several cranes flew to the royal court when the Dasheng symphony was performed. Huizong accordingly issued an imperial decree to stress the importance of recruiting talented schol-

129 This was proposed by Fan Zhen, see SS 9:126.2937–38.

130 SS 9:126.2937–38. See also Lam 2006.

131 SS 9:128.2988–89.

132 Ebrey 2008, 155, 159–66.

133 SS 9:129:3001–2; SS 9:126.2937–38. Lam 2006. Ebrey 2008, 155, 159–66.

ars from the lower strata of society. The emphasis on recruiting talent was considered essential to state harmony by Huizong and his ministers. A connection was then made between the new musical standards and the cultivation and recruitment of new talent for the state. In this way, *qin* music was imbued with rich political meaning.¹³⁴

Since the recruitment of talent was associated with *qin* music in the eyes of the emperors, *qin* players, as subordinates, accordingly emphasized their cultivation of virtues.¹³⁵ Morality, virtues, and high ethical standards were necessarily attached to *qin* playing techniques and knowledge about the *qin*. Scholarly records of *qin* players pay special attention to their virtues. For example, *Qin History (Qinshi)*, compiled by Zhu Changwen in 1084, provides a list of renowned and virtuous *qin* players.¹³⁶ Zhu himself was an excellent *qin* player and a *jinshi* degree holder, but he did not serve in the government and shied away from holding any office for thirty years. When he was forty-seven years old, he was recommended by Su Shi and others to become a professor, and began his short civil service career.¹³⁷ In the “Narratives of History” (“*Xushi*”) chapter of *Qin History*, Zhu lamented that he desired to compose biographies of *qin* players who were recluses waiting to be enlisted in the government.¹³⁸ In the preface, he stated that the publication of *Qin History* came at an opportune moment because the dynasty was experiencing a period of peace and social harmony, making it a suitable opportunity to compose music and establish rituals.¹³⁹ Zhu’s promotion of virtuous *qin* players who were also capable scholars and potential government officials correlated with the emperors’ desires to recruit talent.

4.1.2 Appreciating the *Qin*

Both *qin* music and the features of the *qin* itself convey deeper meanings embedded in the appreciation of *qin* music. The materials used to make the *qin* determine the volume and tonality of the music. Northern Song zither lovers possessed a certain degree of knowledge about the *qin*. Since *qin* music was not loud and the distance between the players and listeners was necessarily short,

134 Considering this line of thinking, it is no surprise that each string of the *qin* was thought to represent a kind of virtue or a social stratum in the eyes of emperors. SS 9:126.2954; SS 9:126.2944–45; SS 10:142.3341–42.

135 Gulik 1969, 26–27. Qin Xu 2000.

136 For Zhu Changwen’s life, see DPQJ 53:735–36. Zhang Huaying 2013, 140–41.

137 Su Shi made a special mention of Zhu’s virtues in a recommendation letter he composed for Zhu. DPQJ 53:735–36.

138 *Qinshi* 6.48–49.

139 *Qinshi* 1.1.

it was appropriate for intimate concerts and because of this, listeners likely had ample opportunities to observe a host's *qin*. The painted lacquer, jade or metal decorations, reeled silk strings, and other features of the *qin* delight listeners with a visual spectacle to complement the music.

A Northern Song player would have preferred playing a Tang period *qin*, although the *qin* made during the Northern Song time were not inferior in quality. Tang *qin*, especially those made by the Lei family of Sichuan, called "*Leiqin*," were highly prized by scholars. Members of the Lei family, such as Lei Wei, Lei Yan, and Lei Jue, were said to have produced top-quality instruments, but these artisans did not leave much in the way of historical records.¹⁴⁰ The Lei family enjoyed high status in the *qin* player community and left many exemplary practices for Northern Song *qin* lovers to emulate. For this reason, a discussion of the *qin* played and appreciated by Northern Song scholars will be enhanced by an investigation of Tang-era *qin*.

Since we do not have any extant *qin* that can be reliably identified as *Leiqin* nowadays,¹⁴¹ we will explore what related information textual records of the *Leiqin* can offer. *Leiqin* were costly in the Northern Song. Ouyang Xiu lamented that he could not afford a *Leiqin* until he was promoted to a higher rank in government.¹⁴² The acoustic properties of the *Leiqin* were considered to be of exceptional quality. Su Shi collected a *Leiqin* with inscriptions noting that the Lei family made it in the tenth year of the Kaiyuan reign of Tang Xuanzong, or 722, in Yazhou in Sichuan.¹⁴³ Su commented on three unique features of the *Leiqin*—1) the space between any two tuning keys on the right side of the *qin* was too narrow to put a finger between them; 2) the reeled silk strings could not be set loose; 3) the sound emerging from the sound holes was trapped inside [the body of the *qin*] and therefore had a lingering quality.¹⁴⁴ These details may reveal qualities about the *Leiqin* but remain insufficient for the purpose of identifying a true *Leiqin*.

140 *Yunyan guoyan lu* 2.62.

141 See Zheng Minzhong 1989, 21; 2001a, 36; 2001b, 13, 15 and 2001c, 13–15. Zheng claimed that there were twelve extant *Leiqin* in 2001. The criteria for identifying a *Leiqin*, as outlined in the discussion in the main text and in the sources cited by Zheng, are neither comprehensive nor definitive. These criteria depend heavily on the connoisseurs' personal judgments. While connoisseurs may be able to identify the approximate production periods of a *qin*, associating a specific *qin* with the Lei family based on the discussed criteria is far from convincing.

142 QSW 34:718.96–97. See also Zhang Meimei 2019, 36–49.

143 QSW 91:1974.46.

144 QSW 91:1974.46. See also Li Mingzhong 2000a, 97. Zheng Minzhong 2001a, 36. Zhang Huaying 2013, 101–2.

There are very few surviving Tang *qin* because the wood and silk strings used to make the *qin* easily decayed and were subject to deformation. However, some well-preserved *qin* can still be played and continue to generate satisfactory sounds after being given new silk strings. The Northern Storehouse of the Shōsō-in held aromatic substances and medicine in its southern and western chambers, but its front and central chambers were used to house luxuriously decorated musical instruments, including well-preserved *qin*.¹⁴⁵ It is claimed that the *qin* in the collection date to the eighth century. If this is the case, do they resemble those *qin* appreciated by Northern Song players?

Would a Northern Song musician play a *qin* that was made in the Song period but which imitated the design of a Tang *qin*? A *qin* named “Withered Wood, Dragon’s Roar” (“*Kumu longyin*,” hereafter Dragon’s Roar *qin*) in the Freer Gallery collection in Washington, D.C. has attracted much attention (Fig. 8). Based on their experiences as connoisseurs, Wang Shixiang and Zheng Minzhong have dated it to the Tang/Song and to the middle Tang period (approximately the eighth century), respectively.¹⁴⁶ Yang Yuanzheng identified an ink inscription on an infrared photograph of the inner side of the belly of the *qin*.¹⁴⁷ The ink inscription points to the year 1009, which may refer to the year of production, repair, or collection of the *qin*. We can ascertain that the *qin* existed before 1009. In the absence of any provenance information, this is to date the best dating result we can obtain (as scientific analysis of the wood would not help much). The pegs and strings currently on the Dragon’s Roar *qin* are replacements of a later date,¹⁴⁸ while the black lacquer was possibly applied when the *qin* was freshly made. The striated surface of the lacquer, as seen in Fig. 8, caused by different tensions within layers of the painted lacquer, attests to its long history. There are usually thirteen *hui*-markers made of jade or metal, placed in thirteen sunken nodes next to the strings on the top of the *qin*. The Dragon’s Roar *qin* has only twelve, made of shiny golden metal; the eleventh marker was lost, and in its place, only a sunken node remains.¹⁴⁹

The main body of the Dragon’s Roar *qin* consists of two wooden boards. Zheng Minzhong and Yang Yuanzheng have identified a part of the upper

145 Fu Yunzi 2000, 18–26. See also the seven-stringed *qin*-zither in Tōkyō National Museum 1999, 123, item no. N102.

146 Zheng Minzhong 2000b, 4; Yang Yuanzheng 2020, 60–61.

147 Yang Yuanzheng 2020, 59–85, for the inscription see 61, 66. Yang Yuanzheng believes that it is the date of manufacture.

148 Zheng Minzhong 2000b, 3; Yang Yuanzheng 2020, 72–73.

149 Yang Yuanzheng 2020, 72.



FIGURE 8 Back and front views of the *qin* in the name of “Kumu longyin” (Withered wood, dragon’s roar). L. 123.2 cm. 7th century–1009
 NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ASIAN ART (NMAA), SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION,
 FREER COLLECTION, GIFT OF CHARLES LANG FREER, F1915.100. PHOTO-
 GRAPH COURTESY OF THE NMAA

soundboard as being made from *cunninghamia* (China-fir).¹⁵⁰ Usually, the two boards of a *qin* were described as being glued together.¹⁵¹ The two boards of the Dragon’s Roar *qin*, in contrast to common practice, were joined using bamboo pins.¹⁵² We can see the computer tomography (CT) scan images of the *qin* in Fig. 9, showing the inner structure of the two attached boards.¹⁵³ The hole in the bottom board shown in the left CT sub-image in Fig. 9 is one of the two sound holes underneath the *qin* called dragon’s pool (*longchi*) or phoenix’s pond (*fengzhao*). When a string is plucked, the vibration of the string and wooden boards creates resonance within the space between the tightly interlocked boards. The sound created emerges through the sound holes. Given this delicate structure, the volume of the sound is relatively low.

Other surviving *qin* that date to the Northern Song are few and far between. At the end of the twentieth century, Zheng Minzhong identified some Song *qin*,¹⁵⁴ but Yang Yuanzheng contended in 2020 that by scholarly consensus, only three extant *qin* can be conclusively dated to between 750 and 1000. If we count the Dragon’s Roar *qin*, the number goes up to four.¹⁵⁵ From Zheng’s connoisseurial point of view, Song *qin* can be divided into three categories—

150 Zheng Minzhong 2000b, 5. Yang Yuanzheng 2020, 72, 83.

151 *Seng Juyue qinzhi*, 650–51. Zhang Huaying 2013, 307–8. Zhu Huipeng 2012, 128–59. He Zhiling 2013, 63.

152 Yang Yuanzheng 2020, 72. See also Tang Jianyuan 2000, 41.

153 Yang Yuanzheng 2020, 173–79, Appendix 2.

154 Zheng Minzhong 1999; 2000a; 2002.

155 Yang Yuanzheng 2020, 82.

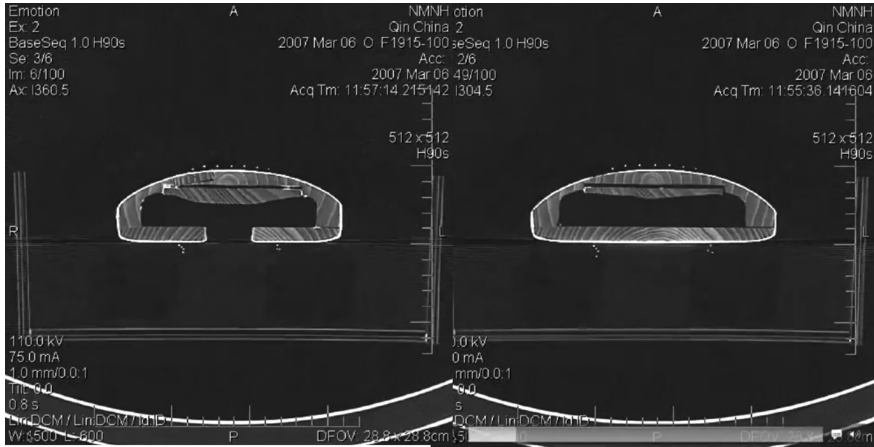


FIGURE 9 X-ray computer tomography scan images of the Dragon's Roar *qin*
 NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ASIAN ART, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, FREER
 COLLECTION, GIFT OF CHARLES LANG FREER, F1915.100 / IMAGES BY THE
 SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, CT SCAN IMAGE

qin made in official workshops, those produced in commoners' workshops, and those paraded as having a (spurious) Tang provenance.¹⁵⁶ For our purposes, it is interesting to observe that the presence of Song *qin* that imitated Tang *qin* demonstrates that the latter were very popular among Northern Song *qin* lovers.¹⁵⁷

4.1.3 *Qin* Music

In his book *The Lore of the Chinese Lute* published in 1940, Robert H. van Gulik described the tonality of the *qin* music as follows: "The music of the ancient lute [author's note: *qin*] as a solo instrument is widely different from all other sorts of Chinese music: it stands entirely alone ... each note is an entity in itself, calculated to evoke in mind of the hearer a special reaction."¹⁵⁸ The volume of the *qin* sound is relatively low, as compared to other instruments such as the *se-* and *zheng-zithers*. In Gulik's term, *qin* music is "not primarily melodic."¹⁵⁹ How did *qin* music actually sound to the ears of the Northern Song scholar-artists?

Reconstructing a playable *qin* melody or simply any *qin* sound from before the Ming dynasty is very difficult. First, *qin* dating to before the Ming dynasty

156 Zheng Minzhong 1999; 2000a, 24–32.

157 Zheng Minzhong 1999, 31–32.

158 Gulik 1969, 1.

159 Gulik 1969, 1.

are extremely rare; most of them have lost their original silk strings and other essential paraphernalia. While the wooden boards used to make the *qin* have survived for hundreds of years, the tonality has undoubtedly changed. Moreover, the notation of *qin* music is difficult for today's musicians to understand.¹⁶⁰ Earlier tablatures indicate fingering techniques or finger movements of playing the *qin*. One of the earliest surviving tablatures is the well-known manuscript of *Solitary Orchid in the Mode of Towering Rock* (*Jieshidiao Youlan*), which was created in approximately the seventh century and is now housed at the Tōkyō National Museum.¹⁶¹ This manuscript, as many scholars describe it, is a full-ideogram notation (*wenzipu*) that records pitches and finger movements in prose, but it does not notate rhythm or duration of pitches.¹⁶² Modern *qin* players have attempted to reconstruct a playable *qin* melody from this manuscript and others.¹⁶³ These reconstructions must rely partially on the players' interpretations because these tablatures record information other than those deemed necessary by modern Western musical standards.

Given the rarity of *qin* tablatures and the difficulties in reconstructing melodies from early periods, we are forced to rely primarily on textual descriptions that seek to record the *qin* music in a verbal sense and not musically. Several pieces of writing that were compiled in the *Essential Records of the Qin Garden* (*Qinyuan yaolu*; hereafter *Qin Garden*) and *Comprehensive Anthology of Books about the Qin* (*Qinshu daquan*; hereafter *Qin Anthology*) describe melody categories of *qin* music. Multiple types of *qin* melodies are mentioned in *Qin Garden*, which dates to approximately the Song period.¹⁶⁴

Zequan, a Buddhist monk who was also a famed *qin* player, and others composed the illustrated *Monk Zequan's Phrasings and Finger Techniques* (*Zequan Heshang jiezou zhifa*; hereafter *Zequan's Techniques*), which was included in *Qin*

160 The invention of musical notation was as intellectually sophisticated as that of writing systems. Apart from music generated from instruments, lyric songs did not appear with musical scores until the fourteenth century. *Songs of the Whitestone Daoist* represents a rare compilation of the lyric songs with musical scores. See He Changlin 2009, 57; Yang Yuanzheng 2019, 88.

161 TB1393. See Yang Yuanzheng 2010; 2014. There is another early manuscript, titled *Fingering Techniques of Playing the Qin*, housed in the Hikone City Museum (V633). See Yang Yuanzheng's works cited above.

162 Yang Yuanzheng 2014, 32.

163 Yang Zongji was among the first players to offer a reconstructed version. Zhang Huaying 2013, 390–92.

164 See the *Gucuo shierzhang* in QYYL, 1–17; and the *Qinshu* in QYYL, 93–99 (94–96 specifically). Names such as *Zhennü yǐn*, *Liangfu yǐn*, *Wenjun nong*, and *Wenwang cao* are mentioned.

Garden.¹⁶⁵ In this book, Zequan and others enumerated *qin* music categories, including *pin*, *diaozi*, and *cao*.¹⁶⁶ For *pin*, the rhythm needed to be speedy. For *diaozi*, it resembled a slow *qu* that was sung. One began each line of the *diaozi* with two slow tunes, continued with several tunes, followed them with a brief pause, and ended with one tune to connect with the following line. It appears that the *diaozi* had lyrics. In contrast to the *diaozi*, the *cao* began with one word for each line, followed by a brief pause, and ended with two tunes to connect with the following line. Zhu Changwen noted, however, that the *cao* contained no lyrics, but rich and elaborate tunes.¹⁶⁷ *Cheng Yujian's Treatise of the Qin* (*Cheng Yujian qinlun*), which was compiled by Cheng Yujian and included in *Qin Anthology*, suggested analogies for these three styles.¹⁶⁸ *Diaozi*, according to him, was like eating olives, bland but not uninteresting, while *cao* resembled a rush of wind and rain, which struck one's soul with immediacy.

For the sequence of *qin* melodies performed at a gathering, Cao Zhi, the writer of the preface of *Zequan's Techniques*, had clear ideas. Cao was a grand-nephew of Empress Dowager Cao (Cao Taihou), the second wife of Renzong.¹⁶⁹ He claimed that after obtaining Zequan's manuscript, he publicized the manuscript and taught *qin* music for over thirty years. His background as a member of the extended royal family, his *qin* knowledge and skills, and his rich experience in teaching mean that Cao Zhi may have been a popular *qin* teacher and player in the royal court. Information about Cao Zhi is woefully limited, and we cannot state with certainty when he was born or whether he had occasion to instruct Huizong in the *qin*. Nevertheless, it was highly likely that Zequan's book with Cao Zhi's preface, which was widely circulated, might have featured in the *qin* curriculum in the royal court and that Huizong and other royals might have been exposed to this textbook.

165 ZQHS, 18–63. In his book *Fozu tongji*, compiled in 1269, Zhipan provides a very short biography of a monk named Zequan. The year of this monk's death, 1045, is noted in *Fozu tongji* 12.201. This may be the same Zequan under discussion here. See also Si Binglin 2011.

The term "*jiezou*" in the book title has a meaning similar to today's, albeit with certain distinctions. It connotes cadences that are grouped into various phrases. Therefore, I have chosen the term "phrasings" to denote "*jiezou*" in the translation of the book title. Elsewhere, contingent on the context, I translate "*jiezou*" as "rhythm." Although this book is attributed to Zequan, he might have composed only parts of the current version of the book. Subsequently the book was added to and elaborated upon by others. See also Zhongguo Yishu Yanjiuyuan Yinyue Yanjiusuo Ziliaoshi 1994, 34, entry no. 1276. Their dating of the book (ca. 1080) is about right.

166 ZQHS, 55.

167 *Qinshi* 6.47. It appears that various *qin* masters may possess their own definitions and classifications of *qin* music.

168 *Cheng Yujian qinlun*, 64.

169 ZQHS, 20.

Participants at *qin* gatherings engaged in a specific sequence of actions designed to heighten the experience. Before the *qin* concert began, aromatic substances were burned in order to suffuse the air with fragrance. The fragrance would repel pesky insects from the performance area and provide a pleasant environment for the player and listeners. This practice is also specified in Cao Zhi's preface.¹⁷⁰ A set of regulations regarding the sequence of melodies to be performed is also provided in the preface. First, the *qin* player pacifies his heart and arranges the *qin* in front of him. He slowly tunes the strings and plays one or two *diaozi* once the guests quiet down. The melodies are slow initially, become a bit swifter, and gradually slow down to a hiatus. Following the *diaozi*, a minor *cao* (*xiaocaonong*) is performed. By then, the player's mind will have attained a harmonious state, and the warm-up exercises will conclude. Eventually the major *cao* (*dacao*) is performed with which he lifts everyone's spirit. One spirit-lifting *cao* is sufficient, Cao suggested, if an encore is played, the listeners will understand the more profound messages conveyed in the melody.¹⁷¹ This sequence is logical and demonstrates the specific qualities of each of the *qin* melodies. We understand from this paragraph that, from a Northern Song *qin* musician's perspective, the *diaozi* could serve as introductory pieces while the *cao* were used to create the climax of a performance. The listeners' mood would depend on what melodies the players performed, while the fragrance served as a psychological stabilizer. The discussion of *qin* music in *Song History* is inclined to dwell on the political and cosmological aspects of music,¹⁷² with barely any mention of how *qin* music was actually played. Cao Zhi's descriptions reflected, by contrast, the mindset of an actual *qin* player.

Other *qin* players, who were also scholars, officials, and artists, left records about how they performed and interpreted their *qin* music. Zhu Changwen's *Qin History* gives clues about how *qin* music was constructed culturally. In Zhu's book, Cui Zundu, Tang Yi, Fan Zhongyan, and Ouyang Xiu are all noted as excellent and virtuous *qin* players well-versed in the essential spirit of the *qin*.¹⁷³ Cui Zundu and Tang Yi taught Fan Zhongyan to play the *qin*,¹⁷⁴ while Fan and Ouyang were close friends and political allies in the government. Zhu historicized a *qin* lineage by connecting these scholar-artists, *qin* lovers, and players. Their multiple identities, linked by their *qin*-playing techniques and high moral standards, helped form a *qin* community.

170 ZQHS, 19–20.

171 ZQHS, 18.

172 SS 10:142.3341–42.

173 *Qinshi* 5.40–43.

174 *Qinshi* 5.42.

Fan's understanding of *qin* music, which he inherited from Cui Zundu, emphasized purity, sternness, calm, harmony, sleekness, and aloofness—the music was not to be too loud, brash, or flattering.¹⁷⁵ The anthropomorphic character and moral implications of some of these terms are unmistakable, yet they were used as adjectives to describe *qin* music. Fan elaborated that if it were too loud, the music would become too “brash,” however “pure” and “stern” it might be in its essential nature. If it were not “aloof” enough, the music would turn to “flattery,” even if it was “sleek” and “harmonious.” In turn, Fan's conception of *qin* music as it was passed on to Ouyang Xiu was illustrated in another anecdote about Ouyang's *qin* learning experience.¹⁷⁶ Ouyang once had what was thought to be an incurable illness, brought on by excess solitude and anxiety. He subsequently found diversion in playing the *qin* and gradually recovered from his sickness. Apparently, Ouyang's recovery was claimed to be affected by the harmonious and pacifying quality of the *qin* music. When the heart was soothed, illness could be kept at bay. Zhu commented that Ouyang indeed understood the deeper principles of *qin* music.

By linking Fan with Cui Zundu and Tang Yi and putting the anecdotes of Fan and Ouyang together, Zhu constructed a community consisting of scholars, officials, and artists interested in the *qin*. Zhu's *Qin History* supplied a perspective of how Northern Song cultural elites appreciated *qin* music, offering insights not present in the political and ideological narratives of *Song History*. Understanding Northern Song *qin* music by solely relying on its textual descriptions, however, is not sufficient for a comprehensive understanding of the role of shared cultural activities in community formation. To this end, we will explore how the *qin* was actually played.

4.1.4 *Qin* Playing Techniques

Qin tablatures produced during and after the Song period represented a relatively efficient way of recording *qin* music. In 1967, Rulan Chao Pian, a famed *qin* historian, offered detailed explanations and interpretations of *qin* tablatures in her authoritative work, *Song Dynasty Musical Sources and Their Interpretation*.¹⁷⁷ In this noted work of scholarship, Pian described the Song as a period full of rich musical developments.¹⁷⁸ *Wenzipu* that had been passed down from the Tang dynasty were still used, while new notations that would later develop into the tablature formats we see today were being experimented

175 *Qinshi* 5.42.

176 *Qinshi* 5.42.

177 Pian (1967) 2003.

178 Pian 2003, ix–xii.

with at the same time.¹⁷⁹ One of the popular new notations was the so-called abbreviated-character notation (*jianzipu*). The *wenzipu* is written in prose in which complete, grammatical sentences are used to explain which string (*xian-shu*) and which position (*huiwei*) should be touched and plucked, and which hand and fingers should be used, while the *jianzipu* represented the same information using clusters of symbols formed by components of Chinese characters.¹⁸⁰

Early notations that indicate the *zhifa* or finger techniques can be traced to approximately the sixth century.¹⁸¹ The manuscript of *Solitary Orchid* mentioned above and Zhao Yeli's notations were among the early notations available to Northern Song *qin* musicians. *Finger Techniques of Tian Zizhi* and *Finger Techniques of Yang Zuyun*, which were compiled into Ming dynasty *qin* volumes,¹⁸² seem on the surface to have been recorded by Southern Song musicians, but actually belong to the Tang period *wenzipu* tradition.¹⁸³ *Zequan's Techniques*, written by Zequan and others, was more likely created in the Northern Song. We may rely on these books to explore the placements and movements of a Northern Song player's hands and fingers while playing the *qin*.

A Northern Song player would consult the *wenzipu*, since the *qin* books in the *wenzipu* tradition continued to be published from the Tang through the Ming and were easily accessible to the players. Given the complexity of capturing in prose the series of ephemeral movements of the hands and fingers, however, would an ordinary player still consult the *wenzipu* when a much handier format, namely the *jianzipu*, was available? Similarly, would Huizong and other scholar-artists consult the *wenzipu*? Chances are greater that Huizong might not even have seen the *wenzipu* and that he saw merely the *jianzipu*, with what his *qin* teacher taught him actually being a verbal translation of the *wenzipu*. The *wenzipu* contains records of a sequence of actions of the fingers and hands that could be very minute and subtle. Rapid changes in finger movements and positionings had to be noted with great care because any loss of information would result in the player's misapprehension (indeed this occurred very often, which made the reconstruction very difficult).¹⁸⁴ When the *wenzipu* evolved into the *jianzipu*, character-like symbols would need to be interpreted. The

179 Pian 2003, 80–81.

180 Zhang Huaying 2013, 388.

181 Zhang Huaying 2013, 389. Yang Yuanzheng 2010; 2014.

182 For *Yang Zuyun zhifa*, see QSDQ 8.13–15. See also Zhang Huaying 2013, 389, 393.

183 Zhang Huaying 2013, 389.

184 We can imagine that if we were to describe the series of actions involved in playing the *piano* in English and substitute the musical scores with the Chinese *wenzipu*, a single page of score could easily turn into more than ten pages of *wenzipu*.

interpretations, whether given by the teacher, or interpreted by the player in his mind, and not spoken aloud, in one way or another, were in fact themselves translated versions of the *wenzipu*.

We can take Pian's explanations of the *jianzipu* as examples.¹⁸⁵ Below are excerpts of Pian's explanation of the symbols for right- and left-hand techniques and general instructions:

1. 毛 for *tuo* 托. "The thumb [nail] pulls the string inward [toward the player]."
2. 尸 for *boh* 擘. "[The fleshy part of] the thumb hooks the string outward [away from the player] ..."
3. 木 for *moo* 抹. "The index finger pulls the string inward."
4. 乚 or 匕 for *tiau* 挑. "The index finger hooks the string outward."¹⁸⁶

If Pian's interpretations of the symbols are correct (as we assume them to be), a Northern Song player would have followed such interpretations in mind, or his teacher would have explained them to him. Therefore, no matter what notations a player was reading, his fingers and hands were guided by the tablatures. Actions and gestures of the *qin* players were determined by the tablature recorders.¹⁸⁷ Ephemeral actions performed in the act of playing the *qin* were imitated and inherited. Individuals might have had the freedom to make subtle changes, but the general positioning, movements, and force of the hands and fingers were expected to be followed, as stipulated in the tablatures.

Zequan and others elaborated on the finger techniques and movements in their book,¹⁸⁸ providing detailed illustrations of the contact points of the silk strings. These texts survive thanks to the advanced publication technologies developed in the Northern Song. One of their elaborations on finger techniques, besides recording the necessary information required in the *jianzipu*, reflected the emphasis they placed on a player's attention to detail when playing the *qin*:

Whenever a player lays the fingers [on the strings], he applies force only after he has put his fingers on top of the strings. He should not plop

185 Pian 2003, 82–98.

186 Pian 2003, 82.

187 Gestures of playing the *qin* have been associated with symbolic meanings since the Ming period, as revealed in illustrations of some *qin* texts, such as *Xinkan Taiyin daquanji*, 44, right-hand "crane gesture;" 49, left-hand "oriole gesture." See also *Yuxian qinpu zhengyin*, 55. Lee Mei-yen 2013. Further research is required to ascertain whether the left- and right-hand gestures of the player in *Listening to the Qin* were associated with any symbolic meanings.

188 ZQHS, 20–54.

down his fingers from mid-air, nor should he pop out his fingers; [if he has done so,] what he can do is to rest the fingers on the next strings. The essence of the finger techniques is to press [the strings] as if [to push them] into the wooden boards and pluck the strings as if to break them. When the left hand presses strongly, the right hand lightly plucks; conversely, when the left hand presses lightly, the right hand strongly plucks. Light plucking should aim at the position between the fifth and sixth *hui*-markers; strong plucking should aim near the bottom of the bridge. In this way, the plucking resembles the way terrapins walk and cranes dance.¹⁸⁹

The elaborations from Zequan and others greatly enriched the implications of the tablatures recorded in either the *wenzipu* or *jianzipu* format. The tablatures recorded playing instructions in fixed formats, but the players still had to learn from their teachers and perfect their skills by learning from experience. Players were required to gain technical know-how, such as the subtle movements of the fingers, the directions in which they should move, the different degrees of force to apply, and the positions where the fingers should stay or from whence they should exert force. These aspects of knowledge and experience are similar to those of whisking tea—the emphasis on the subtleties of the actions and feelings of the fingers constitute the essentials of *qin*-playing techniques and the required mindset.

The actions and feelings of the fingers determined the tonality and volume of *qin* music. The structure of a *qin* and its silk strings provided a wide range in which one could generate a broad spectrum of possible tones. In the *Book of Music (Yueshu)* compiled by Chen Yang in approximately 1100 and presented to the royal court in 1103, eleven types of tones are identified.¹⁹⁰ They include “timber tones,” “floating tones” (harmonics), and “loose tones.” These tones are described in the volume in the following terms:

[As for] pressing a string with a finger of the left hand, along with the vibration of the string when pressing it, the finger of the left hand presses the string until it touches the wooden board while plucking it with the right hand. [This will] make a faint thundering sound—such is the timber tone.

Pluck a string with the right hand, while the left hand softly taps it. [This will] softly make a light, pure sound—such is the floating tone.

189 ZQHS, 20–21.

190 See also Zhongguo Yishu Yanjiuyuan Yinyue Yanjiusuo Ziliaoshi 1994, 34, entry no. 1277.

[Pluck a string with the right hand while] the left hand does not press or pluck any strings. [This will] make a sonorous sound like a tinkling bell—such is the loose tone.¹⁹¹

As readers can imagine, the different combinations of the movements of the fingers from both hands can generate a wide range of tones.¹⁹² Any slight variations of the combinations will bring forth a different tone. An experienced player could create and master his own set of finger techniques and perform using his unique combinations.

The various combinations of finger techniques create numerous musical properties unique to the *qin*. One of these distinct properties is the phenomenon of microtones.¹⁹³ Modern Western musical scores are now taken as a standard notation system. However, the current Western system cannot notate all the musical properties used in different historical and musical traditions. Chinese *qin* musical notation records microtones in a way that modern Western musical scores have not been designed to encompass. The notations in the *wenzipu* and *jianzipu* indicate specific strings, their positions, and corresponding *hui*-markers, implied movements, the direction of these movements, the force used, and the feeling of the fingers in the performance of these actions. All this serves to record minute variations of specific pitches and the processes of the changes of the pitches, ephemeral as they are.

4.1.5 Audial Distinctiveness and Finger Feelings

Rather than characterizing *qin* music as part of a distinctive Chinese culture, it is more appropriate to describe the production and appreciation of *qin* music as a cultural construct. The musical focus on harmony was another cultural construct of the elites. If all *qin* musicians had followed the principles of harmony, however, the great variety of types of melodies, songs, and sets of playing techniques would not have existed. If musicians were only allowed to play melodies that met the standard of harmony, Cao Zhi would not have needed to regulate the sequence of melodies to be played, Zequan would not have defined the rhythms of the melodies, and Cheng Yujian would not have described the

191 *Yueshu* 2.4:143-545. These three tone types bear resemblance to the three prevalent tones of today: open string notes, overtone harmonics, and stopped string notes. Translations are by Yang Yuanzheng 2020, 60.

192 For a corpus of finger techniques from a later generation, see *Yuexian qinpu zhengyin*. The notations from this period were considerably richer and more elaborate, and illustrations of the finger techniques were also provided.

193 He Changlin 2009, 57.

diaozi as similar to eating olives, while the *cao* were strikingly soul-enlivening. Harmony was a cultural ideal advocated by a particular community of scholars and artists, while in reality, *qin* music during the Northern Song was much more varied and diverse.

Emperors, officials, scholars, and musicians had their own interpretations of *qin* music. The conglomeration of their interpretations helped form the specialized *qin* culture of the Northern Song. Nevertheless, aside from the associated political and ideological constructs, their focus on the aural distinctiveness of the *qin* and the sensations of the fingers made the appreciation of the *qin* a unique cultural practice and belief. Their emphasis on the microtonality and the minute changes of the pitches generated by the complex combinations of finger techniques reflected how important they considered touch and feel were in performing on the *qin*. Feelings from the fingernails, the skin and muscles of fingers, palms, wrists, arms, shoulders, and virtually the entire upper body constituted a peculiar set of physical experiences for *qin* players. The verbal and textual transmissions of their experiences guided others to participate in the cultural construct of *qin* music.

4.2 *Prosody*

4.2.1 Perceptions of Rhymes and Tonal Patterns

The theorization and categorization of rhymes and tonal patterns have drawn much scholarly attention since the introduction of Sanskrit into Chinese-speaking areas from approximately the third to the fifth century.¹⁹⁴ The publication of dictionaries of rhymes (*yunshu*) attests to the extensive spread of this interest.¹⁹⁵ It is commonly accepted that rhyming, assonating, or euphonic words sharing similar vowels can produce pleasing aural experiences when grouped and spoken aloud. If they are put into the specified rhyming positions of a poem, or used in sentences in prose, rhythmic and melodic rhyme patterns will be produced when chanted aloud.¹⁹⁶ The tonal differentiation of characters serves a similar purpose in revealing their tonality. In the Sui-Tang period, there were widely-known dictionaries, such as Lu Fayan's *Spelling Rhymes* (*Qieyun*), completed in 601, and Sun Mian's *Rhymes of the Tang* (*Tangyun*), completed in 751.¹⁹⁷ In the Northern Song, additional rhyme dictionaries were

194 Wang Li 1981, 55–75. Tang Zuofan 1991, 21, 75–81. Goh 2015. See also the debate between Mair and Tsu-lin Mei 1991 and Zhang Hongming 2015.

195 Zhang Weiyi 2008, 107. Li Chunyan 2010, 105. Goh 2015.

196 See Cai Zong-qi 2008c; 2014; 2015a; and 2015b.

197 See also the *Jingdian shiwen* compiled by Lu Deming in ca. 590. *Qieyun* was initially authored by Lu Fayan and later re-edited and expanded by Wang Renxu in 706.

published. One of the authoritative dictionaries of the time was the *Expanded Rhymes* (*Guangyun*) compiled by Chen Pengnian and others in 1008 during the reign of Zhenzong. Another renowned government-authorized dictionary is the *Collected Rhymes* (*Jiyun*) compiled by Ding Du and others in 1037 during the reign of the succeeding emperor Renzong. All these rhyme dictionaries constituted government-sponsored projects.

As such one could argue that the rhyming and tonal patterns were political constructs initiated and maintained by the state. Nonetheless, cultural elites, especially scholar-artists and music lovers, appropriated their collected rhyme and tonal patterns to enjoy and share their pleasing effects. In addition to the preface by Chen Pengnian and others, *Expanded Rhymes* also contains prefaces by Lu Fayan and Sun Mian.¹⁹⁸ Together, these prefaces reflect an intention on the part of these authors to construct a lineage of rhyme dictionaries. Lu Fayan's preface recalls a discussion with his colleagues about the importance of standardizing rhymes. All agreed that the topolects spoken throughout the realm were too diverse, with the result that misunderstandings occurred between people of different regions and this furthermore prevented people from knowing about the past.¹⁹⁹ Sun Mian in his preface criticized Lu Fayan's work for mistakes and missed rhymes. Sun called for rectifications to advance the cultural achievements of the state, and took it upon himself to correct and expand the dictionary based on Lu's work.²⁰⁰ Sun was writing roughly 150 years after Lu; pronunciations had changed over that period, causing Sun to deem it necessary to incorporate these changes into his expanded and rectified version of the dictionary.

Expanded Rhymes was also a product of this context. Beyond the politics of standardizing the sounds of words and reducing communication problems between people of different topolects, the preface of *Expanded Rhymes* also introduces a musical consideration to the discussion:

Discussion: *Spelling rhymes* was based on the Four Tone Registers [these refer to *ping*, *shang*, *qu*, and *ru* tones]. The use of characters sharing the same initial consonants or sharing the same rhyme finals is aimed at beautifying literary works whose rhymes and tones are superior to those of the ancients. There were people who did not know the nature of literature and set the Five Pitches [at the bottom of] the feet [i.e., ignored the value of the Five Pitches]. The Five Pitches are the sounds of the

198 GY, "Preface," 12–19.

199 GY, 12–13.

200 GY, 15–16.

Five Elements and the harmonious [conglomerate] of the Eight Musical [Instruments], in which changes of the Four Tone Registers are embedded. The Five Pitches are to be set as the cornerstone; thus the musical scales, referencing characters to modify pronunciations, and [identifying] voiceless and voiced characters [are made possible].²⁰¹

We need not tackle the complicated problems surrounding the methods that Northern Song scholars used to construct the phonetic values of characters. What we are concerned with here is the introduction of the concept of the Five Pitches (*gong*, *shang*, *jue*, *zhi*, and *yu*) to the phonetic construction methods in which the compilers of the rhyme dictionaries were interested, namely, the musical properties of the pronunciations that Chen Pengnian and his colleagues cared about and attempted to associate with their works. How, then, did the musicians contemporary to Chen perceive the Five Pitches? Zequan had his own idea about the Five Pitches in *qin* music:

There is a distinct key for each *cao* melody of the *qin*, such as the *gong*, *shang*, *jue*, *zhi*, and *yu*. One does not change the strings when [playing according to] the Five Pitches. The *gong* key is harmonious and flat; the *shang* key is pure and sharp, and has shorter rhythms; the *jue* and *zhi* keys are slow and lamenting; the *yu* key has resentful tones.²⁰²

These musical and phonetic values and associations would make greater sense if we brought *qin* music into the discussion. As we know, *qin* and bell music were set as pitch standards by Northern Song musicians. The inclusion of musical values in Chen and his colleagues' work in dictionary compilation therefore comes as no surprise.

4.2.2 Melodies in the Three Poetic Colophons

Northern Song cultural elites appropriated the rhythmic and melodic properties of rhyming and tonal patterns to produce audially pleasing and prosodically serious literary works. The poems inscribed on the paintings *Literati Gathering* and *Listening to the Qin* are apt examples.

The two poems written on *Literati Gathering* follow the same *-uwng* rhyme and even use the same rhyming characters, but previous scholars have rarely discussed the tonal patterns they employ.²⁰³ We can see the patterns of level-

201 GY, "xu," 19.

202 ZQHS, 55.

203 See Cai Zong-qi 2008c; 2014; and the articles in Cai Zong-qi 2015c. This field awaits more investigations.

and oblique-tonal combinations in the poems. They signify the rising and falling of the tones of the characters and, correspondingly, the rhythmic undulation of the lines. The tonal and rhyme patterns of the poems constituted standardized prosodic properties that were pleasing to the ears of the cultural elites, because they were educated to follow the rhyme and phonetic values set in the texts *Expanded Rhymes* and *Collected Rhymes*, which had been sanctioned by the government. In order to resonate with Huizong's poems, Cai Jing chose to follow nearly identical tonal and rhyme patterns. While chanting aloud poems composed by Huizong and Cai Jing, listeners repeatedly would have heard the same melodies. We cannot underestimate the importance of this repetition of melody to the listeners' memory, because hearing the melody two or three times would naturally strengthen the listeners' impression of it. We recall that in Cao Zhi's preface to *Zequan's Techniques*, he emphasized the importance of encores so that listeners might better understand the deeper meaning of the melody.²⁰⁴ The same principle is at work in chanting poetic melodies, because poems are not merely groupings of characters but also contain prosodic properties.

Cai Jing's poem inscribed on *Listening to the Qin* follows the same *-uwng* rhyme, but adopts different rhyming characters and a different tonal pattern. Was this a tribute to the two poems on *Literati Gathering*? If *Literati Gathering* (painted before 1110?) predates *Listening to the Qin* (before 1125?), then Cai's *Listening to the Qin* poem was paying homage to the two *Literati Gathering* poems by adopting the same rhyme scheme, even while it retained its uniqueness. If the three poems were related in some way, the melodic functions of chanting, whose pleasing sounds and rhythms repeatedly impressed the listeners, cannot be ignored.

204 ZQHS, 18.

Economic Construct

1 Tea and Utensils

1.1 *From Raw Tea to Consumable Tea*

1.1.1 Tea Gardens in Today's Fujian

Huizong and other authors of the *Daguan Treatise* favored tea from the plantations at Jianxi (Jian Creek), Beiyuan (Northern Garden), and other sites in the Fujian area. Their favorite tea was “Jian'an White Tea.” These tea lovers subscribed to a botanical theory for cultivating tea bushes—in which the *yīn* (negative energy) and *yang* (positive energy) should be balanced to produce the best tea.¹ They contended that tea bushes growing on cliffs should be exposed to the sun as the *yīn* and cold energy of the cliff rocks would leave the tea plants undernourished, rendering the tea less flavorful. Exposure to the sun, conversely, would promote stronger growth and enhance the taste of the tea. On the other hand, tea bushes growing in a garden should receive more shade, as the *yang* and the sufficient energy (*fu*) of the soil would cause the bushes to grow too vigorously, potentially making the flavor of the tea overly intense.

We do not currently know whether Huizong and his subordinates' theoretical conjectures accurately reflected the actual landscapes of tea gardens at the time, but it may be helpful to consider the spatial organization of modern-day tea plantations as a point of reference. A discovery of the archaeological remains of a Tang-Song tea garden, allowing biologists and geologists to conduct pollen analysis and examine ecological and climatic conditions, would be a windfall for students of tea history. But there has not been a reliable identification of a historical tea garden in this area yet. In the absence of such fortuitous discoveries, we cannot assert with certainty how these ancient tea-growers cultivated their cherished crop. While we lack direct evidence attesting to how Northern Song farmers cultivated tea bushes, the issues they encountered were unlikely not dissimilar to those faced by modern-day tea farmers. An ethnographic study of how modern-day farmers cultivate tea bushes in the Fujian area might offer insights into how Northern Song farmers may have planned their tea gardens.

1 ZLCH, vol. 1: 104.

The landscape of the Fujian area is very diverse (Map 1). The mountainous northwest is characterized by Mount Wuyi (indicated roughly by the red mark in Map 1). Beyond these mountains lie Shangrao, Fuzhou, Nanchang, and the renowned porcelain city of Jingdezhen in the Jiangxi region. To the northeast of Fujian is the Zhejiang region, where Hangzhou is easily reachable. To the south lied the prominent port city of Quanzhou, among other harbors, from where ships in the Northern Song set sail for Southeast Asia and more distant regions in search for exotic trade goods.² Tea grew in almost every region in southern China. Some regions were more renowned than others for their tea plantations. The Jian'an tea (modern-day Jian'ou and Nanping counties) cultivated near Mount Wuyi was chosen for promotion by the Northern Song elites. We do not know precisely where the Northern Song tea gardens in Jian'an were. Caution is advised when considering claims of ancient lineage by contemporary plantations, which are often aimed at attracting tourism. For the purposes of our ethnographic study, we will focus on the tea gardens in Neiguidong and Daoshuikeng Canyons.

Fig. 10a and Fig. 10b show a tea garden nestled in the rocky terrain of Neiguidong Canyon. Adjacent to Neiguidong Canyon lies another canyon known as Daoshuikeng (Fig. 11a and Fig. 11b). The two canyons are divided by a long and slender rock formation that rises about 90 to 150 meters high, as measured from the canyon floor. This geological feature is one among many similar canyons within the Mount Wuyi area. We took photographs and conducted a long-range laser 3D scan of the two canyons. Fig. 11a presents an image extracted from our freely rotatable 3D-scanned model. The tea bushes in Neiguidong Canyon comprise primarily wild species (Fig. 10), dispersed all over the canyon. In stark contrast, bushes in Daoshuikeng Canyon are highly domesticated and neatly arranged in rows on the slope (Fig. 11). The many rows separated by black stripes in the aerial view of Daoshuikeng Canyon in Fig. 11a show this pattern of organized cultivation.

The landscape and climate of the canyons offer ideal conditions for the growth of tea bushes. First of all, the altitude of the two tea gardens ranges from approximately 230 to 280 meters, which, while on the lower side for the Mount Wuyi area, is quite suitable for tea growth. The humidity is very high, as moisture-laden winds from the sea sweep through the canyons. These warm winds encounter the cooler mountain air, resulting in frequent mist and light, often drizzly, rainfall. Upon our arrival in the winter of 2018, the tea gardens were shrouded in a dense mix of clouds and fog, with temperatures hover-

2 Fujian Sheng Quanzhou Haiwai Jiaotongshi Bowuguan 1987, 4–5, 64–67.



MAP 1 Southern Chinese regions including Fujian, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, Hubei, Hunan, Guangxi, Guangdong, and Hainan
MAP BY BEN PEASE



FIGURES 10A–B Different views of the tea garden in Neiguidong Canyon, Mount Wuyi, Fujian. The author is shown holding an umbrella in Fig. 10a
PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR'S TEAM, TAKEN IN DECEMBER 2018



FIGURES 11A–B Different views of the tea garden in Daoshuikeng Canyon, Mount Wuyi, Fujian.
FIG. 11A IS AN AERIAL-VIEW IMAGE CAPTURED FROM A FREELY ROTATABLE 3D MODEL OF THE CANYON, CONSTRUCTED BY THE AUTHOR'S TEAM; FIG. 11B IS A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR IN DECEMBER 2018.

ing between 5°C and 15°C in the canyon. Naturally, the summer months bring warmer temperatures. The towering rock formations, rising 90 to 150 meters high, create a long, narrow, and crooked space that effectively traps moisture and fog inside. This unique topography and microclimate shield the tea bushes from harsh direct sunlight. Tea bushes thrive in shady places that are usually cloudy and damp, with just a moderate touch of sunlight.³

Initially, the rocky surface of the ground was not sufficiently fertile for any vegetation. After millions of years of weathering, erosion, and the accumulation of decomposed plant matter, however, a dark, fertile layer of soil has formed atop the rocky substrate.⁴ Wild tea bushes manage to grow within this thin layer, although their roots cannot penetrate deeply into the ground. Consequently, the bushes barely exceed the height of an adult man and are considerably shorter than the tea trees found in the Yunnan area. Local tea farmers told us this is why the tea they cultivate has a rocky, mineral quality to its flavor (referred to as rocky bone and flowery fragrance).⁵ The moisture, rain, fertile soil, shade, and moderate sunlight constitute an ideal micro-ecological system for tea cultivation. Bacteria and fungi of many kinds can proliferate under the shade of the bushes, leading to complex layers of flavor developed in the tea they produce.⁶

Wild bushes grow individually and are spaced out. Farmers do not usually trim them. In the present day, their growth is impacted by the domesticated bushes grown nearby. Domesticated bushes are arranged in orderly rows for ease of maintenance and trimming. A combination of both synthetic and organic fertilizers is employed. Local farmers informed us that both human and animal excrement was brought to the canyons for use prior to the advent of chemical fertilizers.⁷ As the canyons themselves lie far from densely settled areas and are situated high in the mountains, large quantities of such waste was unlikely to have been delivered to these areas. Natural fertilizers include leaves that decompose into humus, aided by microorganisms in the soil. Local farmers have transformed the natural creeks and slopes into terraced fields with drainage systems. Tea bushes thrive in moist conditions, but their roots do not tolerate water-logged soil. For this reason, terraced slopes and drainage are used to help channel away excessive water (Fig. 11).

3 Xu Guimei and Chen Quanbin 2009; Zhu Cunfang 2012, 4–5; Zhang Xiaochun 2015.

4 Huang Xiaoyun et al. 2021, 94.

5 “Yangu huaxiang.” Personal communication with a tea farmer, December 2018.

6 Huang Xiaoyun et al. 2021.

7 Personal communication, December 2018.

1.1.2 Tea Gardens in the Northern Song

Apart from access to chemical fertilizers and pesticides, Northern Song farmers were probably armed with the same knowledge and techniques for cultivating tea in their gardens. They likely harnessed the natural landscape and climate to their best advantage, using available techniques to optimize the health of their tea bushes. These techniques would have included managing factors like humidity, moisture, rainfall, shade and sunlight, micro-organisms, natural fertilizers, terraced slopes, and drainage. Like today's tea gardens, those in the Northern Song were primarily situated south of the Yangzi River. In addition to the tea harvested from Fujian, there were multiple tea brands, such as the *Caocha* from the Zhejiang areas, *Rizhu* tea from Shaoxing, *Hongzhou Shuangjing* tea from Jiangxi, and *Mengding* tea from Sichuan Yazhou.⁸ Sichuan tea was historically esteemed and strategically important,⁹ but according to the authors of *Song History*, the quantities produced in Sichuan could not rival those from Fujian and its neighboring areas.¹⁰ We do not know the exact difference in the volume of tea produced in all regions that cultivated tea plants, but harvest yields must have been determined by natural conditions and artificial factors such as the cultivation techniques employed by local farmers. Wild tea plants in the Sichuan and Yunnan areas could reach the size of trees, whereas in the Fujian area, they remained in bush form. Regional climates, geological conditions, and micro-organic systems differed from place to place.

Moreover, cultivating tea plants on terraced slopes also impacted how farmers pruned the plants and harvested the buds and leaves, all leading to significant differences in production yields. According to historian Qi Xia's reconstruction, one acre of tea plants could yield about 120 *catties* (*jin*; 1 *jin* = 1.3 pounds) of tea.¹¹ The reality was, however, far more complicated. Farmers would need to manage the number of harvests each year. Excessive harvesting accelerates the maturity of the tea buds, which will turn leaves used for tea into useless old leaves, and buds into branches. Rare tea species likely yielded harvests in the order of a few *taels* (*liang*; 1 *liang* = about 1.3 ounces) a year per bush, while ordinary species yielded more. These postulated reconstructions of tea yields are merely estimations of what might have been produced during the Northern Song.

8 SHYJG 6:135-5308 (*juan* 5782). *Longyun ji* 28.303. Qi Xia 1988, 2:747. These names, *Rizhu*, *Hongzhou Shuangjing*, and *Mengding*, as mentioned in these texts, appear to be specific brand names of tea, derived from the places of their origin.

9 Paul Smith 1991, 13-76.

10 SS 13:184.4510.

11 Qi Xia 1988, 2:746. See also Paul Smith 1991, 219.

1.1.3 Cultivating, Picking, and Processing Tea

1.1.3.1 *Picking Tea Buds and Leaves*

The elites writing about tea in the Northern Song were unlikely to have had any direct personal experience in picking the crop. Harvesting tea leaves is back-breaking and onerous work typically conducted by rural peasants, and the tea gardens were far away from the Northern Song capital of Kaifeng in Henan. Nevertheless, they felt comfortable describing the ideal conditions for cultivating and picking tea in their treatises. The authors of the *Daguan Treatise* may have consulted contemporary tea texts and interview records with local tea farmers. The appropriate season, timing, and method of picking tea buds are all briefly described or constructed in the *Daguan Treatise*. For example, the treatise suggests that the best season to pick tea buds is the time around the day of the “Awakening of Insects” (*Jingzhe*), the third of the twenty-four solar terms of the traditional Chinese calendar, corresponding to around early March of the Gregorian calendar.¹² Similarly, “Treatises on Food and Commodities” (*Shihuozhi*) in *Song History* considers March the best time to pick tea buds and April the second best time.¹³ The *Daguan Treatise* authors suggested that picking the buds was best done by using the fingernails to sever the buds from the stems, rather than rolling the buds between the fingers.¹⁴ They also emphasized that tea buds that appeared like “birds’ tongues” or “grains” (*queshe guli*) were the best; one bud with one leaf that resembled a spear and a flag (*yiqiang yiqi*) was the second best; one bud with two leaves (*yiqiang erqi*) was third best, and all other configurations were of lower quality.¹⁵ These detailed records suggest that the knowledge about the picking season and selection criteria probably came from experienced local peasants and that this technical know-how was widely shared among the Kaifeng elites.

1.1.3.2 *Processing and Preserving Tea*

None of the tea texts comprehensively covers the process of turning tea buds into tea cakes. They merely list the idealized and standardized processes of steaming, compressing, baking, and drying. Huang Ru’s *Essential Records of Tasting Tea* (*Pincha yaolu*), published approximately thirty years before the *Daguan Treatise*, mentions some of these manufacturing processes. The *Daguan Treatise* authors might very well have consulted this source. Huang Ru’s

12 ZLCH, vol. 1: 104. This differs from our modern understanding that the optimal time for picking tea buds is around the Pure Bright Festival in early April (*Qingming*).

13 SS 13:184.4509.

14 Their suggestions echo ideas stated in the *Dongxi shichalu*. ZLCH, vol. 1: 86.

15 ZLCH, vol. 1: 104.

approach was, however, slightly different from that prescribed by the *Daguan Treatise*. He listed some of the results of unsatisfactory tea-processing. For example, he discussed the results of over-steaming and under-steaming the tea.¹⁶ The *Daguan Treatise* authors, on the other hand, focused primarily on establishing criteria as to what constituted the proper treatment of the tea buds and of processed cakes of tea that they suggested tea producers follow. Zhao Ruli elaborated on some of these manufacturing processes in detail in his tea text, compiled approximately eighty years after the *Daguan Treatise*. Zhao Ruli added the two steps of squeezing and grinding tea to the process of producing finished, dried tea cakes.¹⁷ Although we do not know in detail how closely the tea-making methods in Zhao's time resembled those of Huizong's time, we can postulate that their preference was for tea that was construed to be processed using refined techniques before it was sold to tea drinkers.

Due to the lack of textual records about techniques for processing and preserving tea, we will rely on ethnographic studies and the treatment of herbal medicine from the same period as cross-references. The *Daguan Treatise* mentions steaming, compressing, and baking.¹⁸ These methods aim to squeeze water from the tea buds and leaves while preserving, or even enhancing, the taste and fragrance of the tea. Where did they learn how to process raw tea? When a large amount of raw tea was harvested, it needed to be dried and preserved rapidly and properly so that it could be transported to distant regions, for example, from Fujian to Henan. Otherwise, the tea would rot. The necessary techniques may have been passed down to the Northern Song tea farmers from the ancients. But this leads us to wonder, how did the ancients first come to know about this?

The processing and preservation of tea were related to the drying and processing techniques for herbal medicine. The drying and processing techniques for medical herbs are discussed in Chapter 1 that the *Fifty-two Prescriptions* in the Western Han period, *Lei's Treatise* in the fifth century, and the various medical texts compiled before and during the Northern Song reveal that medicine practitioners and scholars possessed sophisticated knowledge for preserving herbal medicines. The primary aim of these methods was to extract water from the herbs while retaining and reinforcing their medicinal functions (taste and fragrance). This is not at all unlike the aim of processing tea leaves. Today, we know that removing water from food helps kill bacteria and other microorgan-

16 ZLCH, vol. 1: 90.

17 ZLCH, vol. 1: 135–36.

18 ZLCH, vol. 1: 104.

isms, and that heating denatures the enzymes that are a major cause of food spoilage.¹⁹ Northern Song tea farmers would not have known about bacteria and enzymes, but they would certainly have known from inherited wisdom and experience that steaming, compressing, and baking helped preserve tea and other herbs for longer.

We will compare the techniques used to process tea and herbal medicine to explore the relationship between the two processes despite the fact that no Northern Song tea writer explicitly mentioned the relationship between tea and herbal medicine. As introduced above, Lei Xiao and his fifth-century contemporaries developed numerous drying and processing methods and laid the theoretical and practical foundations for the technical tradition of drying and processing. Tea makers consulted and incorporated these methods into their tea-making process, just as the *Daguan Treatise* authors borrowed the descriptions of the drying and processing processes from the medical texts and constructed their own language in describing tea.

The “Location,” “Season,” “Picking and Choosing,” and “Identification” chapters of the *Daguan Treatise* could be based on the medicinal reasons for selecting the best herbs picked in certain seasons and regions. Lei Xiao and others used barbary wolfberry fruit (*gouqi*, LPN: *Lycii fructus*) as an example to illustrate the rationale behind the method. They suggested that in the spring, one should eat the leaves of the *gouqi*; in the summer, the seeds; and in the autumn and winter, the roots and seeds.²⁰ They also proposed that one use the seeds of pepper from foreign regions (*Hujiao*, LPN: *Piperis fructus*) and the shells of pepper from Chinese regions (*Hanjiao*) as medicine.²¹ Medicine practitioners believed that plants from different regions had different degrees of medicinal power, that different parts of the herbs served different functions, and that the same herb functioned differently in certain seasons.²² Tea makers and drinkers shared these beliefs and incorporated them into their tea texts, which were modelled on medicinal texts.

Some parts of the herbs might be ineffectual or even toxic. Medicine practitioners had to distinguish them and select the appropriate parts before processing. For example, Lei Xiao and others suggested discarding the side branches of the Chinese arborvitae twig and leaf (*baiye*, LPN: *Platycladi cacumen*) and retaining only the leaves.²³ This process is very similar to choosing only the tea

19 Xu Chujiang et al. 1985, 11. Lu Yongxiang et al. 2004, 33–34.

20 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.81.

21 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.81.

22 Today's pharmacists disagree with some of the beliefs.

23 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.75–76.

buds and leaves of the tea plant. Another herb, prepared common monkshood daughter root (*fuzi*, LPN: *Aconiti lateralis radix praeparata*), was to be used with great care because the plant it is extracted from contains highly poisonous and lethal aconitine.²⁴ Lei and others cautioned that one has to process these herbs in order to reduce the aconitine content. Although raw tea is commonly considered non-toxic, inappropriate processing may still damage its taste and fragrance and cause harmful elements to be retained. Tea makers likely considered the methods of processing medicinal herbs when processing tea leaves.

The “Steaming and Compressing,” “Processing and Producing,” “Storage and Baking,” and “Baking at External Workshops” chapters of the *Daguan Treatise* contain a number of processing techniques also mentioned in *Lei’s Treatise*, which seem to have passed down to the Northern Song. These techniques include trimming, grinding, steaming, soaking, slowly diluting after soaking, drying in the shade or the sun, baking by blowing hot air over ingredients put in a container and avoiding direct contact between the fire and the herbs, roasting by laying the ingredients in a pan with the fire directly underneath in a milder fashion, stir-frying by flipping the ingredients in a wilder fashion, frying with a more delicate motion but not flipping the ingredients too much, and cooking with water.²⁵ Only those techniques of treating herbal medicine that are similar to the treatment of tea are listed here, while Lei Xiao and others also included methods of processing mineral and animal ingredients.

The drying and processing methods help strengthen the efficacy of the medicine, and they are similarly beneficial for both tea processing and the tea-tipping practice. In the “Processing and Producing” and “Identification” chapters, the *Daguan Treatise* authors specifically mentioned the negative results of inappropriate processing, such as unrefined filtering, overheating, and processing that goes on for more than one day and night.²⁶ Proper filtering, timing, processing duration, and heat control are essential to the drying and processing of both the medicine and tea.

The cold treatments of trimming and grinding are intended to remove the unnecessary and ineffective parts of the herbs and tea, while the hot treatments leading to reactions between the herbs and other ingredients are worthy of further investigation. The steaming, baking, drying, and roasting methods remove the water in the drying and processing of raw materials, but there are different ways of heating. One could simply heat the raw materials by themselves, heat

24 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.58.

25 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.23–96; 3.124–35.

26 ZLCH, vol. 1: 104.

them with alcohol or other medicinal decoctions, or cook them with water, salt, or honey.²⁷ Heating with alcohol might lead to chemical reactions, but Lei and others believed it also helped preserve the medicine and strengthen its medicinal power. We now know alcohol, honey, and salt also effectively preserve the medicine because high concentrations of alcohol, salt, or sugar extract the water molecules from the bodies of the microorganisms, inactivating or killing them. Heating also stops the action of enzymes.

For instance, Lei and others suggested that to treat *baiye*, one should soak it in liquified sticky rice with sugar for seven days. After taking out the *baiye* and diluting it, the herb needs to be steamed with alcohol, then soaked in juice squeezed from Siberian Solomon's seal rhizome (*huangjing*, LPN: *Polygonati rhizoma*), and subsequently baked until it dries. Soaking and baking are repeated several times until the *huangjing* juice is dried out.²⁸ Peony roots (*shaoyao*) need to be dried in the sun before their rough skins can be removed with a bamboo knife and trimmed. The roots are then placed in water with honey, steamed for four hours, and dried out under the sun before use.²⁹ Redroot gromwell (*zicao*, LPN: *Arnebiae radix*) has to be steamed with water and wax until the water is expelled. Its head and fine roots are removed and trimmed.³⁰ Lei and others did not specify what wax they used, but they indicated clearly that three *taels* of wax should be melted with water in a large vessel. The melted wax was to be heated with the *zicao* to be processed.³¹ In this way, the *zicao* would be coated with wax as the water came out. While medicine treated with a high concentration of alcohol and honey keeps water and bacteria away, medicine coated with wax would be preserved well because wax is insoluble in room-temperature water and does not melt in natural conditions under 40°C. Namely, when the *zicao* is stored at room temperature, the wax coating will prevent the *zicao* from being affected by humidity. No water molecules permeating the wax coating means no microorganisms will grow inside. The medicine can then be preserved for a long time.

Historical records mention a tea type called wax-surfaced tea cakes (*lamiancha*).³² Was the *lamiancha* a type of tea coated with wax like the *zicao* mentioned in *Lei's Treatise*?³³ This is likely because tea was processed in ways sim-

27 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.23–96.

28 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.75–76.

29 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.42.

30 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.48.

31 *Leigong paozhilun* 2.48.

32 WXTK 1:18.174.

33 The term “wax-surfaced tea” literally means that the surface of these tea cakes was coated

ilar to those listed *Lei's Treatise*. The addition of camphor and other aromatic substances to the tea, criticized by Cai Xiang, the *Daguan Treatise* authors, and other scholar-artists, but which remained popular among the general public, was probably also an inheritance from the medicinal tradition, since it was believed that the addition of camphor not only strengthened the fragrance of the tea but also helped preserve it. The intense fragrance of camphor would repel insects that could infest the tea leaves, and this processed aromatic substance made of dehydrated fragrant timber would also absorb moisture, protecting the tea.

In the Northern Song tea texts, especially in the *Daguan Treatise*, the discussions of processing and preservation techniques for tea reveal the consequences of over-treating or under-treating tea. These discussions parallel those of inappropriate treatments of medicine. Inappropriate treatments would change the taste, fragrance, and functions of the tea and medicine. Many drying and processing methods cited by Tang Shenwei, Chen Shiwen, and their colleagues were authorized by Northern Song governments to ensure the quality of the production and preservation of medicine.³⁴ Such government-authorized methods were undoubtedly a significant source of improved tea-preservation knowledge among tea farmers.

These beliefs and knowledge laid the foundation for drying, processing, and preserving medicine and tea in the subsequent generations. The half-fermented *wulongcha* and fully fermented red tea in today's Fujian were inventions from the Ming and Qing dynasties,³⁵ but their technical origin, the making of green tea (unfermented tea), harked back to the Tang-Song or even earlier periods. Today's techniques, such as withering (*weidiao*—losing water), killing-green (*shaqing*—heating to destroy enzymes), rolling (*rounian*), and baking, share the same principles, theories, concerns, and practices as ancient tea-making and medicine drying and processing methods.

1.1.3.3 *Manpower*

We can imagine that a considerable investment in manpower was needed to pick and process the raw tea in a time without modern machinery. As recorded in the “Treatises on Food and Commodities” in *Compendium of Song Dynasty*

with wax. It may also imply that this type of tea could produce a wax-like foam when prepared by the tea-tipping method. This was an alternate name for a type of tea cakes originating from Fujian. See Takahashi 1994, 333; Liu Shufen 2004, 118–19.

34 Lu Yongxiang et al. 2004, 9–10.

35 There are many famous tea types and brands in Fujian, such as *Dahongpao* of the *wulongcha* type and *Zhengshan xiaozhong* of the red tea type.

Government Documents (Songhuiyao jigao), tea gardens owned by the government are known to have had labor forces of over one thousand men.³⁶ In the 1077 dispute in Sichuan Chengdu Pengzhou, a document submitted to the court states that the salary for one laborer per day was 60 *wen* (or *qian*/cash) plus a daily ration of a bag of tea.³⁷ This document also mentions a part-time labor force hired to trim bushes, remove weeds in the winter and spring, and pick and produce tea from spring to summer.³⁸ We can postulate that owners of tea gardens would hire a long-term force consisting of knowledgeable and skilled workers to help maintain the normal operation of the gardens, while in the busy seasons, part-time laborers, probably consisting of unskilled peasants, were hired to do the heavy-lifting and arduous tasks associated with running a tea garden.³⁹ The skilled workers might have supervised this force of day laborers and ensured the quality of tea they picked and processed. This is how today's large-scale gardens in Fujian work. The garden owners probably inherit the gardens, skills, and knowledge from their parents. As tea masters themselves, they maintain a long-term force by keeping several skilled workers and continually training new blood to serve as supervisors. Onerous and repetitive work, such as picking tea in the mountains and processing the tea in factories, will be assigned to seasonal laborers hired from Shangrao and Fuzhou areas in Jiangxi.⁴⁰ Even today, Shangrao and Fuzhou are some of the poorest, mountainous regions in Jiangxi. Jiangxi is, as a whole, far less prosperous than the rich and well-developed regions in Zhejiang and Fujian. Today, seasonal laborers are bussed into the Mount Wuyi plantations by the garden owners. Both men and women are hired. Women are often deemed more careful workers and assigned tasks that require more patience and caution. The wages they receive during the picking season contribute a significant portion to their family's annual income. In this way, the tea farmers in Fujian today and in the past ensure the quantity and quality of tea produced annually. Considering that the tea gardens were located historically in areas remote from metropolitan areas, the part-time employment system must have held sway throughout history.

1.1.3.4 *Ownership of Tea Gardens*

The owners of tea gardens in the Northern Song were socially diverse. There were gardens owned by the throne, the state, the local governments, Buddhist

36 SHYJG 6:136.5348 (*juan* 5785).

37 *Jingde ji* 1.11, 1.9–15.

38 *Jingde ji* 1.11, 1.9–15. See also Qi Xia 1988, 2:756.

39 See also Robbins 1974.

40 Tao Dechen 1998, 239.

monasteries, and private subjects. Gardens owned by Buddhist monasteries had existed since the Tang.⁴¹ Those owned by the emperors and the government in Fujian were located in Jian'an.⁴² Produce from these gardens would be submitted to the royal court as tribute. When Ding Wei and Cai Xiang served as fiscal commissioners of Fujian, they were in charge of supplying tribute tea to the royal court. The annual harvest of the prestigious Large Dragon-phoenix Tea was only two *jin*. Each *jin* of this precious tea could be made into merely eight tea cakes. When Cai Xiang held office, he made ten *jin* of new tea in one year. Each *jin* was turned into ten Small Dragon Tea Cakes, offered to Taizong and Renzong.⁴³ This rare and highly prized tea came from bushes that could only be cultivated in government-owned gardens. Privately owned gardens could be enormous, but the standard of their tea was considered inferior to those of the government-owned ones. Huang Tingjian's family owned tea gardens in Jiangxi Hongzhou, a city near Jingdezhen and Nanchang and famous for the *Hongzhou Shuangjing* tea brand. His family could provide a stable supply to Huang's tea gift repository.⁴⁴ Tea entrepreneurs definitely existed in this highly profitable business and industry sector, but the government was also concerned about the ownership issues.

1.2 *Tea Policies*

1.2.1 The Eternal Problem of Supply and Demand

Policies regarding the tea industry were a source of problems for the Northern Song government.⁴⁵ Tensions triggered by the eternal push and pull of supply and demand existed at the central and local government levels, among the merchants and farmers, and with the peasants in the tea industry. Debates raged unabated throughout the Northern Song over how best to manage the tea trade in terms not unfamiliar to us—planned or liberal economies, “the invisible hand,” monopoly, state-run, and privatized ownership were all considered.⁴⁶ Numerous scholar-officials were embroiled in these debates and utilized their experience and knowledge to offer blueprints for reforming the tea economies.

41 Robbins 1974. James Benn 2015, 66–68, 81–84.

42 ZLCH, vol. 1: 83–85, 103.

43 ZLCH, vol. 1: 76, 79, 116. SHYJG 6:136.5327.

44 Qi Xia 1988, 2:749–59.

45 ss 13:183.4477 to 184.4511. Qi Xia 1988, 2:745–804.

46 See Adam Smith (1776) 1952, 194, “invisible hand” in Chapter 11, “Of Restraints upon the Importation from Foreign Countries of such Goods as can be produced at Home,” in Book Four. Marx (1844) 1975; (1867) 1977. Keynes (1936) 1973. Hazlitt 1960.

Problems facing the Northern Song dynasty founders and successors were plentiful. The most pressing was how to provision their forces guarding the northern frontier.⁴⁷ It was a problem that the government could not handle by itself, and the private sector was brought in to help maintain the strategic supplies. Presented to the central government decision-makers was piece-meal intelligence: soldiers in the north needed food and horses, but these were in short supply in the regions where they were stationed; southerners were often stuck with a surplus of tea that they could not consume; northerners and foreigners loved tea; tea grew only in southern China, yet when sold to the north, net profits could exceed three hundred percent; transportation costs were high; nomads had superior horses, while horse breeds in Chinese-speaking regions were inferior ... Putting the tidbits of information together, the central government devised various ways to balance the supply and demand of a number of commodities and even to create demand where it previously did not exist.

To ensure adequate food and material supplies to the northern frontlines, the Northern Song central government decided to solicit the help of the merchants. Transportation to the north was exorbitant enough to discourage less resourceful people from entering this business, so the political elites decided to use the high profit from the trade of rice, salt, and tea to mobilize the merchants.⁴⁸ The central government monopolized the tea supply and gave merchants willing to transport food and materials to the northern frontlines privileged access to tea markets.

At the beginning of the dynasty, state-run tea trade centers were established in the capital, Jian'an, and other regions.⁴⁹ The central government ordered the local government to collect processed tea and store it at the trade centers. Merchants needed to place deposits with the capital trade center and obtain tea from local trade centers in order to sell to other regions. The local government ordered private tea farmers to pay deposits to tea gardens controlled by the state (*shanchang*), sell a large proportion of their yield to state-controlled gardens, and pay tea tax. The private farmers could retain a proportion of their harvest if they wished. In this way, the state used profits from tea to mobilize the merchants and ensure that adequate food and materials were taken to the northern frontier. The founders of the dynasty leveraged their enormous prestige and authority to achieve this level of control over the economy. Nevertheless, their success in mobilizing the merchants relied on the state monopoly

47 SS 13:183.4479. SHYJG 6:136.5321–23 (*juan* 17560), 6:136.5324 (*juan* 5784). WXTK 1:18.174–75. MXBT 11.71.

48 SHYJG 6:136.5324 (*juan* 5784). Chaffee 2006, 31–77.

49 WXTK 1:18.173. Qi Xia 1988, 2:759–60.

of the tea supply. This level of control came at the expense of closely monitoring private farmers. Enforcing and monitoring the rules regarding the deposit system and the collection of taxes was cumbersome. The state needed accurate data regarding farmers liable to pay deposits and taxes, how much they should pay, and how the state could collect.

Problems began to emerge, and the state's monopoly faced challenges. The liberal economists identified these issues—government control was weakening, the cost of enforcing the rules was increasing, the collection of tax and deposit was getting unwieldy, and the merchants were becoming resistant to the arrangement. These views held sway, and reforms were introduced: a new policy called “*Jiaoyinfā*” (method of submitting vouchers) was declared.⁵⁰

Under this system, merchants who conveyed materials to the northern frontiers continued to do so at their own cost, but they obtained vouchers (*jiaoyin*) after delivery. These vouchers were redeemable when submitted to the capital. At the same time, they also obtained the right to collect tea from southern regions and sell it.⁵¹ As an additional incentive, the state also issued vouchers for aromatic substances, medicine, rhino horn, ivory (*xiāng, yao, xi, xiàng*), and other precious items. The more exotic the items were, the greater the profits for the merchants.

In the meantime, the merchants tried to exploit the arrangement to their advantage by increasing the price of the food and materials they sold on the northern frontier. By artificially inflating prices, they could obtain vouchers of higher financial value in the capital to obtain more tea in the southern regions. Greedy merchants who continued to raise the price of their food and materials sold to the north could redeem more and more tea from the local trade centers in the south. With less tea available in the trade centers, the government generated less income. Moreover, the merchants were allowed to deal with farmers directly.⁵² While the price of collecting the tea at the trade centers was relatively fixed, farmers certainly preferred dealing with the merchants instead of the state because they could sell at a higher price and attempted to avoid taxation. Tax concealment and evasion occurred in this way, which led to the reduction of tax collected by the state. The government bore the loss while tycoons or top merchants soaked up the most significant portion of the profit.

The court and the officials were unhappy now. They decided to charge more by collecting sales tax from the merchants and rent from the farmers. This led to unending squabbles over whether the state should rely on “the invisible hand”

50 SS 13:183.4478. WXTK 1:18.175. MXBT 11.71.

51 SS 13:183.4479.

52 Qi Xia 1988, 2:769.

TABLE 1 Tea-related state revenue by period (compiled by Qi Xia)^a

Year	Profit (<i>guan</i> /string of cash = 1,000 <i>wen</i>)
964–976	4,000,000
1013–1014	3,000,000
1021	1,500,000
1057–1058	1,094,093
After 1059	1,175,104
1109 (Huizong)	Over 1,840,000
1112 (Huizong)	Over 4,000,000
After 1131	2,400,000
1154	2,690,000
1155	Over 2,700,000
1174	4,200,000

a Qi Xia 1988, 2:801, no table no.

behind the scenes or intervene directly in the market. Highly reputed scholar-officials including Wang Anshi, Ouyang Xiu, Sima Guang, and Su Che expressed their opinions in support of or opposing related proposals and reforms.⁵³ However, these unending debates did not in the least stem the losses being sustained by the state.

In the Zhenghe period, Huizong and Cai Jing adopted a mixture of policies to reform how the industry was regulated and ensure that a revenue stream derived from the tea trade would return to the state coffers. Their policies brought rapidly growing revenues to the state and increased tea production. Table 1 placed above shows the trends in tea-related state revenue in different periods.

We can conclude from Table 1 that Huizong's court brought in considerable revenue and rescued the state's share in the tea market as compared to previous periods. Huizong and his subordinates instituted adequate financial initiatives to launch reforms to the industry and institutionalize tea-related market activities. Had the Northern Song government not collapsed, this would have been a startlingly glorious achievement despite the many criticisms often leveled

53 Numerous tax reforms that were branded with various names gradually emerged. See WXTK 1:18.173–77; MXBT 11.71. See also the debates recorded in Wang Anshi's essay in *Linchuan Xiansheng wenji* 70.743; Ouyang Xiu's essay in *Ouyang Wenzhonggong wenji* 112.861–62. Qi Xia 1988, 2:775–94. Huang Chunyan 2002, 4–11.

against Huizong's court. Their political and financial achievements brought significant advantages to the state,⁵⁴ even as the liberal economists continued to attack the policies for taking profit from the private sector. Planned economists would, however, actually favor this if Huizong and his court represented truly the role of a central government. We do not need to settle once and for all the unending debate between the two camps of economists since the debate rages on today. Nevertheless, Huizong and Cai Jing's economic theories and practices surpassed many of those highly reputed scholar-officials in significance.

1.2.2 Punishment and Rebels

Since profits from the tea industry were enormous, the industry naturally attracted its share of criminal elements and illicit goings-on. Karl Marx cites T.J. Dunning in his famous book, *Capital*, saying, "With adequate profit, capital is very bold. A certain 10 percent will ensure its employment anywhere; 20 percent certain will produce eagerness; 50 percent, positive audacity; 100 percent will make it ready to trample on all human laws; 300 percent, and there is not a crime at which it will scruple, nor a risk it will not run, even to the chance of its owner being hanged."⁵⁵ Net profits of selling tea in the Northern Song could easily reach well over 300 percent. The temptation for merchants, farmers, and peasants to commit illegal deals was irresistible. This was why the government instituted strict laws and orders to control the industry.

For example, as recorded in the "Treatises on Food and Commodities" in *Song History*, if farmers did not submit their tea to the state-run trade centers or conducted private deals with merchants (before the reforms), they would be sentenced according to the value of their deals. If farmers destroyed their tea bushes (in order to evade tax or rent), they would be fined the value of the tea the destroyed bushes would have produced. Tea gardens that produced less than the stipulated amount would be removed. If government officials illegally traded state-owned tea of a value of 1,500 *wen* or more, they would be sentenced to death. As this punishment was deemed too severe, it was later modified such that government officials found stealing and selling state-owned tea of a value over 3,000 *wen* would be sentenced to imprisonment and their faces tattooed (as a form of shaming). Anyone who bore arms to form a gang to engage in the illegal tea trade and resisted arrest would be sentenced to death.

54 The expenditure of Huizong's public projects and private entertainment was huge, see Ebrey 2014, 278–83. However, he and his government would need to have considerable savings to cover these expenditures.

55 Marx (1867) 1977, 1:926. T.J. Dunning (1799–1873) and Karl Marx (1818–1883) were contemporaries.

Anyone who sold inauthentic tea weighing one *jin* would be sentenced to one hundred strokes of the cane; selling twenty *jin* of inauthentic tea would result in a death sentence ...⁵⁶ These severe punishment codes reflected the seriousness with which the government monitored the industry and controlled the farmers, peasants, and merchants.

The penal codes targeting merchants, farmers, and peasants also revealed that many people were involved in illegal trade and tax concealment and evasion. When the government wanted to collect more tax, rent, and tea from the farms, the farmers could not keep much of their tea produce. They regarded tea as the result of their labor and devised means to circumvent government levies. They could conceal the produce, lie about the size of the tea growing area and the number of bushes in their gardens, bribe officials, replace fresh and high-quality tea with old and poor-quality teas and sell them to the state-run trade centers.⁵⁷ Worse still, they could rise in rebellion as they did in Sichuan Pengzhou in 1077, where over five thousand rebels came together to fight against the oppression of the local government.⁵⁸

These violent events resulted from the imbalanced distribution of interests and profits among the various parties involved in the tea trade. Since a consensus regarding the tea reforms had never been reached among the scholar-officials, objections and criticisms emerged continuously. Criticisms directly attacking the most successful case of the tea reforms during Huizong's reign were harsh and stern. For example, Li Gang, a famous scholar-official and military commander, lamented in his *Anthology of Mr. Liang Xi* that:

The profit from the tea and salt industries lay in the hands of the local governments at the beginning of the dynasty. The local governments were thus rich and prosperous. From the Chongning and Dagan periods of Huizong's reign onward, the profit lay with the central government, and thus the central government was rich and powerful. Soon the royal court appropriated all the profit and used it up on objects of pleasure, banquets, and bestowments, and all the profit under the heaven was gone!⁵⁹

Li Gang blamed Huizong and his trusted subordinates, like Cai Jing, for causing the collapse of the Northern Song government. However, as discussed above,

56 SS 13:183.4478–79. See also WXTK 1:18.174–77.

57 Qi Xia 1988, 2:763–64.

58 *Jingde ji* 1.13.

59 *Liangxi ji* 63.1002.

these people were also responsible for most of the successful tea reforms during Huizong's reign. One wonders how valid such criticisms were and who was truly to blame.

1.2.3 Why Reforms?

A state needs to balance its expenditure and income. While its expenditure can be an unknown abyss, its income consists of several sources widely recognized in human history. Taxation in the form of cash, materials, or draft labor was one of these sources; monopoly and direct control of a particular industry was another. Allowing private businesses to operate and collecting taxes from them permits the existence of private stakeholders, while state monopoly allows only the state to own and operate. The interplay between the throne, the central and local governments, merchants, farmers, and peasants shaped the development of the Northern Song tea industry.

As Patricia Ebrey describes, the expenditure of the Northern Song government during Huizong's reign was composed of tributes, military expenses (e.g. soldiers' rations and salaries), grain supplies, the construction of palaces, the Northeast Marchmount (Genyue), Daoist temples, gardens, and libraries, rituals, the Flower and Rock Networks (*huashigang*), salaries for officials and clansmen, charity, and, last but not least, cultural and artistic activities.⁶⁰ Any item could be a bottomless pit leading to a fiscal deficit. Huizong's court needed to raise adequate money to launch these projects. High-profit industries such as salt and tea definitely came to their attention, but the profits had to be split between different parties. Two-thirds were retained at the local/prefectural governments, and one-third was submitted to the central government/Ministry of Revenue and the Inner Treasury (Privy Purse, private property of the emperor).⁶¹ In the "Treatises on Food and Commodities" chapters in *Song History*, Tuo Tuo and others alluded to the question of the increase of redundant personnel and the corresponding increase in their salaries during Huizong's reign.⁶² It is known that Cai Jing favored a large force of officials to please Huizong, and the tea industry was chosen as an avenue to generate profit for the court. Tuo Tuo and others continued to upbraid Huizong's court for spending money on the extravagant building projects, the Flower and Rock Networks, and the salaries of greedy officials, which constituted the popular historiography of denigrating Huizong and Cai's achievements.⁶³ Following the line of

60 Ebrey 2014, 91–92, 425.

61 Ebrey 2014, 89–90.

62 ss 13:179.4360–61.

63 Ebrey 2014, 507–9. WXTK 1:18.174–75.

thought developed by Ebrey, we now realize that to only criticize Huizong on account of his lavish personal expenditure on cultural and artistic activities does not do justice to Huizong and his subordinates' attempts to save the government from financial ruin.⁶⁴ The reforms of the tea industry should be examined against this backdrop.

Cai Jing's personal statements regarding the reasons for launching tea reforms are a convenient point of departure. In his remarks to Huizong in 1102, recorded in *Song History*, he articulated that after the Qingli period, the legal codes concerning state-run policies in the tea industry were flouted openly and the illegal trade in tea flourished unabashed. New reforms giving the merchants more freedom were therefore necessary. When the merchants competed with the state in the market, the state lost the profit. It was, therefore, essential for the state to return to the state-run policies and prohibit private deals between merchants and farmers.⁶⁵

Afterwards, with Huizong's support, Cai re-designed the official establishment controlling the local tea trade and built many more new trade centers in various regions.⁶⁶ We understand that these policies would break up long-held connections among old interest holders. Merchants who had long-term collaborative relationships with certain trade center officials might have developed their own power circles to evade state control. Bribery was, therefore, easy and common. Re-designing the official establishment and building new trade centers would break up their power circles, and the state would stand to gain from it. As expected, this act aroused criticism from parties with existing interests.

Cai Jing and his colleagues' responses to the rapidly changing tea market were very efficient. Four years after they re-designed the official establishment of the trade centers, they implemented a new official system and allowed merchants to obtain vouchers from the central and local governments and purchase tea directly from the farmers. The government made its profit from taxation and the sale of vouchers. The authors of *Song History* were of the opinion that the tea trade flourished after these reforms came in.⁶⁷ However, the tea industry had been prosperous all the time. A more convincing interpretation of the increase in government revenues is that the state discovered more tea transactions than before. Tea transactions unknown to the government in the past were now brought to light because of close monitoring. Therefore, the

64 See Ebrey 2014, 507. See also Huang Chunyan 2002, 7, 118–19.

65 SS 13:184.4502–3.

66 SS 13:184.4502–3. WXTK 1:18.176.

67 SS 13:184.4502–3.

state could profit more by “discovering” these “new” transactions. Responses from the central government in planned economies are usually prolonged and bureaucratic, but Cai and his colleagues managed to launch reforms rapidly and efficiently.

We can deduce from what the emperor and his subordinates implemented during Huizong’s reign that financial considerations were essential to launching tea reforms, but were not the only cause. Re-situating the state at the center of the tea market, re-instating the power of the state in the industry, re-designing the official establishment, and re-distributing the powers among the local officials were among the concerns of the central government throughout the history of the Northern Song. Attributing these phenomena to Huizong’s personal interests ignores how Huizong and his subordinates strove to save the state from an economic abyss.

1.2.4 Adding Value to Tea and Product Differentiation

As much as the tea industry provided revenues to the state, the government wanted even more. A state monopoly, sales tax, other taxes and levies on farmers and peasants, and rent on tea gardens were just the start. The government officials realized that heterogenizing tea by creating diverse categories would bring in significantly higher profits. In this way, tea could be sold in different categories at higher prices. Modern economists would term these acts as “value-adding,” “advertising,” and/or “product differentiation.” These strategies include diversifying the features of the products, adding new brand names to generic products, and assembling and packaging products in innovative ways to attract more customers and sell the products at higher prices.⁶⁸ The Northern Song scholar-officials made good use of these marketing strategies.

1.2.4.1 *Diversifying Features*

When considered in this context, the writing and promotion of the *Daguan Treatise* can be seen as a cultural and economic feature added to the tea. We may recall that the state-owned gardens in Jian’an and the government took the initiative to promote their tea. Thus, the *Daguan Treatise* not only theorized and institutionalized tea practices, but also served as a marketing tool to promote an idealized tea culture and a model for an industry in which the state had significant stakes. Promoting appropriate utensils also added cultural and economic value to the tea industry.

68 Samuelson and Nordhaus (1948) 2010, 176–77, 390–91, 675.

1.2.4.2 *Differentiation*

What if the tea in the market were of a generic or homogenous nature? Raw tea was all very similar, but the government had the economic incentive to artificially differentiate the tea using different production techniques, grades, packaging, and price.⁶⁹ We do not know whether there were any actual differences in terms of the taste of the tea. Nevertheless, the specification and differentiation of the quality, types, production techniques, and price of tea as an economic construct is a fascinating phenomenon.

Records in the *Comprehensive Examination of Literature (Wenxian tongkao)* reveal that the Northern Song government singled out some specific tea types at the beginning of the dynasty.⁷⁰ At that time, tea was categorized into *sancha* (loose tea), *piancha* (tea cakes), and *lamiancha* (wax-surfaced tea cakes). The government purchased tea at low prices and then sold it for three to four times the amount they paid:

TABLE 2 Profit by tea types^a

Tea type	Buy (<i>wen/jin</i>)	Grades	Sell (<i>wen/jin</i>)	Grades
<i>lamiancha</i>	35–190	16	47–420	12
<i>piancha</i>	65–250	55	17–917	65
<i>sancha</i>	16–38.5	59	15–121	190

a WXTK 1:18.174.

The *lamiancha* referred to tea from Jian'an, the tea favored by the *Daguan Treatise*. *Sancha* and *piancha*, referring to how the tea was packed, could be found anywhere in the south. The grades were probably set by the government to differentiate qualities and diversify the market. The artificial differentiation would add value to the tea initially of a generic or homogenous nature.

Associating specific tea types with certain production techniques was an economic strategy to enrich the stories behind the products. Northern Song scholar-officials employed this marketing strategy just like modern tea merchants. The processing and preservation techniques probably added value. Wax-surfacing, steaming, compressing, baking, and mixing with aromatic substances were associated with the long-term preservation, better flavor, and pleasing fragrances demanded by many Northern Song tea drinkers.

69 SS 13:183.4477. WXTK 1:18.173–74.

70 WXTK 1:18.174.

1.2.4.3 *Creating New Brand Names*

Tea texts compiled by the Northern Song scholar-officials have mentioned various tea brands, such as Jian'an White Tea, which had the endorsement of the royal court, Ding Wei's Large Dragon-phoenix Tea, Cai Xiang's Small Dragon Tea Cakes, and the various tea brands mentioned in multiple tea texts.⁷¹ The scholar-officials and -artists came up with numerous labels for tea of the same type, quality, and origin. Tea of a homogeneous nature probably tasted the same, but the addition of brand names elevated the economic value of generic tea. Calling the same tea by different and more appealing names was part of innovatively packaging the tea products. Ding Wei and Cai Xiang "invented" Dragon-phoenix Tea and Small Dragon Tea, which were little more than branding the same tea grown in Jian'an. They devised new methods of categorizing the tea and decorated the packages with beautiful dragon and phoenix patterns impressed from metal molds.⁷²

Tea, as a value-added and frequently advertised commodity and luxury, drew the attention of the conscientious reformers because it was such an important source of profit for the state. The value-adding strategies, from the perspectives of the emperors and scholar-officials, were a cultural and economic construct built upon a consensus among the cultural and political elites. The economic value behind the tea provided sufficient incentives for the scholar-officials to invest their energy and time in heterogenizing the tea and artificially creating diverse categories for the tea.

1.2.5 *Exportation and Tea-Horse Trade*

Since tea was a product desired by both Chinese and non-Chinese speaking peoples, the Northern Song government attempted to make it a strategic item in diplomacy and military affairs. The central government controlled tea exports to nomad-inhabited regions through a mechanism, which later became known as the famous tea-horse trade in history.⁷³ Paul Smith and others have conducted detailed studies of the history of the tea-horse trade;⁷⁴ however, one question remains: Why was tea specifically chosen for trading horses, but not other products?

71 ZLCH, vol. 1: 114–27.

72 See Xiong Fan's *Xuanhe Beiyuan gongcha lu* in ZLCH, vol. 1: 116.

73 WXTK 1:18.175–77. SHYJG 4:84.3297–3332 (*juan* 11683–*juan* 11684). Cheng Guangyu 1988b. Paul Smith 1991. Jiang Tianjian 1991, 33–34.

74 Zhu Chongsheng 1985, 72–73; Cheng Guangyu 1988b; Jiang Tianjian 1991; Paul Smith 1991, 249–84. See also Dai Yingcong 2009, 57, 185.

Besides horses, the nomads produced their own strategically important products such as salt and foodstuffs. The Northern Song government therefore could not base its trade with the nomads on such daily commodities. The government needed a product they could entirely monopolize and control to trade for militarily strategic items, horses in this case. In Chapter 1, we know that many herbs could replace tea. Why were *shashen* or lotus seeds not chosen to replace tea? Decoctions made from *shashen*, lotus seeds, and other herbs could provide similar medicinal qualities or daily nutrition. Scurvy, resulting from Vitamin C deficiency, along with other health issues prevalent among the nomads, could potentially be prevented or alleviated through the consumption of these herbal decoctions. Furthermore, these herbs could be preserved for a long time, provided they were treated correctly. Why, then, did tea rise to prominence?

The cultural construct of tea made tea culturally attractive, while the economic construct made tea widely acceptable. These large-scale cultural and economic phenomena led to the popularity and uptake of tea among both the nomads and sedentary people. When tea was singled out from other products in the market, the economic value of tea elevated it to a militarily strategic item. Tea grew in southern China only and was easily controlled by the government. The geographic distribution of tea made it an outstanding product over which the Chinese had a total monopoly. Although *shashen* might have been a viable alternative to tea, its cultivation area in the Yellow River Basin faced constant military threats. Lotus seeds that grew only in the south did not hold as much cultural significance since the cultural construct of lotus seeds was not as popular as tea. After the Chinese scholar-artists began a major cultural campaign to promote tea for several hundred years, tea necessarily became an indispensable strategic item favored by the Northern Song government. By maintaining the historical popularity of tea among the nomads, the Northern Song government capitalized on the longstanding cultural and economic tradition of promoting tea, using it continuously as a trading commodity for desired goods.

Previously the Northern Song government used silver to trade, but eventually, they found that the silver-horse trade was not as cost-effective as the tea-horse trade.⁷⁵ The Northern Song government later established the Tea-Horse Agency to centralize the management of trade affairs and demanded that tea gardens in the Sichuan area trade horses with the Tibetans.⁷⁶ It is recorded that during Shenzong's reign and under Wang Anshi's reforms, the Tea-Horse

75 SHYJG 4:84.3300, 3303 (*juan* 11683). Mair and Hoh 2009: 73–76.

76 SS 13:184.4511. WXTK 1:18.175–77. See also Cheng Guangyu 1988b; Paul Smith 1991, 28–31.

Agency used tea to trade with the Tibetans and procured about 10,000 horses annually from 1074 onwards.⁷⁷ Later the quota of purchasing horses reached 20,000 annually as the trade developed.⁷⁸ In 1116, during Huizong's reign, the number of horses procured reached a record high of 45,021.⁷⁹ By using tea instead of silver to buy horses, the precious metal remained in China, protecting the economy and preventing currency inflation. The massive surpluses of the Sichuan tea industry were traded for valuable horses. Tea cultivated in other parts of the state would be transported north for strategic military purposes and also traded domestically for everyday consumption. The value-adding processes and cultural and economic construct of tea helped spread the reputation and popularity of tea. The Northern Song government was the stakeholder that benefited most from the trade.

1.3 *Production and Distribution of Tea Utensils*

1.3.1 Ceramic Vessels

Tea utensils constituted a significant aspect of the economic construct of the tea industry. The active production and wide distribution of tea utensils reflected how popular the tea-drinking cultures were and how successful the economic construct was in the Northern Song.

1.3.1.1 *Types*

As outlined in Chapter 1, various utensils made up part of the sophisticated Northern Song tea culture and economy. Tea bowls could be categorized into single tea bowls and bowls with pedestals or supports. Ewer spouts required special design to accommodate the tea-tipping practices. Accompanying jars and pots for holding water could be ordinary vessels. Incense burners were an integral component of tea utensil assemblage, being indispensable at tea gatherings. The openwork design of incense burners, which allowed the emission of fragrance from the burning of aromatic substances, had its origins in the openwork design of Han Period incense burners, and in the bronze vessels of earlier periods (Fig. 12).

Most surviving Northern Song tea utensils are ceramic, ranging from stoneware to celadon or porcelain, classified based on variations in firing temperature, clay and glaze types, and degrees of water porosity.⁸⁰ Glazed ceramic

77 WXTK1:118,177. Mair and Hoh 2009, 73–76; Ebrey 2014, 376. See also Paul Smith 1991, 249–84.

78 SHYJG 4:84.3301 (*juan* 11683).

79 SHYJG 4:84.3323 (*juan* 11683). Jiang Tianjian 1991, 45.

80 Metal utensils were rare yet did exist, such as the Tang dynasty tea-powder crusher found in the basement of the Temple of Dharma Doors. Shaanxi Sheng Kaogu Yanjiuyuan et al. 2007, 1131, vol. 2, color pls. 72–78, 80–81.



FIGURE 12 Bronze incense burner from Tomb 3, Xianlielu Huanghuagang, Guangzhou, China. H. 17.6 cm. Ca. 200 BCE–100 CE. AFTER TING 1996, 50, FIG. 1.22. GUANGZHOU MUSEUM

tea bowls give us a glimpse of the aesthetics and economic preferences of Northern Song tea lovers, with the glaze determining the color of the ceramic utensils. Ordinary people probably used unglazed stoneware or glazed porcelain bowls of cheaper quality, whereas the cultural elites preferred those with sophisticated designs, such as multi-colored or purely monochromatic bowls. Monochromatic bowls are not inherently dull or uninteresting. Instead, their color tones can be so pure and subtle that they exhibit a type of restrained beauty. Multi-colored bowls feature various patterns such as the hare's fur pattern discussed in Chapter 1, the oil-drop pattern (*you di*), the dove's feather pattern (*zhēguban*), and *tenmoku*.⁸¹ Variations in firing temperature and oxidation and reduction processes in the kilns would result in a range of glaze colors.⁸² The renowned *tenmoku* bowls stored in Japan (Fig. 5) were results of coincidental changes in the above-mentioned processes. Most of them date to the Southern Song. Although there is not enough evidence at this point, it is possible that some of them were produced in the Northern Song. Given that the *tenmoku* bowls were produced in kilns known as "dragon kilns" (*longyao*), whose earliest construction could be traced to the first millennium BCE,⁸³ the accidental achievement of the so-called *tenmoku* patterns would have probably taken place at earlier times.

1.3.1.2 *Regional Distribution*

Almost every region in Northern Song China had kiln clusters able to produce tea bowls and ewers. In the north, there were the Cizhou (Hebei), Dingzhou (Hebei), and Yaozhou (Shaanxi, Fig. 13) kiln clusters. In central China, well-known kiln clusters such as the Ruzhou and Guan (official) clusters were situated around the capital. In the south, there were the Changsha, Longquan, and Jianyang kilns.⁸⁴ Apart from highly valuable utensils and those specified in the tea texts (like the Jian ware specified in the *Daguan Treatise*), local tea enthusiasts would usually use utensils from nearby kilns to avoid high transportation costs.

81 Wood 1999, 148–57.

82 Wood 1999, 145–55.

83 We do not yet know the origins of the dragon kilns, but for some examples, see Xiong Haitang 1995, 81–95; Wang Yifeng 2010, 26–80. Wang Yifeng translated *longyao* to "climbing kiln."

84 Xiong Haitang 1995, 21–42, 68–74.



FIGURE 13 Tea bowl and support. Excavated from tomb M16 (Lü Dazhang's tomb) of the Lü family cemetery at Shaanxi Lantian, housed in the Shaanxi Academy of Archaeology. The bowl and the support are separate: total h. 10.6 cm, bowl h. 5 cm, bowl d. 11 cm, support h. 7 cm. 10th–11th century. Probably produced at the Yaozhou kilns.

AFTER HUNAN SHENG BOWUGUAN 2020, 99, NO FIG. NO. IMAGE REPRODUCTION COURTESY OF THE SHAANXI ACADEMY OF ARCHAEOLOGY

1.3.1.3 *Production*

Producing ceramic vessels required a significant investment of material and labor resources. First, kilns catering to special and/or local needs were built. In northern China, the so-called “bun-shaped kilns” (*mantouyao*) were constructed on flat ground, while in southern China, dragon kilns built on long slopes of hills were preferred.⁸⁵ Secondly, the materials needed to make the utensils—including clay for the body, glaze stones used to produce the glaze,

85 Xiong Haitang 1995, 23–32, 38–42, 81–95.

water, and fuel—had to be amassed at the kiln site. Some kiln sites were built next to the river bank so the potters could easily draw water to mix with the clay and glaze stones before trampling and grinding them into softer forms. After wheeling and shaping the clay into desired shapes, glaze and pigments might then be applied on the surface. The utensils were then put into the kilns for firing. To bring out the desired colors on the utensils, substantial quantities of firewood and charcoal were required for heating in either oxidizing or reducing conditions. While experienced masters would supervise the entire process, they relied on ordinary workmen to take care of the routine and onerous labor, such as collecting firewood from the forest, drawing water, and carrying raw materials to the workshops. In the firing processes, which could last several days, and in the reduction processes, which could extend for weeks, the masters needed to be very attentive to the colors of the fire and other temperature indicators, which showed the approximate temperature ranges at a time before the invention of thermometers.⁸⁶ During peak seasons, sleepless nights were common as a kiln might house thousands of ceramic utensils. Any errors in the process could result in an entire kiln of ruined or subpar utensils, which could bankrupt a workshop.

1.3.2 Dragon Kilns

The southern Chinese chose to build long and narrow kilns on hill slopes, creating structures that resembled dragons resting on the hillsides. In the Northern Song, such dragon kilns were very common in the Fujian Jianyang area.⁸⁷ Among these, the Yulinting kiln cluster is particularly noteworthy.⁸⁸ Located in the Mount Wuyi area, it was part of Chongan county during the Northern Song. Six sites of ruined kilns on six different hills were located in archaeological surveys conducted at the end of the twentieth century by the archaeological team of the Fujian Provincial Museum. Our focus here is the most prominent site that consisted of two kilns (Fig. 14 and Fig. 15). In this area of about 2,300 m² were found the foundations of the two kilns, potters' workshops, ponds, wells, roads, drainage ditches, and vast quantities of ceramic shards identified as remains of black-glazed Jian ware. Sources of clay and glaze stones in neighboring areas are, needless to say, abundant. Two creeks surrounded the kiln site when we first visited it in December 2018.

86 Personal communication with the potters. See also Xiong Haitang 1995, 26, 51, especially 196–99.

87 Xiong Haitang 1995, 23–32, 38–42, 91–95.

88 Fujian Sheng Bowuguan 2000, 22, 27, 30, 45–46.



FIGURE 14 View of the remaining foundation of Yulinting Kiln 1, from north to south
FUJIAN SHENG BOWUGUAN 2000, 27, FIG. 8



FIGURE 15 Photograph of the Yulinting kiln site covered by a modern-day building
AUTHOR'S PHOTOGRAPH, TAKEN IN DECEMBER 2018. THE TRIANGLE INDICATES THE KILN POSITION



FIGURE 16 Image captured from a 3D model of potter Sun Jianxing's kiln
AUTHOR'S IMAGE

One can imagine that the potters of the Northern Song working in these kilns would draw water from the creeks and wells and store it in the ponds. When needed, the water would be used to filter sand from the clay and to knead and mix the clay powder. Today, the creeks are connected to Chongyang Creek, Jian Creek, and Min River, eventually reaching the sea. If, as was quite likely, these creeks were interconnected during the Northern Song and linked to Gan River (probably via some land transport), then the tea and utensils produced in Jian'an and its neighboring areas could have been shipped to Yangzi River and the Grand Canal, facilitating efficient delivery to the capital. Alternatively, shipping the utensils to Zhejiang by sea was another way to reach the Grand Canal. Firewood from the nearby mountains in the Wuyi area was plentiful, and making charcoal would have presented no challenge.

Only the foundations of the two kilns remain, with all the above-ground structures having disappeared. The length of Kiln 1 is 73 meters, as measured along the slope. It has an average incline of 18° , reaching 26° at its steepest and leveling out to 13° at its flattest point. Kiln 2, measuring 113 meters in length, has an average incline of 19° , with the steepest point at 30° and the most level section at 15° . According to archaeologists' estimates, Kiln 2 had the capacity to yield over 80,000 items with each firing. Since the above-ground structures of the two kilns have disappeared, we can take a modern kiln that imitates the dragon kiln structure as a reference. This modern kiln belongs to a potter named Sun Jianxing. It is only 10 meters long with an incline of about 17° (Fig. 16). Sun's kiln primarily yields Jian-style stoneware, that is, the black-glazed bowls. The front part of the kiln is where the firewood is burned. The rising heat is directed into the long, slanting fire chamber covered by thick bricks, preserving the heat inside. Tiny holes are strategically placed in the fire



FIGURE 17 Foundation of Yulinting Kiln 1
AUTHOR'S PHOTOGRAPH

chamber, allowing the potter to observe the fire types and gauge temperature ranges, although electric thermometers are used nowadays. Smoke generated by burning the firewood and charcoal is emitted through a chimney at the back of the chamber at the peak of the artificial hill. Nowadays, we can still identify the front, the foundations and remaining walls of the fire chamber, and the end



FIGURE 18 End of Yulinting Kiln 1

IMAGE CAPTURED FROM THE AUTHOR'S 3D MODEL

of the Yulinting kilns (Fig. 17 and Fig. 18), which indicate that the operation principles of the Yulinting and Sun Jianxing's kilns are similar. The Yulinting kilns are, however, much longer and twist a little at the center, similar to the twist of Kiln 1 as seen in Fig. 17. This twist was probably built to slow down rapid elevations of heat and maintain a steady heating environment in the kiln. The delicate control of how the heat was raised and channeled reflected the sophistication of the kiln construction techniques. The massive output of one firing of one of these massive kilns meant that the Yulinting kiln clusters provided a stable supply of high-quality Jian ware to the market. Some premium products might be shipped to the capital for use by the cultural and economic elites, contributing to their ambitious endeavor of constructing a new tea economy.

Against this historical backdrop, we now understand why and how the *Daguan Treatise* authors gave their Fujian-centric tea standards and preferences high political and cultural status and expected tea practitioners to follow their prescriptions. They institutionalized tea-making practices and tea-drinking preferences through the dissemination of the text. By launching the reforms, Huizong and his subordinates regained control over the tea industry, monopolized the tea market, garnered a greater share of the profits of the tea trade, and managed the southern tea and utensil production industries with relative ease. No merchants could compete with the government in this market. Simultaneously, Huizong and his subordinates utilized the fame of the Jian'an tea and utensils. Through prioritizing the Jian'an White Tea, lauding the black-glazed Jian ware, grading and categorizing tea types, preserving the tea for a longer time by referencing the drying and processing techniques, and promoting the tea-tipping practice, Huizong, his subordinates, and many scholar-artists and -officials significantly enhanced the cultural and economic value of

tea. It was no coincidence that tea became popular in both Chinese and non-Chinese speaking regions, with the scholar-artists and officials participating in a large-scale economic phenomenon that reified the rarity and refinement of tea and utensils.

2 Aromatic Substances

The production and distribution of aromatic substances from Northern Song-controlled and foreign areas reflected how the Chinese cultural elites economically constructed the rarity and exoticism of the aromatic substances. How the cultural elites molded the popular impressions about the aromatic substances in their texts awaits investigation. Both the burning of the aromatic substances and the specially designed incense burners used in the process were parts of this economic construct.

2.1 *Geographical Sources of Aromatic Substances*

Most of the aromatic substances the cultural elites preferred and indicated in their *xiangpu* were exotic. Many came from Southeast Asian, South Asian, Persian, and Central Asian regions. A minority were domestic, coming from the Canton (Guangdong), Guangxi, and Hainan regions. The state authorities grouped the aromatic substances with other items such as rhino horn, ivory, amber, pearls, agate, crystals, and exotic timbers.⁸⁹ These exotic items stimulated the imagination of the cultural elites. The medicinal properties they were believed to possess were discussed briefly in Chapter 1. However, the aromatic substances were subject to a cultural and economic construct, making them appealing and widely sought after. If it had not been for concerted efforts by the promoters of these exotic items that would almost be of no ordinary use to the cultural elites, they would not have become a sought-after luxury.

Ding Wei's *Legends* mentions several geographical sources of aromatic substances.⁹⁰ Champa (Zhancheng) in Vietnam yielded tambac and *qianxiang*, which would be exported to Canton or Persia. *Xunlu* (a type of aromatic substances) and frankincense originated from the Persian region, where trees that could be made into aromatic substances were planted everywhere purportedly. The geology there was distinctive, as it is still today, with practically no topsoil

89 ss 13:186.4539.

90 *Tianxiang zhuan*, 36–39.

and very little rain. These trees grew in rocky areas only. According to Liu Jingmin, if planted in soil, they would not yield the timber suitable for conversion into aromatic substances.⁹¹

Production theorization and categorization were also common strategies that the *xiangpu* authors employed in making an economic construct of the consumption of aromatic substances. As an example, Ding Wei's *Legends* again describes how rare the aromatic substances from the Hainan and western Canton regions were. The indigenous people on Hainan Island made their living mainly by farming, and only in the winter did they enter the mountains to collect aromatic timbers. In the western Canton regions, the indigenous people chopped down only mature aromatic timbers and left the immature ones untouched. They were careful to preserve the ecological balance with their environmentally friendly habits.⁹² As a result, the aromatic substances they collected and preserved were of a very natural quality. Ding Wei further elaborated that ten thousand *jin* of *huangshu* could be refined into one hundred *jin* of *qianxiang*, while this one hundred *jin* of *qianxiang* could, in turn, be refined into merely a dozen *jin* of *chenxiang*.⁹³ The meticulous differentiation of products was meant to add value to the aromatic substances, echoing similar steps taken with the tea brands and categories.

2.2 Trade Routes for Aromatic Substances

We can now investigate the route by which the aromatic substances travelled to the capital. The Fujian and Cantonese sea merchants shipped aromatic substances from the Hainan and Canton regions to the Hangzhou harbors.⁹⁴ The sea merchants would bring not merely aromatic substances, but also other exotic items mentioned above, such as amber, agate, and ivory. Foreign merchants, such as Arabs and Persians, would have brought to Quanzhou and Hangzhou aromatic substances and other exotic products collected along the way in places like Champa and Srivijaya in Indonesia.⁹⁵ Southeast Asian merchants also played a role in these transactions. Thus, the trade routes between China, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Persia, and Arabia were highly developed in the Northern and Southern Song periods.⁹⁶

91 Liu Jingmin 2004, 150.

92 *Tianxiang zhuan*, 38. "Environmentally friendly" and "ecological balance" are my own terms to interpret the original phrases. While the meanings of the Chinese and English phrases do not exactly match, their connotations are highly similar.

93 *Tianxiang zhuan*, 38.

94 *Tianxiang zhuan*, 36, 38.

95 ss 13:186.4539. Fujian Sheng Quanzhou Haiwai Jiaotongshi Bowuguan 1987, 64–67. Wang Huifang 1987.

96 ss 13:186.4539.

2.3 *Preservation of Aromatic Substances*

While the *xiangpu* authors did not pay much attention to the preservation techniques of aromatic substances, the medicinal texts such as *Lei's Treatise*, *Materia Medica*, and *Imperial Pharmacy* contain detailed records of how they were processed, preserved, and used.⁹⁷ Here we can see again that the medicine practitioners and the *xiangpu* writers had different agendas. The former were concerned with the actual medicinal functions and preservation methods of the aromatic substances, while the latter were concerned with fashioning a luxury image for the aromatic substances. The scholars stressed the cultural sophistication of using aromatic substances, the exoticism associated with the fragrances, and the cultural and economic knowledge and power they could boast to their guests. To be sure, indigenous people had their own processing and preservation methods to treat the fresh aromatic timbers they collected, but there are no detailed original records showing how the indigenous people actually conducted these. Their methods were either unknown, incorporated into the methods recorded in the medicinal texts in digested form, or turned into anecdotal information that the scholar-artists could bandy about at their gatherings.

2.4 *Government Control*

The scholars' notes record the profit brought in by the aromatic substances. The Southern Song scholar Zeng Zao recorded that a type of aromatic substance called *baiduru* was worth two-hundred thousand *wen* per *tael* when it first appeared in the capital, and Cai Jing burned two to three *taels* of it at a banquet.⁹⁸ With two-hundred thousand *wen*, one could have purchased a first-class property ranging in size from twenty-five to one hundred acres, according to Qi Xia's conversion.⁹⁹ Although Zeng Zao's note provides only an anecdotal account or may even exaggerate the price to criticize Cai Jing's lavishness, it could still offer supplementary information on how expensive the aromatic substances were. The value of aromatic substances is also recorded in other notes from the Southern Song.¹⁰⁰ Ambergris was the most expensive substance of all. The highest quality ambergris was worth hundreds of thousands per *tael* in Guangzhou, the second-best fifty to sixty thousand.¹⁰¹

97 For example, see the *chenxiang* entry in *Leigong paozhilun* 2.79. See also ZLBC 12.362–67; and THHF 10.184. ss

98 *Gaozhai manlu*, 320.

99 Qi Xia 1988, 2:906.

100 *Zhufan zhi* 2.29–34, 2.39–44.

101 *Youhuan jiwen* 7.61. *Zhufan zhi* 2.39.

With returns comparable to that of tea, it was only natural that aromatic substances would draw the attention of the central government. As mentioned above, the state monopolized the tea, salt, aromatic substance, and alum markets.¹⁰² The state tightly controlled the industry by imposing heavy taxes at every turn. Labor tax was probably imposed on the domestic indigenous peasants who harvested the aromatic timbers. From the foreign merchants, sales tax was definitely collected.¹⁰³ The state also established offices in the capital, Guangzhou, Hangzhou, and Quanzhou areas to monitor transactions and prohibit private trade.¹⁰⁴ When the Southern Song government gradually resumed control of the markets in 1130, three years after the collapse of the Northern Song government, over 86,000 *jin* of frankincense, classified into thirteen grades, was traded in the Quanzhou harbor. They were transported in units of *gang* (literally meaning “network,” here it might mean “a package”), where one *gang* was made up of three thousand *jin* on land, while ten thousand *jin* was one *gang* on water.¹⁰⁵ According to Qi Xia’s estimates of the total revenue in three trade centers in 1154, tea made up 13%, aromatic substances and alum 5.3%, and salt was the highest at 75.8%.¹⁰⁶ The significance of the percentage of revenue taken up by tea and aromatic substances should not be ignored. Even though these statistics came from sources dating to the early Southern Song, we can imagine how important the revenue of tea and aromatic substances was to the government of the Northern Song. In the Northern Song, the punishment for illegal trading activities was severe. In the Taiping Xingguo period of Taizong’s reign, illegal transactions worth over fifteen strings of cash were punished by a tattoo on the face and banishment to offshore islands. Imprisonment awaited those involved in illegal trades valued at more than fifteen strings of cash. In 994, the punishment escalated. People caught engaging in illegal trade with a value of up to four strings of cash would be sentenced to tattooing and conscription as convict soldiers.¹⁰⁷ The state adhered strictly to the categorization of the substances, closely monitored transactions, clearly regulated transportation and packaging, and showed great determination in exercising the penal codes.

102 Alum, which could be used to purify water, thus became a highly sought-after commodity.

103 SS 13:186.4538–39. *Tianxiang zhuan*, 36.

104 SS 13:186.4538–39. SHYJG 6:136.5323 (*juan* 17560).

105 SS 13:185.4537.

106 Qi Xia 1988, 2:911, based on SHYJG 6:147.5761–62 (*juan* 14989).

107 SS 13:186.4539.

3 *Qin*

To produce a *qin*, an artisan needs to assemble a whole array of raw materials: boards of wood, lacquer, silk strings, metal pieces, and stones.¹⁰⁸ Many scholars have studied the mechanism and acoustic properties of the *qin*,¹⁰⁹ but the acquisition and processing of raw materials for producing a *qin* in the Northern Song has not received much attention. As will be illustrated, many of the necessary raw materials were sourced from diverse regions across China and ultimately assembled into a *qin* within the metropolises of the Northern Song.

3.1 *Acquisition of Raw Materials*

3.1.1 Boards of Wood

First of all, *qin* artisans had to collect the appropriate timber and turn it into usable and durable boards. The boards form the principal structure of a *qin*. They give the instrument its basic shape and determine its acoustic characteristics. Selecting the appropriate timber represented the artisans' most critical task. The timbers known and accessible to a Northern Song artisan included the Chinese parasol tree (*wutong/firmiana simplex*), catalpa (*zi/Chinese catalpa/catalpa ovata*), and cunninghamia (*shan/China-fir*).¹¹⁰ Modern-day timber scientists have analyzed these woods, and their properties are listed in Table 3.

The three types of hardwoods listed here are well-suited for crafting into boards for musical instruments that demand resonant qualities.¹¹¹ They are durable, highly workable, and elastic. In other words, boards crafted from these woods can be preserved for a long time. They resist deformation and can be readily shaped. Two boards are assembled to form a *qin*. They need to endure changes in air pressure, humidity, and temperature to keep producing the desired tones while holding the shape of the *qin*. A straight and even grain is crucial for producing the desired tones, which is also a sign that the woodworking would be easier. In contrast, interlocked and knotted wood grains make woodworking more difficult and are to be avoided. These three types of timber

108 For the studies of artisans, see Barbieri-Low 2007; Ko 2017; Kelly 2020.

109 Han Baoqiang 2003, 18, 90, 176; Sui Yu 2010, 29–30.

110 We have to note that both the Chinese names and English-translated names of the timbers do not always correspond to the same species in modern scientific nomenclature. The Chinese parasol tree should not be confused with the paulownia trees (known as *paotong* in Chinese). *Cunninghamia* is a species of cypress, not a fir.

111 Zhang Fugang 1990, 32; Zhao Renjie and Yu Yunshui 2003, 150; He Zhiling 2013, 61–63.

TABLE 3 Properties of the different types of timber^a

Timber	Hardness and strength	Workability	Durability	Deformation and cracks	Elasticity	Texture and gloss	Usual applications
Chinese parasol tree	Hard	Easy	High	Rare	High	Straight grain, glossy	Furniture, coffin boards, musical instruments
Catalpa	Medium hard	Easy	High	Rare	High	Straight grain, glossy	Furniture, coffin boards
Cunninghamia	Medium hard	Easy	High	Easy to deform at high temperature	High	Straight grain, reddish-brown	Buildings, bridges

a Zhao Renjie and Yu Yunshui 2003, 322–29, also 94–130, 135–45.

are anti-corrosive, fragrant, and insect-repellent. The application of lacquer, which aids in preventing erosion and insect infestation, is relatively easy with these timbers too. A Northern Song *qin* artisan would not know about the radiation damping, impedance, soundwaves, and other scientific terms used by today's acousticians to explain the working mechanism of the *qin*,¹¹² but he would know which type of timber was easy to carve and to lacquer, resistant to corrosion, and able to resonate to produce a quality sound.

How and where did a *qin* artisan obtain the wood needed for his *qin*? Piece-meal forestry records from the Song period can be found in scholars' notes. Fan Chengda's *Register of Mounting A Simurgh* (*Canluan lu*; hereafter *Simurgh Register*), written in or after 1173, could be used as a reference.¹¹³ This book records Fan's journey from Suzhou in Jiangsu to Guilin in Guangxi *en route* to his posting. Although his notes date to the Southern Song period, and the records about logging in the book pertain specifically to a place called Yanzhou (near Hangzhou) in today's Zhejiang, it is probable that similar means of wood procurement were common in earlier periods and other places as well. In Fan's description, very few indigenous people chose to cultivate crops; instead, they made their living by planting cunninghamia trees in the mountains. When the wood was transported out of the mountains, the initial price was low, but after the imposition of various taxes, its price had escalated significantly by the time

112 Zhang Fugang 1990, 32–34; Han Baoqiang 2003, 18, 90, 176; Sui Yu 2010, 29–30.

113 *Canluan lu*; see also Zhang Cong Ellen 2011, 64–68.

it reached the county and then, Yanzhou, a larger city. Fan recorded that the officials of Yanzhou made their profit by taxing the sale of the wood, and he lamented that a piece of timber that started off costing less than one hundred *wen* would be sold for two thousand.¹¹⁴ We can postulate from Fan's record that the wood for making the *qin* was not cheap. Indigenous loggers would fell the trees, shape the timber for easy transport, and sell it to merchants. Merchants at the county level would arrange for transportation and resell the timber to others. Throughout these transactions and the transportation processes, the local governments would impose taxes. By the time the wood reached a *qin* artisan's workshop in metropolitan areas like Hangzhou or Kaifeng, it had inevitably become a precious and scarce commodity, no matter how plentiful it may have been in the forests.

Interesting stories about serendipitous encounters where *qin* artisans acquired distinctive wood were told from time to time. Cai Yong in the Eastern Han period accidentally came upon a piece of wood by rescuing it from being completely burned and used it to craft the "Scorched-tail" (*Jiaowei*) *qin*.¹¹⁵ Li Mian of the Tang dynasty assembled multiple pieces of wood of various types and made two *qin*, known as the *Bainaqin* (the *qin* of hundreds of pieces [i.e., made from assembling them]).¹¹⁶ In the tenth century, King Zhongyi (Qian Chu) commissioned an artisan to acquire appropriate wood. This artisan discovered that the pillars of a temple near a waterfall in Mount Tiantai in Zhejiang were made of Chinese parasol wood. He theorized that the sound of the waterfall might cause long-term changes to the properties of the pillar wood, and thus he used the *yang* (positive/southern) side of the pillars and made two *qin* out of the wood.¹¹⁷ The Song period scholars inherited this tradition of creating legends about *qin*.

The Song scholars expounded on the tradition of unearthing ancient wood or wood that had lain buried for years. As historian Yan Xiaoxing notes, an entry from *Materia Medica* provides such a clue.¹¹⁸ This is the entry of "*guchenban*" (ancient coffin boards), which was originally written by the Tang medicine practitioner Chen Cangqi in 739 in his now lost *Supplements to Materia Medica* (*Bencao shiyi*). This entry was later compiled into Tang Shiwen and others' *Materia Medica*.¹¹⁹ Chen Cangqi thought that the boards of wood used to make

114 *Canluan lu*, 4.

115 *Soushenji* 13.167.

116 *Shangshu gushi* 1.4.

117 *Dongtian qinglu ji*, 225–26.

118 Yan Xiaoxing 2019.

119 ZLBC 10.398.

the coffins from ancient tombs were good for curing certain illnesses. Among them, the cunninghamia wood was the best and could be used as the bottom board of a *qin*. The Northern Song scholars further developed this tradition. Shen Gua described the production of two *qin* made of ancient wood in the chapter “Musical Scales” (“*Yuelü*”) of his famous *Notes by Dream Creek* (*Mengxi bitan*) published in 1087.¹²⁰ The first was Mr. Lu’s *qin* (*Lushiqin*), made of eroded wood in the early Tang period. The second one was produced by Zhang Yue, who enjoyed fame comparable to that of the Lei family *qin* artisans. Zhang’s *qin* was claimed to be made from eroded cunninghamia boards taken from coffins of ancient tombs. Zhou Mi, in his *Records of Clouds and Mist Passing the Eyes* (*Yunyan guoyan lu*), documented the transmission of the “Spring Thunder” (*Chunlei*) *qin* made by Lei Wei of the early Tang period, which was esteemed as the finest in Huizong’s *qin* collection.¹²¹ Zhangzong of the Jurchen Jin state later acquired it after the collapse of the Northern Song government and subsequently interred it in his tomb. Eighteen years later, in about 1226, the second to last year of Genghis Khan’s reign, it was unearthed from the ground and was added to the collection of the famous scholar-official Yelü Chucai. At that time, it was still regarded as the finest *qin* ever made.¹²²

It is doubtful, however, that a *qin* unearthed from an ancient tomb could still produce a good sound. For example, the “Heavenly Wind, Sea Waves” (*Tianfeng Haitao*) *qin* excavated from the tomb of the Ming dynasty prince Zhu Tan, cannot be played anymore because the *qin* was not properly dehydrated when freshly excavated in the 1970s.¹²³ Its bottom board is cracked and deformed, rendering it beyond repair. We cannot with certainty dismiss the possibility that eroded wood and boards from coffins inside tombs or from ancient pillars might be suitable for making *qin*. Modern-day *qin* producers may prefer such wood because they believe that it would be suitably dry.¹²⁴ But how can they be certain that the tomb’s humidity has not compromised the boards? As the Southern Song antique collector Zhao Xihu explained, *qin* unearthed from tombs usually yielded unclear sounds because they were affected by the earthly

120 MXBT 1:5,36.

121 Huizong was also renowned for his *Wanqintang* (Hall of tens of thousands of *qin*) collection, as recorded in *Yunyan guoyan lu* 2.61. In other versions it is recorded as *Baiqintang* (Hall of hundreds of *qin*).

122 *Yunyan guoyan lu* 2.61. See also Zheng Minzhong 1993, 6.

123 Shandong Sheng Bowuguan 1972, 28. See also Zheng Minzhong 1993, 7.

124 Lu Changchao 2009, 10–11.

energy and humidity.¹²⁵ For Song *qin* enthusiasts lacking adequate dehydration methods and preservation knowledge, a *qin* unearthed from an ancient tomb might represent more of a culturally and economically constructed fantasy than an actual playable instrument.

3.1.2 Lacquer Surface

The exterior of the *qin* boards was lacquered, and the application of lacquer was a complicated, onerous, and lengthy process.¹²⁶ First, raw lacquer needed to be collected from lacquer trees found in central and southern China. Processing raw lacquer was hazardous due to the potential for allergic reactions upon contact. Hence, treating raw lacquer was by necessity a specialized task handled by trained laborers.¹²⁷ The processed lacquer would be mixed with the ash of burnt deer antlers, paint, mica, ground pearl powder, and other precious items. The most common lacquer colors were black and red, as these were relatively easier to produce.¹²⁸ The lacquer artisans needed to apply multiple even layers of lacquer to the wood, ensuring a beautiful and glossy finish. A lacquer coating would protect the wood from temperature fluctuations, humidity, and insects. In other words, the lacquer layers would help preserve the wood for an extended period, unless it was exposed to abnormal conditions such as overheating. Between applications of layers of lacquer, artisans needed to wait for the previous layer to dry before applying another layer on top. However, the lacquer prepared as described above could only remain liquid for a brief period. Therefore, the artisans had to repeatedly prepare small batches of fresh lacquer, further complicating the already time-consuming finishing process of a *qin*. The process relied on specialized skills and years of experience. The lacquer, and the *qin* it was used to create, represented significant investments of resources and labor.

Textual descriptions of how lacquer was prepared for making the *qin* appear in *Monk Juyue's Qin Production (Seng Juyue qinzhi)*, compiled into *Qin Anthology*. Juyue detailed the preparation and mixing of lacquer with specific materials and advocated a particular lacquer-applying process.¹²⁹ The layers of lacquer not only protected the boards of the *qin*, but also changed the acoustic properties of the *qin*.

125 Zhao Xihu also noted the preference among *qin* lovers for burying their *qin* underground. *Dongtian qinglu ji*, 231.

126 Zheng Minzhong 1999, 35. Zhu Huipeng 2012, 128–59. He Zhiling 2013, 63.

127 Ma Xiao-ming et al. 2012.

128 Lu Rong et al. 2013, 157–58, 169–70. Terada 1999, 200–11.

129 *Seng Juyue qinzhi*, 651–52. See also Zhang Huaying 2013, 306–8.

The lacquer surface, enhancing the beauty of the *qin*, provided visual enjoyment to its lovers. The so-called “cracks” on the lacquer surface, known by various names, were treasured by scholar-artists as indicators of the antiquity of a *qin*.¹³⁰ The pure-color lacquer would occasionally be inlaid with glossy and colorful shells, gold inscriptions, or other visually attractive elements. These inlays enhanced the cultural and economic value of the *qin*.

3.1.3 Silk Strings

The silk strings of most ancient *qin* have usually disappeared due to erosion or damage. Therefore, it is very difficult to analyze the materiality of these silk threads, such as the number of fibers twisted to form a single string and the supplementary materials combined with the silk during the soaking and boiling processes to produce the *qin* strings. Today's *qin* artisans would specify some of these processes. For example, they mix some Chinese herbs and glue with the silk while soaking and boiling.¹³¹ In Juyue's writings, the specifications for the silk strings' length, density, the type of glue used, and the fiber types were clearly detailed.¹³²

3.1.4 Metal and Stone Components

A Northern Song artisan would use pieces of metal and stone to decorate other parts of his *qin*, such as the *hui*-markers, bridges, and pegs. These components have often been lost over time. Usually, the metal pieces were made of gold and silver, whereas the stone pieces ranged from ordinary stones to precious jade (nephrites) pieces. Gold and silver were heated, cut, and hammered in a metalsmith's workshop according to *qin* artisans' specifications. Working with jade required highly specialized techniques. First, jade had to be worked with abrasives, but not with hard metal tools. The complex jade pegs illustrated in the *Xuanhe Period Catalogue of Antiquities* (*Xuanhe bogu tulu*), compiled during Huizong's reign,¹³³ required expert craftsmanship over a long period. To create the thin, circular jade *hui*-markers, a jade cylinder would first need to be drilled out from raw jade, and thin pieces would then be sliced from this cylinder and fitted into the dented areas of the *hui*-markers. This entire process had to be carefully executed, as a minor error could render the whole cylinder unusable.

130 *Seng Juyue qinshi*, 650; *Dongtian qinglu ji*, 223.

131 Zhu Huipeng 2012, 128–59; He Zhiling 2013, 63.

132 *Seng Juyue zaoxianfa*, 8.

133 Yang Yuanzheng 2015a.

In his *Note on Three Qin* (*Sanqin ji*, 1062), Ouyang Xiu mentioned that he owned three *qin* made by renowned artisans from the early to middle Tang periods.¹³⁴ Each *qin* featured different types of *hui*-markers: gold on the *qin* made by Zhang Yue, stone on that by Lou Ze (a contemporary of the Lei family), and jade on the one made by the Lei family. Ouyang lamented his old age. For this reason, he favored the *qin* with stone markers, because stones did not glitter gaudily like metal. He accorded the stone markers a high moral status for their modesty and integrity because they unobtrusively but clearly marked out the *hui* positions. Ouyang was not alone among scholar-artists to invest the metal and stone components of the *qin* with moral characteristics.¹³⁵

3.2 Assembly

After gathering the materials, the artisan started to assemble them into a *qin*.¹³⁶ The boards needed to be cut, chipped, and chiseled, and holes were drilled into them to produce the desired shape. Sunken and protruding parts needed to be planned in advance. The sizes of the various parts of a *qin* are specified in texts such as Shi Ruli's *Qin Cutting Methods of Biluozhi* (*Biluozhi zhuoqinfa*), *Book of the Qin* by an anonymous writer that was incorporated into *Qin Garden*, and *Monk Juyue's Qin Production*.¹³⁷ The general length of extant *qin* dating to the Tang and Song periods is around 120 centimeters,¹³⁸ which accords with the comfortable range of the movement of human arms.

The two boards and sides would then be attached either using glue or pins inserted between them.¹³⁹ The thickness of the two boards, which had to correlate with each other, was discussed in detail in Shi Ruli's text.¹⁴⁰ Shi thought that the acoustic properties of the *qin* would be significantly altered if one board was thicker or thinner than the other or if they were both very thick or thin, but he did not think a certain thickness should be specified. Instead, he argued for an even correlation between the upper and bottom boards. The boards could be

134 QSW 35:741.147.

135 Egan 1984, 36, 221–22.

136 Zheng Minzhong 1989, 21; 2001 (shang), 36. Li Mingzhong 2000a, 96; 2000b, 28. Lu Changchao 2009, 10–11. Sui Yu 2010, 13–40. Zhu Huipeng 2012, 128–59. Zhang Huaying 2013, 306–8. He Zhiling 2013, 63.

137 *Biluozhi zhuoqinfa* in the QYYL, 111–21. *Qinshu* in QYYL, 64–107. *Seng Juyue qinzhi*, 650–51. See also Sui Yu 2010, 16.

138 See Sui Yu 2010, 13, Table 4; 20, Table 8. But Yang Yuanzheng thinks that there are only three *qin* extant that can date to between 750 and 1000 (2020, 82).

139 Yang Yuanzheng 2020, 72. Lu Changchao 2009, 10–11. Zhu Huipeng 2012, 128–59. He Zhiling 2013, 63.

140 QYYL, 111–14.

made from wood from the Chinese parasol tree or catalpa, but they needed to be cut to the desired proportions.¹⁴¹ This discussion has led to debates among *qin* lovers in subsequent generations over which kind of wood—the Chinese parasol tree, catalpa, or cunninghamia—should be used for the upper or bottom board of a *qin* and their corresponding acoustic properties.¹⁴² Shi Ruli's discussion gives artisans great flexibility to develop their own techniques for creating *qin*. Shi also allowed for a wide degree of flexibility in the number of layers of lacquer and the thickness of the layers over certain areas.¹⁴³

Aromatic woods such as rosewood (*jiangzhenxiang*) and sandalwood (*futanmu*) could be used as supplementary parts or accessories of a *qin*, as indicated in Juyue's text.¹⁴⁴ Juyue also mentioned the use of medicinal wood as an alternative when aromatic timbers were not available. While the main boards should be made of hardwood, the accessories made of these aromatic and medicinal timbers had the advantage of keeping insects away and releasing a fragrance that was believed to be beneficial to the health of the *qin* players and listeners. In this way, the host would have achieved results similar to burning the aromatic substances. As a matter of fact, the hardwood of the Chinese parasol tree and catalpa gives off a distinctive fragrance, even if the aroma is weaker than burning aromatic substances.

3.3 *Qin-Making Workshops*

After taking these preparation and production processes into consideration, a *qin* artisan might find it advantageous to set up his workshop in a metropolitan area, where it would be easier for him to amass the various raw materials needed for making the *qin*. Preparing pre-cut boards of wood, silk threads, lacquer, glue, and metal and stone components was a collaborative effort of meticulous division of labor. Even if a *qin* artisan knew how to assemble all of these materials to make a *qin*, he would still have to acquire them from nearby workshops and merchants. Mixing lacquer and twisting silk threads were complicated tasks. A *qin* artisan who knew well how to adjust the acoustic properties might still have to collaborate closely with these other artisans. If he, the person-in-charge, thought that the tones were not up to scratch, he might ask the lacquer artisan to apply additional layers on the instrument, the silk artisan to add more threads to a string, or the carpenter to thin out certain sections. Famous *qin* workshops, such as that of the Lei family, were proba-

141 QYYL, 114–16.

142 Zheng Minzhong 1989, 21.

143 Lu Changchao 2009, 10–11. Zhu HuiPeng 2012, 128–59. He Zhiling 2013, 63.

144 *Seng Juyue qinzhi*, 651.

bly organized in this manner. The *qin* artisan master who oversaw the whole process might supervise his disciples and artisans of other media in the joint creation of a *qin*. While the scholar-artists praised a certain master's creation, such as the *Leiqin*, they were actually complimenting a workshop brand with the name of the master.

The well-established and skillful *qin* artisans would produce *qin* that could generate the best sounds and possess unique beauty on account of the lacquer work, inscriptions, metal and stone components, and the particular fragrance that comes from the wood. The *qin* artisans, similar to the makers of tea and aromatic substances, were concerned with sensory experiences and the enjoyment of the listeners and players. The artisans provided a rich source of inspiration to the scholar-artists with their magnificently crafted *qin*.

4 Transportation

4.1 Geography

The distribution networks of tea, aromatic substances, and raw materials for making the *qin* covered a wide area of East Asia. At the risk of oversimplifying the landscape and transportation conditions, the north encompassed the capital and Central Plains near the Yellow River, covering today's Henan, Hebei, Shandong, Beijing, and a part of the Mongolian steppe. In the Yangzi River basin, the Sichuan, Hubei, Anhui, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu areas were interconnected by Yangzi River and its tributaries. Reaching into the deeper south, there were the hilly areas of Hunan, Jiangxi, Fujian, Guangdong, and Guangxi (Map 1). Carts drawn by draft animals such as oxen, horses, and donkeys were a common sight in the Central Plains, while boats were necessary for the southern areas and the Grand Canal.¹⁴⁵ In the hilly areas, only small carts could be used, and often human labor was necessary to transport goods. Utilizing these diverse routes and means of conveyance, scholars-artists, merchants, officials, and porters could traverse these regions.

4.2 Means of Transportation

The raw materials for making the *qin* came from almost every region in the state. Since the *qin* workshops were located in metropolitan areas, they were readily available to the scholar-artists. Exotic aromatic substances from distant territories crossed the sea routes and reached harbors such as Quanzhou

145 Ihara 1991, 39–40.

and Hangzhou. They were then conveyed to the capital by cart and on boats plying the Grand Canal. Aromatic substances from the Guangdong, Guangxi, and Hainan areas might be shipped by boat and carried by cart to the Central Plains. The drying and processing of aromatic woods helped reduce their weight significantly. Tea and utensils were more complicated to transport. Tea from Sichuan was transported to Tibet along famously dangerous roads,¹⁴⁶ or it could be taken by travelling scholars and officials, such as Su Shi, to the capital. As we know, tea was planted in remote, mountainous areas and needed to be carried down from the mountains by porters walking along roads too narrow for large draft animals. The Mount Wuyi area that yielded the famous Jian'an White Tea is one of the most dramatic examples of these unaccommodating road conditions (Fig. 10). After the tea was carried down from the mountains, it was then shipped by boat sailing on mountain creeks that later joined larger rivers. The tea might then continue to be carried by porters over mountains until it reached the metropolitan areas. Ceramic utensils were usually shipped by boat as they were too fragile to be transported on land. In the Northern Song times, their long journey would likely begin at the creeks near the Yulinting kiln cluster. Hundreds of bowls and ewers would have been loaded onto smaller boats that sailed on the mountain creeks before being re-packaged and reloaded onto bigger boats upon arrival at larger rivers.

What about other means of transportation used in the Central Plains and other less dangerous areas? Many scholars, such as Cong Ellen Zhang, have written about general transportation in the Song period.¹⁴⁷ In Meng Yuanlao's *Reminiscences of the Eastern Capital* (*Dongjing menghua lu*; hereafter *Eastern Capital*) and Zhou Mi's *Miscellaneous Notes from the Guixin [Street]* (*Guixin zazhi*), we can find records of the kind of carts and draft animals used in transportation. The *Eastern Capital* describes a type of large cart used in the north, known as *banzaiche*, which was driven by two people and pulled by over twenty mules or donkeys, or five to seven oxen, capable of transporting a load up to 4,000 to 5,000 *jin* (about 2,000–2,500 kilograms).¹⁴⁸ When unloaded from the boats, tea and aromatic substances would be loaded onto carts like

146 Mair and Hoh 2009, 124–36. Da-Qiongpei 2017, 26–54. See also Kim 2020. Cheng Guangyu 1988b, 112–14.

147 Wang Fuxin 2007, 306–20; Zhang Cong Ellen 2011, 43–68, 88–100.

148 *Guixin zazhi*, *xuji* 1.157. *Dongjing menghua lu* 3.139–40. See also Mair and Hoh 2009, 147; the Russian, Mongolian, and northern Chinese used camels and ox-carts to transport tea to Kyakhta, and from there it continued on to St. Petersburg and Moscow in the nineteenth century.

this and transported further north. Using horses to travel and transport light goods was faster but more expensive. According to the *Eastern Capital*, renting a horse to ride within the capital costs less than 100 *wen*.¹⁴⁹ The cost would undoubtedly be higher for travel to distant locations and for carrying additional goods.¹⁵⁰

For transportation relying purely on human power, a rough estimate would be that a man carrying 60–80 *jin* of goods could walk about 20 *li* (1 *li* = about 0.3 miles) on mountainous roads per day. The direct distance from Mount Wuyi to Nanchang is about 1,000 *li*. It would therefore have taken approximately 50 days on the road to complete this trip on foot. From Nanchang, the tea could be re-packaged onto larger boats for shipment via Yangzi River and the Grand Canal. Reaching Min River from Mount Wuyi and then shipping by sea might be an easier route.

4.3 *Porters and Their Sensory Experiences*

4.3.1 Working Conditions

Northern Song porters have not received much attention due to the lack of textual records. However, their labor was essential to transport tea, timber, and utensils out of the mountains, especially in the hilly Fujian and Jiangxi areas.¹⁵¹ We can speculate on their working conditions from the few textual records we have today. Fan Chengda's *Simurgh Register* serves as a valuable reference.¹⁵² Fan chose to travel by boat in most of his travels within the Zhejiang area. In the Quzhou area, he could comfortably travel on a brick-paved road. In his travels in Jiangxi and Hunan, he rode on boats and in sedan chairs and complained about the muddy roads. During his travels away from Yichun and in Yongzhou in the first three months of a lunar year, he encountered heavy rainfall. The roads he and his companions walked on were paved with stones with smooth surfaces.

Sedan chair carriers had to either walk in the mud and sink into the muddy water or walk on the wet stones, which were too slippery to set their feet on.¹⁵³ He criticized the local governments for not repairing the roads, which made his travels unnecessarily uncomfortable.¹⁵⁴ His descriptions match today's road conditions in these areas and reflect a typical scholar-official mindset—these

149 *Dongjing menghua lu* 4.143.

150 See Shen Zuxiang 2002, 103–10; Wang Fuxin 2007, 232–76.

151 Cf. Kim 2020, 271–328, 452–82.

152 *Canluan lu*, 1–17.

153 *Canluan lu*, 11, 13–14.

154 *Canluan lu*, 11, 13–14.

scholar-officials wanted to travel comfortably and enjoy the sights.¹⁵⁵ His experience was worlds apart from that of the porters walking on the same roads.

Fan's complaints might be prompted by local officials not repairing the roads, or, even if they had repaired the roads, the road conditions were still muddy and wet. The Jiangxi and Hunan areas were noted for their humid weather. It could be very cold in the winter but not cold enough for the water to freeze. The roads might have been soaked in water and mud for years. Many reasons could have contributed to the smoothness of the paving stones. The stones were probably weathered; years of porter traffic may have smoothed them out, or the road builders intentionally selected smooth pebbles from the rivers to pave the road. Porters might have worn woven hemp or grass sandals when necessary, and occasionally they would have gone barefoot, depending on how comfortable they felt when walking on different types of surfaces. The roads were probably paved for barefoot porters, allowing them to grip the edges of the smooth stones and the space in between the stones with their toes. Fan and his companions wore shoes that trapped them on the muddy roads.

In the Northern Song, porters had to walk on various types of roads carrying heavy baskets of tea or pieces of timber out of the mountains. During our travels in the Mount Wuyi area, we found muddy roads, rocky roads, grassy roads, rough roads with sharp stones, roads with stone or brick pavements, roads made of pounded earth, or simply no road at all (walking in the wild). By their gradient, there were level roads, steep roads, and nearly vertical roads. Of course, brick-paved and pounded-earth roads were easy to walk on (which the rich Zhejiang local governments could afford), but porters' roads were dangerous and difficult. The paving stones were arranged to give the roads traction, especially in the case of muddy roads on an incline, which were impossible to climb when wet, no matter the strength of the person. Rocky roads were hot when it was sunny and slippery in the rain. Steps chipped out of the rocks or simple indentations made in them were convenient for the porters. Muddy roads could be found everywhere in the mountainous regions of Fujian, Jiangxi, and Hunan (see Fig. 10). They tended to suck in the feet of the travelers, making it hard for them to raise their legs. Paving with pebbles would be a better option for these roads to improve conditions.

We can only imagine what accidents might have befallen the porters. Slippery roads might have meant injuries or death, especially when they had to walk along cliffsides with heavy goods on their shoulders. In the winter, they could easily have developed sores and frostbite. They may have risked cutting

155 Zhang Cong Ellen 2011, 7.

themselves badly on sharp rocks. Snake bites were likely a common hazard on grassy roads. These conditions inevitably contributed to the high transportation costs for tea, timber, and aromatic substances.

4.3.2 Food and Accommodation along the Roads

While wealthy merchants and scholar-artists enjoyed delicious food such as pork, mutton, hare, chicken, fish, and fruit in the capital,¹⁵⁶ the porters probably ate only salted or dried food on the road. Dry buns with salted vegetables were probably their daily fare. If they sailed on the rivers, fish and salted food were common. Petty merchants who plied the same routes would eat better. For porters who carried tea, a portion of their daily liquid intake would be tea when allowed.¹⁵⁷ In all likelihood, their accommodation was of the most primitive kind—in the poor porters' lodges, on boats, under trees, or in caves out in the wild.¹⁵⁸

4.3.3 Loss

We can imagine that incidental losses are only to be expected in challenging natural conditions. Damage to carts, extreme weather, and poor road conditions could delay the delivery of goods.¹⁵⁹ Illnesses, injuries, accidents, and deaths of the porters and draft animals also caused unexpected delays. A porter falling from a cliff might take down a load of goods he was carrying, and bandits and thieves preyed on the porters. Water transportation was preferred where possible because accidents, damages, and injuries were less frequent. The boat captain could closely monitor his crew, reducing the likelihood of theft unless the boats were targeted by pirates. Spoilage of tea, aromatic substances, and timber by humidity and insects, in this way, was frequent if they were not processed and packaged appropriately. Thus, the “Storage and Baking” chapter in the *Daguan Treatise* cautions tea collectors to frequently and regularly bake their tea to remove humidity.¹⁶⁰

4.3.4 Sensory Experiences of the Porters

The sensory experiences of the porters were drastically different from the scholar-artists living in the metropolises. Although we lack descriptions of the appearance of the porters from the Northern Song, we can postulate that the

156 *Dongjing menghualu* 4.143–45; Ihara 1991, 188–192, 225–26.

157 Ihara 1991, 44–46.

158 Shen Zuxiang 2002, 103–10; Zhang Cong Ellen 2011, 100–110.

159 *Guixin zazhi, xuji* 1.157.

160 ZLCH, vol. 1: 107.

appearance of some of the tea porters would not be very different from the porter travelers of today, such as those traveling in Fujian and Sichuan in China and elsewhere in the world.¹⁶¹ They still walk on the roads that Fan Chengda traveled long ago. Today's tea gardens still rely on manpower to carry the tea out of the mountains.

We can imagine what a porter would look like in the Northern Song based on comparisons between their material lives and those of the scholar-artists. A porter's clothing was very simple and coarse. They probably went about bare-chested but with pants that barely covered their genitals in the summer. In the winter, they would probably have worn ragged hemp-woven working suits. Their skin was darker and rougher. Thick calluses covered their palms and fingers from years of handling ropes and goods, unlike the calluses that grew on *qin* players' finger tips. Their hands were big, with knobby knuckles and short fingernails. Veins bulged on their hands, arms, foreheads, and temples due to prolonged heavy physical work and pressure. Excessive labor led to long-term injuries to their bones and joints, to say nothing of scars, sores, rheumatism, and arthritis that would plague them. Their muscles were strong and wiry, especially on their arms, thighs, calves, and back. Unlike today's bodybuilders who have large and sculptured muscles, the porters' muscles were smaller but firmer. Poor nutrition on the roads (only salted vegetables and dry buns; but tea porters could drink tea) may not have caused severe scurvy, but they were likely to lose some of their teeth and whatever remained would take on yellow strains. They were relatively short and stout. They cut their hair short, if possible, for convenience and to avoid sweat and fleas. Sweat and dust from long hours of outdoor work gave them a body odor different from that of the upper-class scholar-artists, who liked to surround themselves with all sorts of burning aromatic substances. A lack of education meant that they were mostly illiterate. They probably spoke only their own topolects, which were difficult for outsiders to understand. They thus tended to aggregate in communities of people from the same geographic origins when they travelled to larger towns. They were accustomed to using their major muscles, but unlike the scholar-artists who were trained to write with their minor muscles since their childhood, they would have lacked fine motor skills to write.

161 See the nineteenth to twentieth century tea laborers in Ceylon, Mair and Hoh 2009, 216 (photo in George Grantham Bain Collection/Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.); 223 (photo in The Art Archive), and the early twentieth century tea porters transporting tea on dangerous roads in Sichuan at elevations of 5,000 feet, Kim 2020, 323, fig. 7.20 (photo taken by Ernest Wilson in 1908, collection of the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University). See also Dai Yingcong 2009, 185.

Even when their lives were closely connected with the very objects that made up the leisure activities of the scholar-artists, the porters derived very different sensory experiences. In terms of physical appearance, odor, and sound (languages), the porters often seemed to be at odds with the urban setting into which, by dint of their means of livelihood, they were thrust from time to time. The economic value they helped create, however, was significant because only they could bring the precious and rare raw materials out of the mountains. Although they might not appear in the textual records of the scholar-artists, their participation in the production and exchange networks of the tea, aromatic substances, and raw materials for making the *qin* should not be forgotten.

Artistic Construct

1 Literati Gatherings as Constructed in Paintings

In Chapter 1, we have briefly examined the themes of two paintings—*Literati Gathering* and *Listening to the Qin*. The two paintings depict ordinary activities at actual literati gatherings. While I Lo-fen and Wang Cheng-hua masterfully address the political aspects of the two paintings,¹ our inquiry will focus on investigating how the two paintings and their associated poetic colophons were constructed artistically, visually, verbally, prosodically, and melodically. We will pay particular attention to the sequence of artistic activities implied in the two paintings, as they provide some direct and rare evidence of the scholar-artists' ephemeral practices, which were essential to the formation of their communities. Being static in nature, it is not easy to express the unfolding of a sequence of events in paintings, unless they are presented in the form of comic-strip or in animation. How, then, can we extract evidence of the ephemeral practices from the two paintings?

1.1 *The Implied Sequence of Artistic Activities*

In Chapter 1, we mentioned that the protagonists in *Literati Gathering* first enjoy the *qin* music, then put aside the *qin*, which is shown unwrapped on a piece of cloth in the painting, before moving to the larger table to enjoy their banquet. Alcohol and tea are served, while at the same time they enjoy the fragrance from the flowers, the fumes from the aromatic substances, and the tea.

The gathering depicted was a political symbol.² The two poetic colophons by Huizong and Cai Jing reiterate the relationship between the literati gathering in the painting and similar occasions hosted by Tang Taizong. The allusion to the eighteen scholars, erudite consultants to Tang Taizong, represented Huizong's efforts to recruit talented people for court service, the epicenter of state power. The ability to recruit and gather so many erudite scholars reflected the emperor's reputation, power, and authority. The reference to Yan Liben's *Portraits of the Eighteen Scholars* under Tang Taizong's patronage underscored Huizong's determination to recruit talent.³ Huizong used *Literati Gathering*

1 Wang Cheng-hua 1998. I Lo-fen 2006; 2008.

2 Wang Cheng-hua 1998.

3 Notes on Cai Jing's poem in Chapter 1. See also *Jiu Tangshu* 72.11a.

and his colophon poem to express this ambition. His Grand Councilor, equally erudite, echoed this political agenda, mirroring the rhymes and tonal pattern of the first poem as a gesture of deference to his emperor's literary tastes. Cai also seized the opportunity to flatter Huizong by claiming that Huizong surpassed Tang Taizong.

The sequence of activities implied in *Listening to the Qin* is relatively euphemistic. Most scholars focus on the *qin*-playing and -listening activities and ignore the tea gathering that follows. They have not paid attention to the evidence pointing to the likely order of *qin* melodies played at the elegant gathering. While these are implied in Cai's poem, the painting must be understood in the context of a deeper interpretation of his poem, which describes three types of *qin* melody that are presumably played in the painting: *yín* (melody with chanting), *diao* (an abbreviated form of *diaozi*), and *nong* (an abbreviated form of *caonong*, which can be divided into major and minor *caonong*).⁴ Thus the first four characters in the first line, “*yín zhi diao shang*,” should be translated as “[a *qin* melody with] chanting in the key of *zhi*, [a *qin* melody called] *diao* in the key of *shang*.” The characters *yín* and *diao* are not verbs,⁵ but names of *qin* melodies with lyrics that can be sung. The *Zuiweng yín* (*Chant of the Drunken Old Man*) is an obvious example of the *yín* type of *qin* melody. *Diaozi* and *caonong* appear in the *qin* textbook *Zequan's Techniques* authored by Zequan and others. According to Cao Zhi, an esteemed *qin* teacher in service to the royal family who wrote the preface of the *qin* textbook, *diaozi* should be played first and *caonong* last.⁶ Since the rhythm of the *diaozi* is slower, it garners the listeners' attention at the beginning of the performance. It is bland, but not uninteresting, like eating olives, as Cheng Yujian puts it.⁷ Following a break and sufficient warm-up, the minor, and then the major *caonong* are to be played.⁸ At this stage, the real show-time for the player, Cheng Yujian proposed that the *caonong* should be soul-enlivening, invigorating, and exhilarating. However, as theorized in Zhu Changwen's *Qin History* and as echoed by many other prominent scholar-artists, the emotional effect of *caonong* is supposed to be harmonious and restrained.⁹ Both Cao and Cheng emphasized that the player

4 See the discussion in Chapter 1, and see also Cao Zhi's preface in ZQHS, 18; *Cheng Yujian qinlun*, 64.

5 The character *yín* also appears in Huizong's colophon poem on *Literati Gathering*, where it appears together with the character “*yong*.” Both characters probably refer to the actions of chanting and singing while the *qin* was played. In this context, the *yín* character is a gerund.

6 ZQHS, 18.

7 *Cheng Yujian qinlun*, 64.

8 ZQHS, 18.

9 *Qinshi* 6.45–49.

should not perform more than one *caonong*. The player's task was to impress listeners by performing only one piece at this stage.¹⁰ Cai Jing would definitely have understood this sequence and incorporated it into his poem. *Yín* and *diao* are played and sung with lyrics. They appear in the first line of the poem, while the *nong* appears in the final line, bringing the literary gathering to its climax. This climax, different from the exciting climaxes attained with other musical instruments, is achieved by playing a stringless *qin*, which was believed to signify the highest form of performance.¹¹ Cai, likely a *qin* lover, may have gained familiarity with *qin* melodies through extensive study of the era's *qin* literature, possibly including *Zequan's Techniques*.

Understanding the tonal pattern of the poem provides additional insight into Cai's poem, though this may be challenging for English readers. When we look at the — | tonal pattern of the poem in Chapter 1, the characters of *yín* and *diao* are marked with (—) and (|). This means that characters in these positions can occasionally deviate from the prescribed tonal pattern.¹² Originally the tonal pattern for the first four characters is “| | — —”; the second and fourth characters must follow this prosodic rule, while the rule for the first and third characters is not as strict. A serious poet, attentive to tonal patterns, would “correct” a deviation from the tonal rules with another deviation. Hence, if he deviates from the rule by using a level-toned character for the first, that is (—), he would change the third character to (|). In this way, by what we call “reverse rescue,” the poet can achieve a prosodic balance in the tonal pattern.

Cai's poem exhibits this “reverse rescue” pattern twice: in the phrases “*yín zhi diao shang*” and “*yang kui di shen*” (the first four characters) of the third line. In Huizong's poem on *Literati Gathering*, we see the use of the same pattern in the phrases “*duo shi zuo xin*” and “*hua tu you xi*” (first four characters) in the last two lines. These two serious poets achieved a prosodic balance by coupling the “reverse rescue” patterns. As a result, the third character of the first line of Cai's *Listening to the Qin* poem should be read as an oblique tone. The character “*diao*” possesses two tones: one is read as the level-toned “*dew*” (Middle or Medieval period Chinese) or “*tiáo*” (Modern Chinese) as a verb meaning “tuning” or “adjusting,” or the oblique-toned “*tew*” or “*diào*” as a noun signifying “a tune or melody.”¹³ It is thus more likely that as a serious poet, Cai chose the oblique tone to reversely rescue the tonal pattern. Thus the third character of the line should be read as a noun, meaning the *diaozi* melody.

10 ZQHS, 18. *Cheng Yujian qinlun*, 64.

11 For a discussion of the descriptions of the stringless *qin*, see Zhang Meimei 2023.

12 Wang Li 1979, 63–71.

13 For the Middle Chinese reconstruction, see Baxter and Sagart 2014.

One may counter-argue that the “*nong*” in the last line refers to any *qin* melody as it is sometimes used as a generic name for any *qin* melody category. But why did Cai not use “*yín zhi nong shang*,” “*yín zhi yǐn shang*,” or “*yín zhi cao* (oblique-toned) *shang*” in the first line, and “*wuxian yidiao zhong*,” “*wuxian yiyǐn zhong*,” or “*wuxian yiqu zhong*” which also accord with the tonal pattern? The answer is that Cai’s diction has taken into consideration the proper sequence of *qin* melodies to be played, as discussed above.

The keys of the *yín* and *diaozi* were just as significant to the emotions Cai expresses in the poem. It seems that Cai relied on Zequan and others’ interpretations of the Five Pitches, where the *zhi* pitch represents slow and lamenting sounds, while the *shang* pitch pure and sharp sounds with short-ending rhymes.¹⁴ The player begins by performing a *yín* melody and singing a slow and lamenting song in the key of *zhi*, which captivates the listeners, seemingly summoning them to the *qin* gathering. Then the player turns to the key of *shang*, and performs a *diaozi* melody and sings another song with a completely different emotion. The tones and lyrics are pure and sharp and a shorter and speedy rhythm is adopted. The emotions conveyed are therefore uplifting. The varying tonal and emotional modes of performance would have engaged the listeners’ attention.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the “pine wind” sweeping through the pine grove might refer to a *qin* melody called *Feng ru song*, and/or the sound of boiling water for making tea. Now that we see how Cai subtly incorporated the *qin* melodies into his poem without ever directly mentioning the word *qin* at all, we are all the more inclined to believe that he would show off his literary prowess by finding a way to mention tea without actually referring to it. This way of analogizing “tea” was widely shared among the scholar-artists, if we recall Pi Rixiu’s and Su Shi’s poems cited in Chapter 1.¹⁵

All in all, the sequence of the activities implied in *Listening to the Qin* now becomes clear:

1. When the guests quiet down, the *yín* and *diaozi* are played and sung;
2. The guests vaguely hear the sound of boiling water for making tea. Rather than a disturbance, it is a pleasant sound signifying elegant activities to come;
3. The guests show different responses: glancing, contemplating, their hearts brimming with sentiments; they are impressed by the skill of the player;

14 ZQHS, 55. See also the discussion in Chapter 1.

15 See the notes underneath Cai Jing’s *Listening to the Qin* poem in Chapter 1.

4. The gathering reaches a climax when a *caonong* melody is played on a stringless *qin*—the highest level of all *qin* playing skills!

Cai skillfully flattered the player by incorporating many allusions into the poem, proof of his high literary ability and knowledge of *qin* music. If we look closely at the *qin* in the painting, there are actually seven strings depicted as white lines (Fig. 2c).¹⁶ A closer investigation of the *qin*, probably with the aid of infrared photography, should be undertaken to clearly reveal the white strings. By mentioning the “stringless *qin*,” Cai might simply have been incorporating the allusion of Tao Qian’s stringless *qin* into his poem instead of describing what he actually saw and heard. If there are, in fact, seven strings depicted on the *qin*, Cai’s “stringless *qin*” was undoubtedly a form of flattery of describing the elegant and sophisticated taste of the *qin* player.

More importantly, *Listening to the Qin* expresses that the emperor and his Grand Councilor worked closely by complimenting each other as they jointly promoted their political agendas and artistic ideals. Knowledge akin to Cai’s regarding the *qin* was widely disseminated among the royal family members and other political and cultural elites, as is evident from the royal *qin* curriculum of Zequan and Cao Zhi. A large and knowledgeable audience would have been invited to view *Listening to the Qin*. Who else could have merited Cai’s flattery in the colophon poem but Huizong? Huizong also treasured Cai’s calligraphy, which is why his poem occupies pride of place above the pine tree in the painting.

Given the evidence presented above, *Listening to the Qin*, like *Literati Gathering*, reveals the political significance of literati gatherings in that they are associated with the emperor’s agenda of recruiting talent to serve in the government. The court painters were tasked with rendering the political agenda in pictorial form, and Huizong and Cai Jing contributed their small but significant parts to make this agenda all the more explicit.

Furthermore, the choice of the *-uwng* rhyme likely held political and artistic significance within the composition of the three poems, a point that seems to be lost on most scholars who overlook the significance of using this rhyme scheme in the two politicized paintings. The *-uwng* rhyme is the inaugural entry

16 According to the description of Zheng Minzhong (2003, 27), a curator at the Beijing Palace Museum who might have a chance to examine the painting closely, the seven strings are not drawn on the painting. However, Fig. 2c clearly reveals seven white lines depicted on the *qin*. Qiu Caizhen argues that there are nine depicted at the player’s right-hand position (2023, 118). These extra two strings might have been wrongly depicted, as there are only seven at the player’s left-hand position, and the extra two lines do not continue till there.

in the government-authorized system of the *Expanded Rhymes*.¹⁷ Given the political associations of the rhyme dictionaries and the political messages promoted in the paintings, it would not be far-fetched to say that the rhyme in the *Literati Gathering* poems was chosen with great care and that it was by no means a random act that Cai used the same rhyme scheme in his matching poem on *Listening to the Qin*. Cai's poem did not merely pay tribute to the poems on *Literati Gathering*, but reiterated the importance of rhyme matching, the expression of sounds, and, thus, the official regulation of sounds, as we recall from the discussion of the compilation of rhyme categories in Chapter 1. The official regulation of sounds correlated with the re-adjustment of the music system and the new interpretations of the tea and fragrance cultures, which were also targets of Huizong and Cai's politicization of artistic practices. Every element signified a new beginning.

Is the *qin* depicted in *Listening to the Qin* a *Leiqin*? Assuming that the player depicted is of high status with superior taste and cultural knowledge, the possibility exists that he is playing a *Leiqin*. There is also a possibility that he is playing a prized *qin* called "Spring Thunder," which was claimed by Zhou Mi to be the star of the Xuanhe Palace collection.¹⁸ Until new discoveries are unearthed, we may never know which *qin* are depicted in the two paintings. At any rate, they were likely antiques passed down from the Tang period that eventually came into the collections of cultural elites such as Huizong. We can see that the player and guests sit relatively close to one another in *Listening to the Qin*, which is about right because the volume of the *qin* music is not loud.¹⁹ In the world of the painting and beyond, spatial proximity is assured between the host and the guests while they share the same sensory experiences and similar interpretations of cultural practices performed together.

If the *qin* player and the seated officials depicted in *Listening to the Qin* were to drink tea after the music performance, as is highly likely, the narrative hidden in the painting would be very fascinating. That is to say, they would have experienced two different kinds of fragrances. Firstly, they would have smelled the mixed fragrance of the blossoming jasmine and the burning aromatic substances in the incense burner. Their proximity to one another would allow them to easily smell the first kind of fragrance. Second, when the *qin* performance concluded and tea was served, an additional scent, that of whisked tea, would

17 GY 1.21, 1.22–32.

18 *Yuyan guoyan lu* 2.61.

19 The desk on which the *qin* rests is no ordinary object. It should help with rather than dampen the sound of the *qin*. Thus, the wood used to make the desk and the shape of the desk are crucial. Personal communication with Yang Yuanzheng, January 22, 2021.

have pervaded the air, blended with the lingering scent from the aromatic substance in the burner and the jasmine. Alternatively, if the aromatic substance has completely burned off, the host may have told his servants to replace it with other aromatic substances, the fumes of which would then mingle with that of the tea. This act would impress his guests with another olfactory experience. We may never know with certainty what is occurring in the depiction, but it is clear that the painting contains many subtle layers of meaning. Ephemeral practices and a mixed mode of sensory experiences, though how little evidence about them is left, are euphemistically revealed from the painting.

1.2 *Tea Gatherings in Other Paintings*

In Li Gonglin's famous painting of his enormous garden in Anhui Tongcheng, *Painting of the Villa in the Longmian Mountain* (*Longmian shanzhuang tu*; hereafter *Mountain Villa*), we see a different aspect of the literati gatherings. Robert Harrist's book, *Painting and Private Life in Eleventh-century China*, is a detailed and comprehensive study of several different copies of *Mountain Villa*.²⁰ We will focus on the copy in the collection of the Beijing Palace Museum. Scenes that depict tea preparation, tea-drinking, and the burning of aromatic substances can be found in various sections of this long horizontal handscroll, including the sections of the Cave of Extending Blossoms, Lingling Valley, Jade Dragon Gorge, Cliff of the Avalokiteśvara-bodhisattva, Surpassing Gold Cliff, and Hall of Ink Meditation.²¹ Three figures, all scholars judging from their appearance, sit in the Cave of Extending Blossoms. Beside them are two identifiable tea cups (Fig. 19a). They are obviously enjoying their cups of tea. On the riverbank of the Lingling Valley, a servant is carefully holding a tea cup in his hands, ready to present it to a seated scholar (Fig. 19b). In the Jade Dragon Gorge and at the Cliff of the Avalokiteśvara-bodhisattva (Fig. 19c), there are four important figures, three seated scholars and one Buddhist monk, waiting for their cups of tea, prepared by three servants. One is attending to a stove, which is used for boiling water. On the platform of the Surpassing Gold Cliff, a group of people sits around a tripod. Supposedly, a type of aromatic substance is burning inside (Fig. 19d). Next to the platform, three servants are preparing food and beverages. In the Hall of Ink Meditation, two scholars are copying what may presumably be Buddhist sutras, while aromatic substances are burning in tripods between them. The stove is heated, and tea is ready to be served (Fig. 19e). Confucian scholars and Buddhist monks depicted in the scroll enjoy

20 Harrist 1995.

21 Harrist 1995, figs. 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, and 1.10, n.p.; see also 38–44. The author of this book follows Robert Harrist's translations for the names of the places.

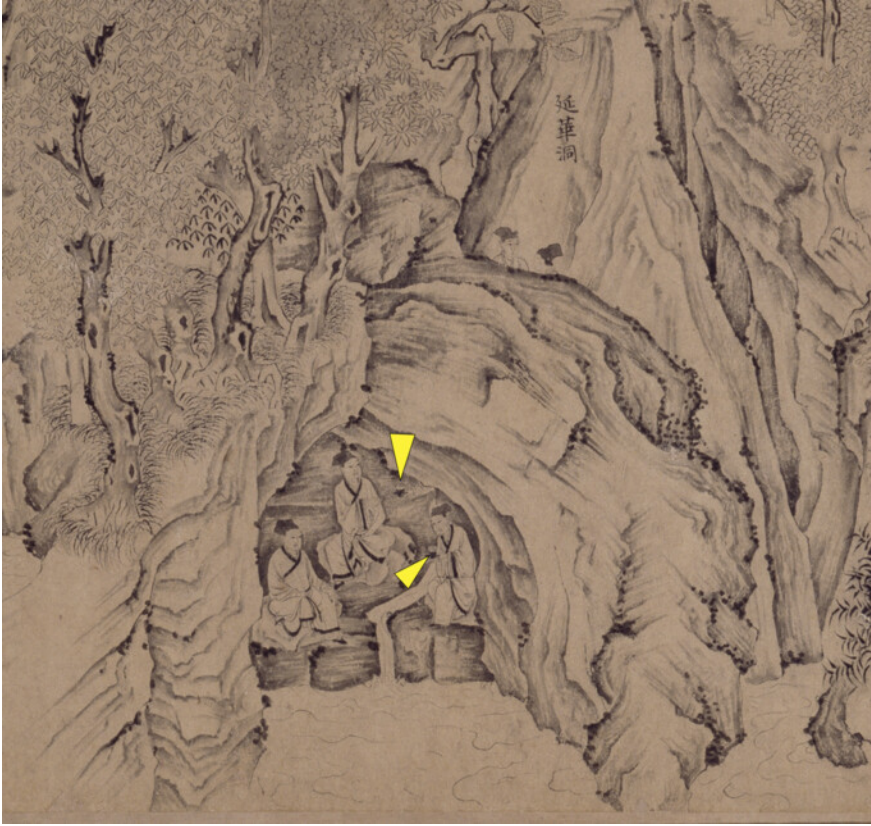


FIGURE 19A Cave of Extending Blossoms, section of a copy after Li Gonglin's *Mountain Villa* (*Longmian shanzhuang tu*). Handscroll, ink on paper. 27.7 × 513 cm. 12th century COLLECTION OF THE BEIJING PALACE MUSEUM. ACCESSION NO.: XIN-00146323. IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE PALACE MUSEUM; PHOTOGRAPHER: FENG HUI. TRIANGLES ADDED BY THE AUTHOR

tea and the fragrances of burning aromatic substances while going about their scholarly and leisure activities, such as conversing in caves, gazing into the water, meditating, and copying sutras.

Mountain Villa presents, as Harrist argues, the private lives of scholar-artists and monks.²² Tea and aromatic substances, originally devoid of cultural and artistic significance, were endowed with such value by scholar-artists, transforming into culturally and artistically esteemed products. While the painters of *Literati Gathering* and *Listening to the Qin* were interested in using tea, aromatic substances, and *qin* as vehicles for political propaganda, Li Gonglin con-

22 Harrist 1995, 106–8.



FIGURE 19B Detail of *Mountain Villa*

IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE PALACE MUSEUM; PHOTOGRAPHER: FENG HUI



FIGURE 19C Detail of *Mountain Villa*

IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE PALACE MUSEUM; PHOTOGRAPHER: FENG HUI



FIGURE 19D Detail of *Mountain Villa*

IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE PALACE MUSEUM; PHOTOGRAPHER: FENG HUI

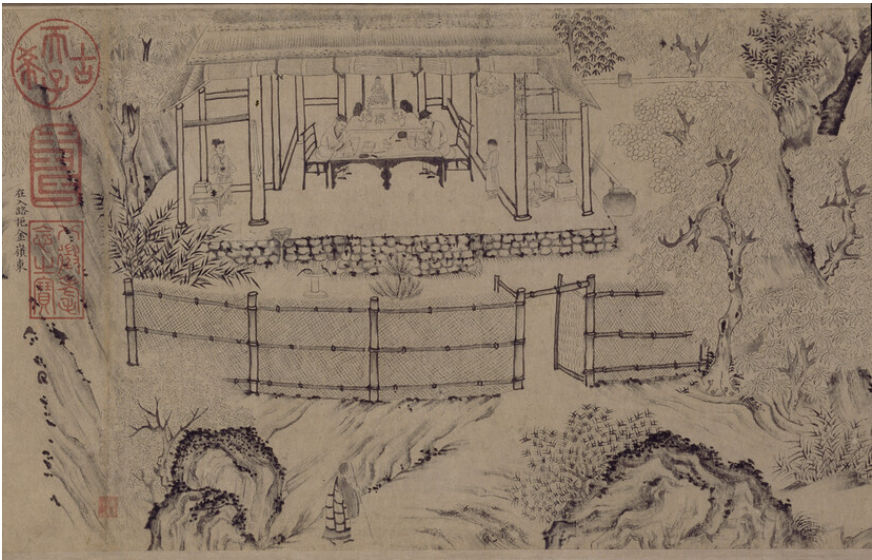


FIGURE 19E Detail of *Mountain Villa*

IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE PALACE MUSEUM; PHOTOGRAPHER: FENG HUI



FIGURE 20A A tea shop; detail of Zhang Zeduan's *Qingming* scroll (*Qingming shanghe tu*). Handscroll, ink on paper. 24.8×528.7 cm. 12th century

COLLECTION OF THE BEIJING PALACE MUSEUM. ACCESSION NO. XIN-00087177. IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE PALACE MUSEUM

structed tea and aromatic substances as essential objects for private scholarly and leisure activities. This connected the scholar-artists and the monks in their pleasant literary gatherings.

Zhang Zeduan's scroll, *Painting of the Riverside Scenes in the Qingming Festival* (*Qingming Shanghe tu*; hereafter *Qingming* scroll), also in the collection of the Beijing Palace Museum, vividly illustrates the hustle and bustle of a prosperous city in which tea and aromatic substances are sold or enjoyed on site (Fig. 20a and Fig. 20b).²³ Several sections of this long handscroll depict

23 Wu Gou 2015, 129–30. See also Hansen 1996a and 1996b; Murray 1997; Tsao 2003; Ihara 2001 and 2012. This prosperous city may be the capital or an imagined city.

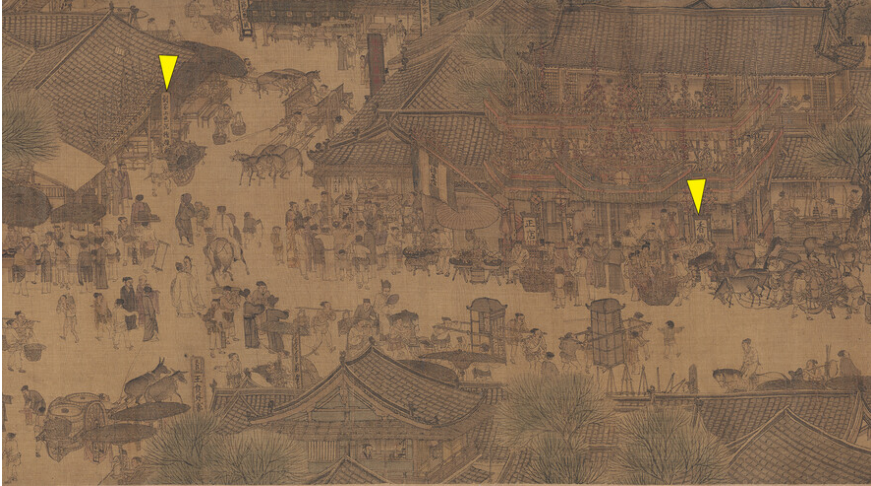


FIGURE 20B Detail of Zhang Zeduan's *Qingming* scroll

IMAGE PROVIDED BY THE PALACE MUSEUM. TRIANGLES ADDED BY THE AUTHOR

shops selling tea and aromatic substances. This is a center of worldly activities, in contrast to the private, reclusive garden depicted in *Mountain Villa*.²⁴ The atmosphere of drinking tea, depicted in the *Qingming* scroll, drastically differs from that in *Mountain Villa*. We do not know what type of tea is sold in the shops, but these people probably would not whisk tea for seven rounds.

The themes of the above paintings and the agendas behind their production constitute a wide artistic range in which tea and aromatic substances played an important role. Tea could be drunk alone or with a group of people, by ordinary people, porters, or political and cultural elites. The social strata and number of drinkers did not alter the nature of tea as a substance, but they certainly determined how tea was stored, prepared, presented, and drunk. Here it is the artistic expressions, the paintings *per se*, that construct the environment in which the tea is enjoyed. In an ordinary street setting, tea is sold and drunk as an ordinary beverage. However, in special settings, like the private gardens in *Literati Gathering*, *Listening to the Qin*, and *Mountain Villa*, participants are surrounded by beautiful landscapes, and tea drinking is elevated to a cultural and artistic ideal. The practice of drinking tea became codified as a pleasure reserved for scholars and monks. Other decoctions (except alcoholic beverages) necessarily became unwelcome and inappropriate in these settings. The enjoyment of tea, com-

24 For the descriptions of activities that took place in tea shops, see Zhu Chongsheng 1985, 65–68; Cheng Guangyu 1988a, 57–59; Yi Yongwen 2005, 193–97.

plemented by aromatic substances and the *qin*, thus played an essential role in literati gatherings. Each gathering further internalized and reinforced the positions of these objects and practices in the lives of scholar-artists and their social bonding. In this sense, paintings helped establish the cultural power and artistic status of tea appreciation and its related activities.

1.3 *Tomb Murals*

If a tea drinker passed away, his “tea, utensils, and servants” would be sent off with him into the underworld, as evidenced by scenes from murals in tombs found in the Hebei and Henan areas.²⁵ Our focus will be on the cemeteries in the Hebei Xuanhua region that belonged to the Khitans in the eleventh century. Murals depicting tea preparation and serving are found in the tombs of Zhang Kuangzheng (M10, buried in 1093, see Fig. 21), Zhang Wenzao (M7, buried in 1093), and others.²⁶ Crushers, bowls, ewers, and other objects such as flowers, special rocks resembling those from Lake Tai, writing tools, musical instruments, presumably Buddhist sutras, cranes, horses, and camels are shown in the murals. Guards, maid-servants, children, procession teams, and banquet attendants are shown actively interacting with these objects.²⁷ The objects in the murals likely represent the treasured belongings of the tomb occupants during their lifetimes; the people depicted probably signify the deceased’s servants, and the animals shown are also associated with the deceased. Equally plausible is that the mural painters adhered to the then popular and prevailing painting themes, in which case we can postulate that the depicted objects were probably auspicious symbols to the tomb occupants. Cranes, rocks, sutras, and tea and utensils were rare and precious objects, while the animals and humans were underworld servants protecting and serving the tomb occupants. The inclusion of writing tools in the murals probably indicates that the tomb occupants were scholars or members of the cultural elite. The multiple sets of tea and banquet utensils depicted in the murals of various tombs also suggest that large parties were envisioned to be held in the underworld. Such opulent tombs were evidently not for people of low rank.

25 For the Hebei Xuanhua area, see Zhangjiakou Shi Xuanhua Qu Wenwu Baoguan suo 1995; Hebei Sheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo et al. 1996; Hebei Sheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo 2001. For the Henan Yiyang area, see Luoyang Shi Dier Wenwu Gongzuodui and Yiyang Xian Wenwu Guanli Weiyuanhui 1996. For the Henan Yuzhou Baisha area, see Su Bai 2002. For the Henan Luoning area, see Li Xianqi and Wang Liling 1993.

26 Hebei Sheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo 2001, 13–14, and pls. 1, 22, 41, 60, 66, 68, 77, 78, 81, 82, 98, n.p.

27 Hebei Sheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo 2001, 1–22, and all plates.



FIGURE 21 Detail of the mural paintings of the tomb of Zhang Kuangzheng, M10, Hebei Xuanhua. Ca. 1058–1093
HEBEI SHENG WENWU YANJIUSUO 2001, 24–25, PL. 1. IMAGE REPRODUCTION COURTESY OF THE CULTURAL RELICS PRESS

Ethnic differences in the use of tea and utensils were not significant between the Khitans and Chinese, as similar depictions and carvings from the eleventh century have been found in the Henan region.²⁸ The Khitan servants, either living or depicted in the Xuanhua murals, probably did not whisk the tea for seven rounds, but they crushed the tea, probably into powder form, and used ewers with specially designed spouts and bowls with pedestals very similar to those used by the Chinese. As depicted in the Xuanhua murals, the ways of preparing tea, holding tea bowls, and presenting tea resemble what is done in *Mountain Villa* and *Literati Gathering*. The servants are not depicted as adding fruits to the tea and mixing the tea with salt or ginger, practices to which Su Che took strong exception.²⁹ Instead, if the servants' Khitan hairstyles were not shown and the cemeteries were located further to the south, it would be difficult to tell whether the tombs belonged to the Khitan or the Chinese.

28 Li Xianqi and Wang Liling 1993, 33, 38. Luoyang Shi Dier Wenwu Gongzuodui and Yiyang Xian Wenwu Guanli Weiyuanhui 1996, 47–48, 50.

29 Qian Shilin 1989, 120–21.

2 Forming Their Own Visual Language

Despite their shared themes of tea and literati gatherings, the styles and agendas of the paintings and murals discussed above were multi-fold. The Xuanhua mural painters paid particular attention to the details of the dress and ornaments of the servants and gathering attendants. Their colorful dress, hats, hairstyles, and belts reflect how careful the painters were to reconstruct the material luxuriousness and status of the tomb occupants and the circles with which they were associated. Tea utensils in multiple sets, decorations, special rocks, and precious animals repeatedly appear in different occupants' tombs. Meanwhile, to show the prosperity of the city he was depicting, Zhang Zeduan chose to include shops of tea and aromatic substances. For his part, Li Gonglin paid particular attention to the space (landscape of his garden) and the emotions evoked. Material luxury was not his concern (he was rich enough to own such an enormous garden). His construction of the artistic space in which pleasant private gatherings were held was crafted with sophistication. The Xuanhua painters could not construct the artistic space in one scroll, as they had to three-dimensionally set their paintings onto the walls of the tombs. The painters of *Literati Gathering* and *Listening to the Qin* took all of these concerns into consideration. They attended to the materiality of the dress, ornaments, and utensils used by the host and guests of the gathering to show off their status and power. They deliberately created gardens that appeared austere but pleasant. Unlike the painters of long handscrolls and murals, they could not clearly delineate a narrative of the gatherings in the static medium of the hanging scroll. The most they could do was to capture one single moment of the gatherings. The painters ingeniously used the unattended *qin*, aided by Huizong and Cai Jing's poetic colophons, to imply a sequence of the activities. The progress of a literati gathering was thus successfully presented. The painters affiliated with cities of Xuanhua and Tongcheng, and the prosperous city, exhausted almost all the prevailing forms and painting techniques available at that time to create representations of the pleasant gatherings, in which tea, aromatic substances, and music played vital roles.³⁰ It is amazing to find the strong artistic adaptability of the three types of culture.

It is impossible to overstate the contribution of the ephemeral practices of preparing and drinking tea, burning aromatic substances, and listening to music to the artistic construction of literati gatherings. Simultaneously the

30 Ceramic paintings that present comprehensive narratives did not emerge until the Yuan dynasty.

materials including tea, aromatic substances, and the *qin* provided the scholar-artists with an opportunity to project their cultural ideals onto their paintings that were understood, appreciated, and adopted by their commissioners, partners, colleagues, disciples, and supporters. Their paintings codified the artistic significance of tea, aromatic substances, music, and the ephemeral practices behind them, which in turn played a significant role in the visual language used in elite circles.

3 Tea in Literary Works

The ephemeral arts were important subjects in Northern Song literary works, including poetry, essays, and songs. In the following section, we investigate how they are represented in those literary works that aim at self-expression and others intended for exchanges among the scholar-artists. These literary works are artistic constructs that define the roles of the three types of ephemeral arts.

3.1 Allusions

Since tea-tipping and tea contests only became popular during the Northern Song and fell out of fashion after the Southern Song, poems mentioning these practices became an artistic signature of these periods. Allusions and metaphors related to tea-tipping and tea contests frequently appeared in the literary works of these periods. A poem of the famous scholar-official Fan Zhongyan was among the early Northern Song poems establishing how allusions to tea contests should be produced. This poem was written in reply to Zhang Min, Fan's associate in office, in around 1034, when Fan became the governor of Muzhou. Zhang's original poem was titled *Song of Tea Contests*. Fan's reply poem, which is better known, is cited and translated below:

范仲淹《和章岷從事鬥茶歌》³¹ Fan Zhongyan, *Resonating with the Governor's Associate, Zhang Min's Song of Tea Contests*

年年春自東南來 (-oj) Every year spring comes from the southeast;

——— | ——

建溪先暖冰微開 (-oj) Jian Creek is the first to become warm, and the ice there
begins to melt.

| —— | ——

³¹ QSS 3:165.1868.

(cont.)

范仲淹 《和章岷從事鬥茶歌》		Fan Zhongyan, <i>Resonating with the Governor's Associate, Zhang Min's Song of Tea Contests</i>	
溪邊奇茗冠天下 — — — —	Unique tea bushes grow beside the Creek, surpassing all others in the world.		
武夷仙人從古栽 (-oj) — — — — —	The Wuyi immortals planted them in ancient times.	4	
新雷昨夜發何處 (-o) — — —	From where did the new thunderclaps come last night?		
家家嬉笑穿雲去 (-o) — — — — —	Laughing gleefully, [tea farmers] of every family penetrated the clouds [i.e., went to the mountains].		
露芽錯落一番榮 — — —	Splendid [tea bushes] are dotted with dew and buds.		
綴玉含珠散嘉樹 (-u) — — —	Jade pendants and pearls hang on auspicious trees.	8	
終朝采掇未盈襜 (-em) — — — —	After a morning's picking, there is not enough tea to fill one's apron.		
唯求精粹不敢貪 (-om) — — — —	They look only for the elite, and dare not be greedy.		
研膏焙乳有雅制 — —	[The process of] grinding the paste, baking [the tea leaves, and stirring] the foam is sophisticated.		
方中圭兮圓中蟾 (-em) — — — — — — —	Jade tablets within the square [tea cakes] and toads within the round [disks].	12	
北苑將期獻天子 (-ij) — — —	[Before] offering the Beiyuan tea to His Majesty, as expected,		
林下雄豪先鬥美 (-ij) — — — —	prominent figures in the woods compete for the comeliness [of tea].		
鼎磨雲外首山銅① — — — —	Bronze cauldrons and grinders made of copper from Mount Shou beyond the clouds;		
瓶攜江上中冷水② (-ij) — — — — — —	jars containing Zhongling water from [Yangzi] River.	16	
黃金碾畔綠塵飛 (-ij) — — — —	Green dust is winnowed from the gold crusher;		
碧玉甌中翠濤起 (-ij) — — —	green waves float in the bluish-green-jade bowls.		
鬥餘味兮輕醞酬 — — — — —	Competing for the lingering taste [of tea], they dismiss that of good beer;		

(cont.)

范仲淹《和章岷從事鬥茶歌》

Fan Zhongyan, *Resonating with the Governor's Associate, Zhang Min's Song of Tea Contests*

鬥餘香兮薄蘭芷 (-ij) — — — —	vying for the lingering scent, they disdain that of orchid and angelica.	20
其間品第胡能欺 (-i) — — — — —	How can one cheat in the grading and ranking [of tea],	
十目視而十手指 (-ij) —	[while] numerous eyes are watching and fingers pointing?	
勝若登仙不可攀 — — —	Winners are like immortals, too noble [for the commoners] to cling to;	
輸同降將無窮恥 (-ij) — — — — —	losers are like capitulating commanders, what a shame!	24
籲嗟天產石上英 (-aeng) — — —	Alas, the elite [tea] that grows on the rocks is a bounty of nature.	
論功不愧階前萁 (-eng) — — — —	In terms of its merits, it is not inferior to the auspicious grass before the emperor's seat.	
眾人之濁我可清 (-eng) — — —	I can be pure among the impure;	
千日之醉我可醒 (-eng) — —	I can be awakened after thousands of days of drunkenness.	28
屈原③試與招魂魄 — — —	Qu Yuan attempted to invoke the souls.	
劉伶④卻得聞雷霆 (-eng) — — — — —	Liu Ling was able to hear the claps of thunder.	
盧仝敢不歌⑤ — — —	How could Lu Tong not sing?	
陸羽須作經 (-eng) — —	Lu Yu had to compose the <i>Classic of Tea</i> .	32
森然萬象中 — — —	Within the myriad of all splendid things,	
焉知無茶星 (-eng) — — — — —	how is one to tell that there is no Constellation of Tea?	
商山丈人⑥休茹芝 (-i) — — — — — —	The four old men from Mount Shang should not eat fungi anymore;	
首陽先生⑦休采薇 (-ij) — — — — —	neither should the two gentlemen from Mount Shouyang gather ferns.	36

(cont.)

范仲淹《和章岷從事鬥茶歌》 Fan Zhongyan, *Resonating with the Governor's Associate, Zhang Min's Song of Tea Contests*

長安酒價⑧減百萬 — —	The price of beer in Chang'an will drop by millions;	
成都藥市⑨無光輝 (-ij) — — — — —	the medicine market in Chengdu will lose its luster.	
不如仙山一啜好 — — —	[All these] cannot compare to one sip [of tea] from the mountains of the immortal,	
冷然便欲乘風飛 (-ij) — — — — —	[which is] as pleasantly cool as riding on the wind to fly.	40
君莫羨花間女郎只鬥草⑩ — — — —	Do not envy those ladies among the flowers, competing only with plants;	
贏得珠璣滿斗歸 (-ij) — — — —	[they] win [and] carry home sacks brimming with pearls.	

The words “來, 開, 裁” belong to the *-oj* rhyme group (*huiyun*). The words “處, 去” that rhyme with the *-o* sound (*yùyun* 御韻) and the word “樹” that rhymes with the *-u* sound (*yùyun* 遇韻) may exhibit an imperfect rhyme or euphony. Other words that share imperfect rhymes or contribute to euphony include (hereafter shown as “imperfect rhyme or euphonic words”): “襜, 蟾”-*em* (*yanyun*); and “貪”-*om* (*tanyun*). “子, 美, 水, 起, 芷, 指, 恥”-*ij* (*zhīyun*); “飛, 薇, 輝, 歸”-*ij* (*weiyun*); and “欺, 芝”-*i* (*zhīyun*). “英, 清”-*aeng* (*gengyun*); and “莫, 醒, 靈, 經, 星”-*eng* (*qingyun*).

- ① The Yellow Emperor collected copper ore from Mount Shou and cast bronze cauldrons at the base of Mount Jing. *Shiji* 28.23a. Here it means very precious and sacred copper.
- ② Zhongling water originated from the midpoint of Yangzi River's course near Zhenjiang. It ranks seventh among the best water sources for tea brewing in Zhu Quan's *Chapu*. See ZLCH, vol. 1: 176. While Zhu Quan's record of Zhongling water dates to the Ming period, legends of Zhongling water might have been in circulation for much longer.
- ③ *Chuci* 9.105–14. There is controversy regarding its authorship. Its author may be Qu Yuan and/or Song Yu.
- ④ See Liu Ling's *Jiude song*, *Quan Jin wen* 66.684. Liu described the status of a nobleman who was not bound by any mundane restrictions. Thunderclaps and Mount Tai were bound to be heard and seen by ordinary men. This nobleman could not hear the thunderclaps even when he was calm and not see the conspicuous profile of Mount Tai even when he was looking directly at it. Here it implies that Liu Ling could hear the thunderclaps because the tea kept him awake.

- ⑤ Lu Tong, described as the Immortal of Tea, was famous for his poem, *Writing to Thank Remonstrator Meng for Sending the New Tea* (*Zoubi xie Meng jianyì jì xìnchá*; hereafter *Remonstrator Meng*).³² QTS 1:388.970. Lu describes the effects of tea thus: the first bowl moistens and soothes one's throat; the second relieves boredom; the third inspires the drinker with enough to compose five thousand chapters of literature; with the fourth bowl, the drinker brakes into perspiration, and any feelings of unfairness are flushed away with the sweat; the fifth cleanses the muscle and bones; and the sixth makes one immortal. Lu then cautions against drinking the seventh bowl, as one would then feel the breeze beneath the armpits, signifying an ascent to the sky and leaving this world behind. Lu then indicates that he wants to ride the wind and fly to Mount Penglai where the immortals live.
- ⑥ Shangshan Zhangren 商山丈人 refers to the tale of four elderly men who demonstrated their integrity by refusing to serve malevolent emperors. *Shiji* 55.8a–b.
- ⑦ Shouyang Xiansheng 首陽先生 refers to the account of Bo Yi and Shu Qi who refused to serve the Zhou government, subsisting on ferns on the secluded Mount Shouyang. *Shiji* 61.3a.
- ⑧ Beer in Chang'an is renowned for its high cost. See the story of Ding Wei in *Xuezhai zhanbi* 2.32. Other Tang poets also decried the high price of beer in Chang'an, although the historical reliability of these claims is questionable.
- ⑨ The medicine market in Chengdu was likely well-known and bustling during certain times of the year. See Lu You's *Laoxuean biji* 6.225.
- ⑩ A game of picking up flowers and plants, played during the Duanwu Festival. *Jing Chu suishi ji*, 11.

In this poem, Fan Zhongyan alludes to various historical figures, places, festivals, and most importantly, tea-picking, tea-tipping, and tea contests. The different rhymes mark out various sections of this long ancient-style poem. Lines 1 to 12, characterized by perfect and imperfect rhymes and euphonic ending characters, describe the location of the tea gardens and the picking and processing of raw tea. Lines 13 to 24 describe contests, water, crushers, foam, fragrance, and the taste of tea. From lines 25 to the end, the poem discusses the functions and value of tea, suggesting it as a means to transcend the secular world. The tone and emotion of the poem are enlivening, and readers familiar with tea lore could easily understand the allusions.

The use of allusions in literary works has been commonly seen in different periods. Given that tea-tipping and tea contests were Song period signature practices, their inclusion in poetry undoubtedly established the fundamental tones and trajectories of using tea allusions in the period's literary works. Whether they were clearly revealed to the reader or appeared obliquely as riddles, they were not simple word plays.³³ Instead, such allusions served as the

32 See the translation in James Benn 2015, 91–92.

33 See Huang Tingjian or Qin Guan's word play of tea in the song, *Tea, to the Tune "Fragrance All Over the Garden"* (*Mantingfang—cha*) in QSC, vol. 1: 386. Cf. Zhou Yukai 1999. See also Egan 1994, 170, 173–79.

scholar-artists' sophisticated artistic tactics to elevate the stature of the type of tea they chose. Obviously, the tea that Fan chose to promote was the Jian'an tea, which was favored in the *Daguan Treatise* and many other tea texts circulating in the Northern Song. Fan intended to build up certain impressions of the Jian'an tea in the readers' minds before Huizong's time, associating the tea with famous historical figures and places.

3.2 *Reclusiveness*

Tea in the artistic world constructed by the scholar-artists was frequently associated with reclusiveness, although, in reality, it was savored by people of all mindsets. For the scholar-artists, however, striving for a reclusive lifestyle could be a source of contradiction. They aspired to be hermits, yet few undertook concrete actions to become one. Su Shi was obviously one of these scholar-artists. As Ronald Egan translates the remarks of Li Zehou regarding Su Shi as follows—"Su never became a recluse, nor did he ever 'return to the farm,' but the sense of the meaninglessness of worldly striving conveyed by his poetry and prose is deeper and more profound than that of any earlier writer."³⁴ We will not investigate whether Su's literary works reflect more profound reclusive tendencies than others, but it is clear that the connection that he builds between the reclusive ideal and tea constitutes an important trend in literary works. Tea was constructed to be enjoyed by people with a dual identity—while their physical essence was in the secular world, their spiritual aspiration lay in a private realm of leisurely contemplation.

Su Shi composed this poem in 1072 during his tenure in office in Hangzhou:³⁵

蘇軾《試院煎茶》³⁶

Su Shi, *Brewing Tea in the Exam Court*

蟹眼已過魚眼生 (-aeng)

|||—|—

颯颯欲作松風鳴 (-aeng)

|||— — —

蒙茸出磨細珠落

— — | — | — |

[Bubbles in the shape of] fish eyes emerge after the appearance of crab's eyes;

[Boiling water] hisses, mimicking wind blowing over a pine forest.

[Tea leaves are] crushed in the grinder, tiny pearls fall out;

34 Li Zehou 1989, 171. Ronald Egan's (1994, 178) translation.

35 QSS 14:791.9158.

36 QSS 14:791.9160.

(cont.)

蘇軾《試院煎茶》

Su Shi, *Brewing Tea in the Exam Court*

眩轉遶甌飛雪輕 (-aeng) — — —	[Foam] swirls dazzlingly in the bowl, as airy as drifting snow.	4
銀瓶瀉湯誇第二 (-ij) — — — —	Boiled water poured out from a silver jar can be praised as the second best;	
未識古人煎水意 (-ij) — —	yet [I] know nothing of the ancients' way of heating water [with tea].	
君不見昔時李生①好客手自煎 (-en) — — — —	Did you not see how in the past Mr. Li took it upon himself to brew tea out of hospitality?	
貴從活火發新泉 (-en) — — —	He depended on the use of fresh spring water and a live fire.	8
又不見今時潞公②煎茶學西蜀 (-owk) — — — — — —	Do you not see again how at the present time the Duke of Lu learns from the West Sichuanese in brewing tea?	
定州花瓷琢紅玉 (-owk) — — — —	[He uses] patterned Dingzhou ware adored with red jade.	
我今貧病常苦飢 (-i) — — — —	I am now impoverished and ailing and often suffer from hunger;	
分無玉碗捧蛾眉 (-i) — — — —	not to me do the beautiful ladies offer [tea] in a jade bowl.	12
且學公家作茗飲 — — —	Perhaps [I] should learn from the way court officials drink tea:	
磚爐石銚行相隨 (-i) — — — — —	[they] travel around equipped with brick braziers and stone-sprouted kettles.	
不用撐腸拄腹文字五千卷③ — — — —	If only [I] needed not to exhaust [myself] from composing five thousand chapters of literary works,	
但願一甌常及睡足日高時 (-i) — — — — —	[I] would wish that one bowl [of tea] would always be there [for me] and [I] could sleep soundly till late morning.	16
	“生，鳴，輕” -aeng (<i>gengyun</i>). “二，意” -ij (<i>zhiyun</i>). “煎，泉” -en (<i>xianyun</i>). “蜀，玉” -owk (<i>woyun</i>). “飢，眉，隨，時” -i (<i>zhīyun</i>).	

① Li Yue, an excellent Tang tea maker, maintained that tea should be roasted over a small fire, but boiled [in water] over a large fire. See Wen Tingyun's *Caicha lu*, ZLCH, vol. 1: 51.

② Lugong 潞公 refers to Wen Yanbo, who was conferred the title “the Duke of Lu.” SS 29:313.10260–61.

③ See Lu Tong's poem, *Remonstrator Meng*.

Below is another poem composed by Su Shi in 1100 when he was about to move to Guangxi from Hainan Island:³⁷

蘇軾《汲江煎茶》³⁸Su Shi, *Brewing Tea by Drawing Water from the River*

活水還須活火烹 (-aeng) — — —	Boiling live water depends on live fire,	
自臨釣石取深清 (-aeng) (l) — — —	[I] have come to the fishing rock to draw water from the deep and clean [river].	
大瓢貯月歸春甕 (l) — — —	Water in the large ladle that holds the moon goes into the jar of spring;	
小杓分江入夜瓶 (-eng) — — —	water in the small ladle that divides the river goes into the bottle of night.	4
雪乳已翻煎處腳 (l) — —	The snowy milk [tea foam] has covered the boiling feet [i.e. uncovered surface].	
松風忽作瀉時聲 (-aeng) — — — —	[Water boiling and] spilling over suddenly makes the sound of wind blowing through the pine forest.	
枯腸未易禁三椀 ^① — — — —	[I could drink] three bowls while my stomach is yet to be filled,	
坐聽荒城長短更 ^② (-aeng) — — (—) —	sitting and listening to the [time-calling] clapper sounds in [this] deserted town.	8
	Imperfect rhyme or euphonic words: “烹, 清, 聲, 更” -aeng (<i>gengyun</i>); and “瓶” -eng (<i>qingyun</i>).	

① See Lu Tong's poem, *Remonstrator Meng*.

② This refers to the sound of informing people the time of day by clapping.

Neither poem was written in the heyday of Su Shi's political career. His time spent in Hangzhou was relatively comfortable; however, his life in Hainan (1097–1100), the southernmost part of the state, was beyond what Su and his colleagues could have imagined. Nevertheless, Su has been praised throughout history for his resilient spirit, as reflected in the two poems. In *Brewing Tea in the Exam Court*, metaphors and analogies such as pearls and snow allude to the tea-tipping practice, while the eyes of crabs and fish, and the wind in the pine forest to the water boiling. Su talks of “brewing tea” in the title of the poem, a Tang period practice. The historical reference alludes to the Tang tea mas-

ter Li Yue and the mid-Northern Song scholar-official, the Duke of Lu (Wen Yanbo). Why is Wen Yanbo mentioned in the poem? A Qing dynasty scholar Weng Fanggang provided some clues.³⁹ Wen and Su opposed Wang Anshi's reforms during Shenzong's reign, among which was a reform to the exam system.⁴⁰ Wang wanted to change the exam content from testing the candidates' literary ability to their knowledge of contemporary political issues.⁴¹ In another poem *Invigilating the Exams and Submitting [This] to Exam Officers (Jianshi cheng zhu shiguan)*, also written in 1072, Su criticizes the exam reform more overtly, expressing that he would rather sleep and forget about books.⁴² Weng's analysis astutely points out the implications of the reference to sleeping in the last line.

The other poem, *Brewing Tea by Drawing Water from the River*, is a very neat regulated poem highly acclaimed in Chinese literary history.⁴³ The poem presents a sense of loss and solitude. Su had been banished to Hainan Island by this point and was experiencing the most difficult time in his life, yet complaints and recriminations are absent from the poem. Instead, Su constructs an image of himself as a calm recluse by situating himself in a tea-drinking scene at night. The visual representations of the fire, fishing rock, water, moon, river, ladle, darkness of the night, snowy whiteness of the milky foam, and tea, harmonize with the auditory imagery of the wind through the pine forest (symbolizing boiling water) and the time-calling clapper. The long-ending sound of the rhyme, *-aeng*, also presents an acoustically lingering effect that implies an on-going narrative where Su still has remarks to make and stories to recount. Drinking tea at night has kept Su awake, and he would be awake for the long quiet night. Characteristically, Su Shi tends to be optimistic in the face of adversity. As the poem illustrates, his optimism takes the form of peace and serenity in the face of impending hardship.

Su Shi used tea to express his political viewpoints, reclusive inclinations, and signature optimistic spirit. Whether in the realm of officialdom or in withdrawal from the secular world, tea was not only an essential beverage to Su but also represented a particular set of cultural values and ideals. For scholar-artists like Su, these cultural values and ideals surrounding tea were not only their own

39 *Shizhou shihua* 3.167–68.

40 SS 11:155.3616–20. He Zhongli 2007, 185, 189–90, 195–96.

41 SS 11:155.3616–22. *Shizhou shihua* 3.167–68.

42 QSS 14:791.9159. *Shizhou shihua* 3.167–68.

43 Yang Wanli's *Chengzhai shihua*, 729. See also the comments of Qing dynasty scholars Wang Shihan and Ji Yun in *Sichuan Daxue Zhongwenxi Tang Song Wenxue Yanjiushi* 1994, 5:1851, 1979.

constructions, but also had an impact on them in return. Tea was inextricably woven into their lives and became intertwined with their identities.

3.3 *Exchanges among the Scholar-Artists*

The poems analyzed in this section demonstrate how the communities of scholar-artists were cemented through the exchange of tea and poems, through which a sort of verbal language was created and shared among themselves. The poems indicate the exchange process and tell us how the recipients responded to the gifts of poems and tea. The givers' values and perceptions about tea and life were confirmed, reiterated, consolidated, elaborated, and further interpreted and re-imagined in the recipients' responses.

Huang Tingjian wrote the first of the three poems discussed below to accompany a gift of tea that he sent to his mentor Su Shi. As far as can be ascertained, the poem was written on a certain day before the eighth of the second month of the Chinese lunar calendar in 1087:⁴⁴

黃庭堅《雙井茶送子瞻》⁴⁵ Huang Tingjian, *Presenting the Shuangjing Tea to Zizhan*
(*Su Shi*)

人間風日不到處 (-o) — — —	[At the place where] the wind and the sun of the mortal world cannot reach,	
天上玉堂①森寶書 (-o) — — — —	where the sacred books from the jade chamber of the immortal world lie around in a splendid disarray,	
想見東坡舊居士 — — —	[I] envisioned the old Householder of the East Slope [i.e. Su Shi]	
揮毫百斛瀉明珠 (-u) — — — —	wielding the brush with a hundred liters of ink, and pouring out bright pearls [of beautiful calligraphic works].	4
我家江南摘雲腴② (-u) — — — — —	The Sleek Cloud [tea] was harvested in my garden south of the River;	
落磴霏霏雪不如 (-o) — — —	snow is not as white as the powder [of the Sleek Cloud tea] fallen from the stone mortar.	
為君喚起黃州③夢 — — —	[May the tea] invoke your dreams of Huangzhou;	
獨載扁舟向五湖④ (-u) — — —	Sailing the boat, all alone, to the Five Lakes.	8

44 See also Egan's translations of the previous two poems (1994, 171–72).

45 QSS 17:984.11358.

(cont.)

黃庭堅《雙井茶送子瞻》

Huang Tingjian, *Presenting the Shuangjing Tea to Zizhan (Su Shi)*

Imperfect rhyme or euphonic words:

“書, 如” -o (yúyun 魚韻);

“珠, 腴, 湖” -u (yúyun 虞韻);⁴⁶ and

“處” -o (yùyun 御韻).

- ① *Yutang* 玉堂 refers to the jade chamber of the immortals on the one hand, and is an alias of the Northern Song Hanlin Academy on the other. Su Shi was an academician of the Hanlin Academy in charge of drafting royal decrees and important policies then.
- ② *Yunyu* 雲腴 literally means the sleekness of the cloud. Here it may denote a type of tea or describe its cloud-like whiteness.
- ③ Although Su Shi faced banishment to Huangzhou between 1080 and 1084, it was during this time that his literary production reached its height.
- ④ *Wuhu* 五湖, the Five Lakes, alludes to the tale of Fan Li. *Wu Yue chunqiu* 6.226.

Su Shi dispatched his response on the eighth day of the second lunar month:

蘇軾《黃魯直以詩饋雙井茶次韻為謝》⁴⁷Su Shi, *In Appreciation of the Gifts of the Poem and the Shuangjing Tea from Huang Luzhi (Tingjian), I Replied in the Same Rhyme*

江夏①無雙種奇茗

Unique tea bushes are planted in Jiangxia.

—|—|—|—|—|

汝陰②六一③誇新書 (-o)

The Six-ones (Householder) of Ruyin extolled [them] in his new book.

|—||—|—|—|

磨成不敢付僮僕

[I] do not dare entrust the ground [tea powder] to my servant,

|—|||—|

46 In the strictest sense, words from the rhyme group -o (yúyun 魚韻) did not rhyme with those from the rhyme group -u (yúyun 虞韻) during the Tang-Song periods. See Mei Zulin 2001, 3. However, they could be considered imperfect rhymes and shared very similar vowel sounds, at least to the ears of Tang-Song poets. Evidence of this is that the authors of the rhyme dictionaries argued vehemently to keep apart the two groups, implying that many contemporaries mixed up the two rhyme groups.

47 QSS 14:811.9388.

(cont.)

蘇軾《黃魯直以詩饋雙井茶次韻為謝》
 Su Shi, *In Appreciation of the Gifts of the Poem and the Shuangjing Tea from Huang Luzhi (Tingjian), I Replied in the Same Rhyme*

自看雪湯生瓊珠 (-u) — — — —	but I take it upon myself to watch the boiled water, as white as snow [i.e., tea], generating [bubbles like] pearls.	4
列仙④之儒瘠不腴 (-u) — — — —	The Confucian scholar amidst the immortals, is not plump, but thin and frail;	
只有病渴同相如⑤ (-o) — — —	Only [my] illness of thirst is the same as that of [Sima] Xiangru.	
明年我欲東南去 — — — —	Next year, I desire to go to the southeast.	
畫舫何妨宿太湖 (-u) — — — —	What does it matter having to spend nights aboard a painted boat on the Lake of Tai?	8
	Imperfect rhyme or euphonic words: “書, 如” -o (yúyun 魚韻); and “珠, 腴, 湖” -u (yúyun 虞韻).	

- ① A place located in what is now Hubei. In this context, it generally refers to an area in the southern part of the state. Huang Tingjian's *Shuangjing* tea was actually from Nanchang in Jiangxi, far away from Hubei Jiangxia.
- ② A county belonging to Yingzhou, covering areas in today's Fuyang of Anhui and Xincui of Henan.
- ③ “Six-ones Householder (Liuyi Jushi)” is an alias of Ouyang Xiu. He was the governor (*zhizhou*) of the commandery of Yingzhou and spent his retired life in Ruyin (a part of Yingzhou).
- ④ Sima Xiangru mentions immortals in his *Rhapsody of the Great Man (Daren fu)*. See *Hanshu* 57(xia).8b.
- ⑤ Sima Xiangru had an illness that caused him to feel thirsty constantly. *Hanshu* 57(xia).6b. This illness, similar to but not necessarily the same as diabetes, makes one weak, thin, thirsty, and hungry constantly. Hyperthyroidism can cause similar symptoms too.

Upon receiving Su's reply, Huang thanked Su with another poem, which elicited yet another reply from Su. These two latter poems, not quoted here, are mainly about Huang's eye problems.⁴⁸ Afterward, Huang replied with two more poems. The one included below is about tea:⁴⁹

48 Egan 1994, 172–73, 407, n8. Huang Tingjian's replying poem was, *Heda Zizhan* (QSS 17:984.11358). Then Su replied with *Ciyun Huang Luzhi chimu* (QSS 14:810.9384).

49 The other was *Zizhan yi Zixia Qiuming jianxi liaofu xida* (QSS 17:984.11358).

黃庭堅《省中烹茶懷子瞻
用前韻》⁵⁰ Huang Tingjian, *Missing Zizhan while Brewing Tea in
the Officers' Quarters, Using the Previous Rhyme Set*

閤門①并不落第二 —	The well at the central government office should rank second to none [in water quality].
竟陵②谷簾③定誤書(-o) — — —	Lu Yu's [high praises of] Gulian Creek must have been a mistake.
思公煮茗共湯鼎 — — — —	[I] think of you and [I] brew tea with water boiled in the cauldron.
蚯蚓竅生魚眼珠④(-u) — — —	The [water bubbles resemble] fish eyes, emerging [as though] from earthworm burrows. 4
置身九州之上腴(-u) — — —	In the most fertile land of the Nine States,
爭名燄中沃焚如⑤(-o) — — —	the fire of desire for fame was quenched.
但恐次山⑥胸壘塊⑦ — — —	[I am] afraid that the lumps of earth inside Cishan's chest [, which causes me anxiety,]
終便酒舫石魚湖⑧(-u) — — —	will eventually [be laid to rest only by imbibing on] 8 the beer boats on the Stone Fish Lake.
Same as the previous poem.	

- ① This refers to one of the central government offices responsible for rituals, banqueting, and courtly orders. *Mengliang lu* 9.76. As a high government official, Su Shi seemed to have an office where a well could provide water of the “best quality” for making tea.
- ② Lu Yu originated from Hubei Jingling.
- ③ Shuilian Creek, located in Kangwang Valley of the Mount Lu area. Cited in Zhang Youxin's *Jiancha shuiji*, Lu Yu ranked Shuilian Creek the best water. ZLCH, vol. 1: 35.
- ④ These were common terms in the Song period referring to the form of bubbles in the water at different temperatures.
- ⑤ *Fenru* 焚如, meaning “fire.” *Zhouyi* 3.20.
- ⑥ Cishan 次山 is an alias of Yuan Jie, a Tang poet and politician who helped subdue the An-Shi rebellions.
- ⑦ *Leikuai* 壘塊 literally means “lumps of earth.” *Shishuo xinyu* 5.178. Here it refers to the story of Ruan Ji, who claimed that his anxiety, which was metaphorically described as lumps of earth inside his chest, needed to be laid to rest by beer.
- ⑧ Jiufang Shiyuhu 酒舫石魚湖, the beer boats on the Stone Fish Lake. This phrase originates from Yuan Jie's poem *Song on the Stone Fish Lake (Shiyuhu shang zuige)*, QTS 1:242.611. Yuan describes that the big waves on the lake could not stop the boats from transporting beer. He was drinking to relieve anxiety. In Huang Tingjian's case, he was afraid that the tea was not powerful enough to help him relieve his anxiety, and he might need to resort to beer.

The scholar-artists' mutual exchanges not only set the fundamental poetic tone used in their circles but also determined how their disciples perceived tea. While Ouyang Xiu was Su Shi's mentor, Su also nurtured a group of disciples. Huang was prominent among them. Huang officially became Su's disciple in the first month of the year 1086. In that year, two of Su's famous political rivals, Wang Anshi and Sima Guang, died in the fourth and ninth months.⁵¹ Su was a Hanlin academician and was in charge of making recommendations for people to serve in the capital. Several of his disciples, including Huang, were appointed to the Palace Library in the tenth month of that year to compile the *Veritable Records of Shenzong's Reign* (*Shenzong shilu*).⁵² Those were the heydays of their political careers and the two maintained a close relationship. Since Su occupied a higher government position and was nine years senior to Huang, the forty-one-year-old Huang wrote the first poem with a rather flattering tone. It appears to be the case that Huang possessed a large store of *Shuangjing* tea from his hometown, as he frequently sent tea as gifts to many colleagues along with his poems. For a lower-ranking official, this was a traditional and common way of attracting the attention of superiors. Politeness and deference characterize the tone of the poem. At the same time, Huang also attempted to evoke Su Shi's thoughts of reclusiveness since Su's life in Huangzhou and the literary works he created there were so famous that Huang used them as a reference in the first poem. Su's reply echoed Huang. Eventually Huang reiterated the aspiration of reclusiveness in the final poem by alluding to Yuan Jie and Ruan Ji, who drank beer to relieve anxiety, whereas Su and Huang drank tea instead.

Through their several rounds of exchanges of poems, they came to a consensus about the artistic associations of tea. To the merchants, tea could help them make a profit; to the porters, tea was a soothing beverage; but to this group of scholar-artists (Su and Huang), tea could help quench the fire of desire, relieve anxiety and depression, and evoke solitary contemplation. They inherited these values from their mentors. In this case, Su inherited them from Ouyang and shared them with his disciple, Huang. Moreover, together, they opposed the drinking of beer in this context. If they drank it at all, they would do so only as a last resort. For different generations of scholar-artists, tea became the beverage *par excellence* to stay calm and peaceful and to foster artistic endeavors.

51 Gu Bai 1980, 67–70.

52 Gu Bai 1980, 67–70; Egan 1994, 170.

The sound elements of the poetic exchanges are fascinating.⁵³ In terms of the musicality of the three poems, they might appear on the surface to be regulated poems. In fact, they are all ancient-style poems. The first line of Huang's first poem, which uses three consecutive level-toned characters and then four consecutive oblique-toned characters, would have been unacceptable in any regulated poem.⁵⁴ However, the categories of the rhymes Huang uses in the first poem are phonetically similar (*yúyun* 魚韻 and *yúyun* 虞韻), although they do not belong to the same group.⁵⁵ These similar rhymes create a euphonic effect. The two groups of rhyming characters that Huang uses constitute an ABBAB rhyming pattern, which Su follows and is then repeated by Huang again. The poems present a unique melody when they are read aloud in sequence. Compared to poems exchanged between other scholars, such as the ones by Ouyang Xiu and Mei Yaochen,⁵⁶ where the same rhyme runs throughout, Huang and Su's poems are distinctive—peculiar even. More interestingly, although the poets could have adhered to the strict requirements of composing regulated poems, Huang and Su intentionally avoided doing so. The reason may be simply that Huang originally chose not to write a regulated poem; Su followed suit, and the two men kept this tacit understanding in place as they proceeded with their poetic discourse. Compared to Cai Jing's careful melodic resonation of the rhyme and tonal pattern of Huizong's poem in *Literati Gathering*, Huang and Su in this case demonstrated the opposite extreme.

Huang's initial gift of tea and poems, therefore, resulted in the several rounds of correspondence between him and his powerful mentor. Huang's tactic of demonstrating his friendship with Su and his literary ability was successful because he caught Su's attention and caused him to invest time and energy to reply with the same, peculiar but distinctive rhyming and euphonic pattern. This was not simple word play or jest,⁵⁷ but was intended as a way of forming a private poetic language. This private language would not remain a secret

53 While Ronald Egan offers interesting arguments about these poems (1994, 170), his analysis does not fully explore the sophistication of the rhyme pattern of the poems.

54 Huang was famous for his oppositional style ("aoti") and oppositional prosodic pattern in his poetry. I have revised David Palumbo-Liu's translation of *aoti* (unregulated style) to highlight the connotations of "ao." Huang's "ao" was to be opposite to the prosodic requirements. See Palumbo-Liu 1993, 134–35. See also Wang Li 1979, 63–71.

55 Mei Zulin 2001.

56 Ouyang Xiu sent Mei Yaochen the poem *Chang xinchang cheng Shengyu* (Mei Yaochen) in 1058 and Mei replied with the poem *Ciyun he Yongshu Chang xinchang zayan*. See QSS 6:288.3646 and QSS 5:259.3262.

57 See Zhou Yukai 1999; Egan 1994, 169–79.

between the two indefinitely. Eventually, it would be revealed to later generations for them to imitate. The scholar-artists reaffirmed their subscription to the values and attitudes inherited from their mentors by imitating their literary styles. Tea, along with the rituals and cultures surrounding it, was one vehicle by which these values and attitudes were passed down.

4 Aromatic Substances in Literary Works

Unlike tea, aromatic substances were comparatively rarely alluded to, and when they were, they lacked historical depth. The *xiangpu* and the practice of burning aromatic substances were widely disseminated in the Northern Song period. At about the same time, the scholar-artists' exchanges of aromatic substances and related literary works started to gain currency. Since the fragrance of burning aromatic substances would easily diffuse into the air, the scholar-artists and their peers needed to sit in relative proximity to the incense burner to enjoy the fragrance. The intimacy of the setting and shared olfactory experience further consolidated their sense of closeness and belonging within the groups. In addition to enjoying the fragrances together at gatherings, they would also send their favorite aromatic substances to their friends so that they could enjoy at their leisure. Huang Tingjian was one of the most famous scholar-artists known for his zealous love of aromatic substances. He initiated another round of correspondence with Su Shi on the subject of fragrances. These correspondences occurred in 1086 when Huang had just become Su's disciple, establishing their close relationship. Huang first sent two poems to Su:

黃庭堅《有惠江南帳中
香者戲贈二首》⁵⁸ Poem set Huang 1
Huang Tingjian, *Presenting in Jest Two Poems with A
Gift of the Canopy-scent from the South of the River*

百鍊香螺沉水① Incense [made of] whelk and aloeswood after a hun-
|| — — — | dred stages of refinement.

58 QSS 14:981.11342. The canopy-scent from the south of the River might be made with the "Method of Scenting the Canopy of Li Yu, Ruler of the South of the River" as mentioned in Chapter 1.

(cont.)

黃庭堅《有惠江南帳中
香者戲贈二首》 **Poem set Huang 1**
**Huang Tingjian, Presenting in Jest Two Poems with A
Gift of the Canopy-scent from the South of the River**

寶薰近出江南 (-om) — — —	A precious incense-burner recently from the south of the River.	
一縷黃雲繞几 — — —	A filament of yellow fume coils up from the table.	
深禪想對同參 (-om) — — — —	[I] envision [us] practicing deep meditation together.	4
1st poem	“南, 參” -om (<i>tanyun</i>).	
螺甲割昆侖耳② — — —	Black ear-shaped [raw scent material] from cutting out the <i>opercula</i> of whelks.	
香材屑鷓鴣斑③ (-aen) — — — —	Crumbs of scent timbers, spots of francolin's feathers.	
欲雨鳴鳩日永 — —	The rain is about to come; singing doves; long unending day.	
下帷睡鴨④春閑 (-aen) — — —	Curtain falls; sleeping ducks; spring of leisure.	4
2nd poem	“斑, 閑” -aen (<i>shanyun</i>).	

- ① Types of aromatic substances.⁵⁹ *Luo* 螺 refers to whelk or turban snail (*turbinidae*). *Chen-shui* 沉水, literally “sinking into the water,” refers to aloeswood here.
- ② *Luojia* 螺甲 means the *operculum* of a whelk; *kulun'er* 昆侖耳 refers to the black, ear-shaped *operculum*.⁶⁰ It is a raw material for making aromatic substances.
- ③ *Zheguban* 鷓鴣斑, literally, the spotted patterns [of the feathers of a] francolin, here it refers to a type of aromatic substance from Hainan.⁶¹
- ④ *Shuiya* 睡鴨 could mean literally a sleeping duck, or an incense burner in the shape of a sleeping duck.

59 *Xiangpu* 1.13. Cf. West 2017, 308, n78. “The *operculum* of a whelk was mixed with ‘lignum aloes, musk and various medicinal flowers.’ See Bernard Read, *Chinese Materia Medica: Turtle and Shellfish Drugs: Avian Drugs: A Compendium of Minerals and Stones Used in Chinese Medicine from the Pen-ts'ao kang-mu*, vol. 3, *Chinese medicine series* (Taipei: Southern Materials Center, 1977), 74–75.” See also West 2017, 138. For a picture of the turban snail and its operculum, see ZLBC 22.545–46. Yang Zhishui 2014, 54.

60 See Yang Zhishui 2014, 54–55.

61 See Yang Zhishui 2014, 54–55.

Then Su replied with two poems with matching rhymes:

蘇軾《和黃魯直燒香 二首》 ⁶²	Poem set Su 1 Su Shi, <i>Two Poems Resonating with Huang Luzhi on Burning Incense</i>
四句燒香偈子 — —	Four lines of <i>gathas</i> about burning incense
隨香遍滿東南 (-om) — — — —	got carried by the scent to spread all over the Southeast.
不是聞思所及 — —	[The incense is] not within reach of hearing and thoughts;
且令鼻觀先參 (-om) — — —	[but for the moment,] allow [my faculties of] 4 olfaction and vision to meditate first.
1st poem	
萬卷明窗小字 — —	Tiny characters in tens of thousands of books by the window
眼花只有爛斑 (-aen) — — —	dazzle the eyes with bright colors.
一炷煙消火冷 — —	A stick [of burning incense]; fume extinguishes; heat cools;
半生身老心閑 (-aen) — — — —	Half of life; body ages; mind unoccupied. 4
2nd poem	Rhyme schemes match the previous poems.

There followed two more poems by Huang about the canopy-scent (poem set Huang 2) and two others by Su about drinking beer and paintings (poem set Su 2).⁶³ Eventually, Huang replied with these two:

62 QSS 14:811.9387. The aromatic substance in this poem exists in the form of a stick, which is very much like the incense-stick used widely today.

63 The two sets of poems, which are not reproduced in this book, can be found in QSS 14:981.11342 and QSS 14:811.9387.

黃庭堅《子瞻繼和復
答二首》⁶⁴ **Poem set Huang 3**
Huang Tingjian, Two Poems in Reply to Zizhan's
Replies

置酒未容虛左 — —	It would not do to have no guests when beer is served.
論詩時要指南 (-om) — — —	A guide is needed when poetry is discussed.
迎笑天香滿袖 — — —	Smiling, [I] welcome with heavenly scent filling [my] sleeves
喜公新赴朝參 (-om) — — — —	[and I am] glad that you have newly assumed courtly rituals [i.e. back in power]. 4
1st poem	
迎燕溫風旖旎 — — —	Wind warm and gentle, welcoming swallows;
潤花小雨斑斑 (-aen) — — —	little dots of raindrops moistening flowers.
一炷煙中得意 — —	Enveloped in the fumes from a stick of incense and feeling pleased,
九衢塵裏偷閑 (-aen) — — — —	[I] snatch a moment of leisure from a life among the dust of Nine Avenues. 4
2nd poem	
Same as the previous poems.	

Although we have little direct evidence that Su loved aromatic substances, these poems cast him as a scholar-artist who enjoyed aromatic substances as much as any other. Regardless of his personal preference for or against the then popular aromatic substances, his scholar-artist peers, including his disciples, would just assume that he appreciated them. Through their literary construction, Su's image as a fragrance-lover was established and reaffirmed in the dissemination of the poems. Huang also associated the practice of burning aromatic substances with Buddhists, as the monks preferred meditating in a fragrance-filled setting. As for themselves, Su and Huang also appreciated Buddhist philosophy and maintained friendship with many Buddhists. Meditation, a symbolic act of removing oneself from worldly affairs, was a topic of con-

64 QSS 14:981.11342.

TABLE 4 Tonal patterns of the even-numbered characters of the five poem sets

Poem set	Huang 1	Su 1	Huang 2	Su 2	Huang 3
1st poem	鍊螺水	句香子	上人臭	酒逢沐	酒容左
	—	—	—	—	—
	薰出南	香滿南	生孔南	同北南	詩要南
	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —
	穉雲几	是思及	印嚴寂	復呼和	笑香袖
	— —	—	—	—	—
	禪對參	令觀參	必林參	牆是參	公赴參
	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —
2nd poem	甲昆耳	卷窗字	讀宗傳	青是世	燕風旒
	—	—	—	—	—
	材鷓斑	花有斑	章減班	石窺斑	花雨斑
	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —
	雨鳩永	炷消冷	以為俗	字還節	炷中意
	—	—	—	—	—
	帷鳴閑	生老閑	知要閑	行似閑	衢裏閑
	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —

versation they shared with the Buddhists. Like tea, aromatic substances were vehicles of the scholar-artists' values and perceptions.

The poems are ancient-style poems with four lines and six characters per line. The same is true of those that are not shown here. Huang and Su strictly followed the rhymes set in the initial poems. The tonal patterns of the poems are very interesting. Since each line has six characters, the tones of the even-numbered characters were critical, while the restrictions for the odd-numbered ones could be looser, the tones of all the even-numbered characters of each line are listed in Table 4.

We can easily see that the tonal pattern of poem set "Su 1" mostly follows that of Huang 1, except for slight variations in the last two lines of the first poem of Su 1. Huang 2 strictly follows the tonal pattern of Su 1; there is not a single character with a tone out of sync. Since Huang 2 is a replying poem set to Su Shi, Huang dedicated all of his efforts to align with the content and tonal pattern of Su 1. As Huang had just become a disciple of Su, he needed to demonstrate his literary abilities. Su 2 follows some, but not all, the tonal patterns of Huang 2 (with slight variations in the last line of the first poem and the first two lines of

the second poem). Huang 3 again spares no effort in following Su 2 and Su 1.⁶⁵ These tonal matchings were not a simple matter.⁶⁶ Fulfilling all the requirements of tone, rhyme, and diction in Chinese poetry has always proven very difficult. The diction has to be precise, and there should be no repetition. A word may fit the content but not the tone. Even if individual words fit both the content and the tone, they may not fit when they are put together into a phrase. When all these are taken care of, there is still the matter of rhyme. It is clear that, although some of the poems were titled in “jest” (*xizuo*), Huang and Su took their crafting very seriously.⁶⁷

Huang used these poems to strengthen his friendship with Su. This explains why he frequently sent tea, aromatic substances, and poems to Su. By demonstrating his literary abilities and creating opportunities to share sensory experiences with Su, he hoped to impress his mentor. Su, as a mentor and official superior to Huang, paid attention to his scholastic image. He portrayed for himself an image of someone who would prefer to remain aloof from politics and secular affairs, even though he never managed to carry it out in action. He described himself as fond of drinking tea, enjoying fine fragrances, meditating, and doing chores usually performed by servants (drawing water from the river and grinding tea). Su also approved of Huang’s artistic portrayal of himself. By matching Huang’s pre-designed content and logic about life, rhymes/euphonies, and tonal patterns in his responding poems to Huang, he projected a similar vision of life akin to Huang’s. It is no exaggeration to argue that it matters little whether Su was actually a great lover of tea or aromatic substances, as long as he maintained the appearance of appreciating them in his literary works, as was customary for scholar-artists in his time.⁶⁸ In 1086, the poems were a private matter between Su and Huang. However, following their publication alongside other literary works, the impression of how a scholar-artist behaved was publicly affirmed. The poems would then be read by their disciples and finally by generations of scholars. The exchanged messages, constructed images, projected imagination about the lives of scholar-artists, and the repeated tonal and melodic patterns would help tea and aromatic sub-

65 The tonal pattern of the first poem of Huang 3 follows the first poem of Su 2 because they all address the theme of beer drinking. The second poem of Huang 3 aligns with the second poem of Su 1 as both are about burning incense sticks (the second poem of Su 2 is about painting, so it is less relevant).

66 The matching of the tonal patterns and rhyme resonations is unlikely to be coincidental. We can compare the correspondences in these elements to the matching of the two poems by Huizong and Cai Jing on *Literati Gathering*.

67 Cf. Egan 1994, 169–79.

68 See how other scholar-artists’ images were constructed, Egan 1994, 305; 1997.

stances attain their unshakable status in the communities of scholar-artists, who would automatically seek association with the practices. Their preoccupation with tea and aromatic substances in their poetry would contribute to cementing these cultural practices as inextricably linked to the identity of scholar-artists in the Northern Song.

5 *Qin* in Literary Works

Not everybody was skilled at playing the *qin*, but scholar-artists often liked to be portrayed, at least, as aficionados of *qin* music. This section concerns literary works about playing the *qin* and appreciating its music. Whether written as a form of self-expression or a poetic exchange, these works demonstrate how the *qin* contributed to constructing the image of the scholar-artists.

No other body of literary works related to *qin* music attracted the participation of so many scholar-artists as the tradition that developed out of Ouyang Xiu's famous essay, *Note on the Pavilion of the Drunken Old Man* (*Zuiwengting ji*; hereafter *Note on the Pavilion*), and his friendship with a *qin* player about seven years his junior, Shen Zun.⁶⁹ By contributing their songs and poems about *qin* music and scenes of *qin* playing to this body of literary works, the participating scholars attempted to demonstrate their sophisticated understandings of *qin* music, even though they came from different generations and did not have any direct relationship with Ouyang Xiu and Shen Zun. The works they exchanged, shared, and then made public concerning the *qin* music built up a common understanding of the *qin* even though they did not necessarily have a chance to meet.

Ouyang Xiu wrote the famous *Note on the Pavilion* during his time of banishment in Chuzhou in today's Anhui. This was a low point in Ouyang's life, but a scholar-official, Shen Zun, who admired Ouyang so much that he visited Ouyang in Chuzhou, composed three movements of a *qin* melody, which he entitled "*Chant of the Drunken Old Man*." After Ouyang left Chuzhou and regained his authority and power, in 1055 he served as an emissary to the Khitan and in 1056 Ouyang wrote a song in the *Chuci* style recalling the story behind the *qin* music and Shen's friendship with him, which was already ten years old by then. The rhyme schemes of Ouyang Xiu's song were well-organized, and Ouyang probably intended to use clusters of euphonic ending words to

69 QSS 14:831.9627. For Shen Zun's life, see Wang Anshi's essay in QSW 65:1419.235. See also Zhang Meimei 2019, 80–83.

TABLE 5 List of literary works and musical pieces inspired by Ouyang Xiu's *Note on the Pavilion*^a

Name	Genre	Author	Date
<i>Note on the Pavilion</i> ^b	Essay	Ouyang Xiu	1046
<i>Chant of the Drunken Old Man (Zuìweng yín)</i>	<i>Qin</i> song, three movements, no lyrics	Shen Zun	1046–1055
<i>Chant of the Drunken Old Man, with Preamble</i> ^c	<i>Chuci</i> (<i>Song of the Chu</i>) style	Ouyang Xiu	1056
<i>Chant of the Drunken Old Man</i> ^d	<i>Chuci</i> style	Mei Yaochen	1056
<i>To Shen Zun, with Preamble</i> ^e	Song lyrics	Ouyang Xiu	1057
<i>A Song for Professor Shen</i> ^f	Song lyrics	Ouyang Xiu	1057
<i>To Professor Shen, the Deputy Magistrate of Jianzhou</i> ^g	Song lyrics	Mei Yaochen	1057
<i>Presented to Professor Shen, with Yongshu</i> (Ouyang Xiu)	Song lyrics	Liu Chang	1057
<i>Imitating Chant of the Drunken Old Man</i>	<i>Chuci</i> style	Wang Ling	1057–1059
<i>Preface to Chant of the Drunken Old Man</i> ^h	Essay	Ouyang Xiu	1070
<i>To the Tune “Qin Music for the Drunken Old Man,” with Preamble</i> ⁱ	<i>Qin</i> (<i>diaozi</i>) song lyrics	Su Shi	1082
<i>Written after To the Tune “Qin Music for the Drunken Old Man”</i> ^j	Essay	Su Shi	1092
<i>To the Tune “Qin Music for the Drunken Old Man”</i>	Song lyrics	Guo Xiangzheng	1092
<i>Preface to a poem</i> ^k	Essay	Huang Tingjian	1101
<i>To the Tune “Qin Music for the Drunken Old Man”</i> ^l	Song lyrics	Xin Qiji	Ca. 1189
<i>To the Tune “Qin Music for the Drunken Old Man”</i>	Song lyrics	Lou Yao	12th–13th century

a See Zhang Huaying 2013, 498, Table 5-15.

b QSW 35:739.115–16. For a translation of this essay, see Egan 1984, 215–17, “The Old Drunkard’s Pavilion.”

c QSW 31:663.136–37.

d QSS 5:257.3193.

e QSS 6:287.3633–34.

f QSS 6:288.3641.

g QSS 5:258.3229.

h QSW 34:718.93.

i QSS 14:831.9627.

j QSW 91:1974:54.

k QSS 17:1017.11600.

l QSC, vol. 3: 1939.

complement and construct a consistent melodic pattern. In the same year, Ouyang’s close friend Mei Yaochen also composed a song recalling Ouyang’s life in Chuzhou and Ouyang’s friendship with Shen Zun.⁷⁰ The structures of

70 QSS 5:257.3193.

the rhyme schemes and euphonic word groups of Ouyang's poems and songs cited in the table above are all well-organized, but none of them could fit into Shen's *qin* melody.⁷¹ The frequent changes in the rhyme schemes in Mei's lyrics reflect how difficult it is to compose rhymed lyrics that could both fit into the melody and express the lyricist's emotions.

In 1057, Shen was appointed the Deputy Magistrate of Jianzhou (*Jianzhou tongpan*), and Ouyang, Mei, and Liu Chang bade farewell to him. At his farewell party, Shen played the *Chant of the Drunken Old Man* again, and the three scholar-artists composed poems and songs for Shen. Ouyang and Mei were aging, and they all treasured the memory of the *qin*-gathering with Shen. In 1070, ten years after Mei passed away, Ouyang recalled the farewell party and wrote the *Preface to Chant of the Drunken Old Man*, describing the sequence of his songs concerning Shen's *qin* melody.

By 1082, Ouyang Xiu and Shen Zun had passed away, and Su Shi composed the lyrics for the melody, which Cui Xian, a Daoist from Mount Lu, notated, using the then popular *jianzipu* format.⁷² In the preamble, Su Shi recalled Ouyang and Shen's friendship built on their joint interest in the *qin* and noted that Ouyang's song lyrics did not fit the *qin* melody. Su also criticized others for trying to bend their lyrics to fit into Shen's *qin* melody. As a result, Su composed his new lyrics:

蘇軾《醉翁操·並
引》⁷³

Su Shi, *To the Tune "Qin Music for the
Drunken Old Man," with Preamble*

琅然① (-en)

Imposingly,

清圓 (-en)

distinctively, perfectly,

誰彈 (-an)

who plays?

71 QSS 14:831.9627.

72 QSS 14:831.9627.

73 QSS 14:831.9627. Since Zequan, Zhu Changwen, and probably their contemporaries who were *qin* educators, had disagreements about the definitions of *qin* melody categories (see Chapter 1), the "cao" in Su's title does not match with the "diaozi" format defined by Zequan. In this instance, we will adhere to Zequan's definition that Su's lyrics fit into the category of *diaozi*. Cui Xian also renamed the *qin* melody from "yín" to "cao" to highlight these differences. See also Zhang Meimei 2019, 95–97.

(cont.)

蘇軾《醉翁操·並引》		Su Shi, <i>To the Tune "Qin Music for the Drunken Old Man," with Preamble</i>	
響空山 (- <i>ean</i>) — —	Resonating in the empty mountains?	4	
無言 (- <i>on</i>) — —	Speechlessly,		
惟翁醉中知其天 (- <i>en</i>) — — — — — —	only the Old Man, while inebriated, knows heaven.		
月明風露娟娟 (- <i>en</i>) — — — —	The moon is bright, the wind and the dew mild and soft.		
人未眠 (- <i>en</i>) — —	Sleepless,	8	
荷簞②過山前 (- <i>en</i>) — —	carrying a bamboo basket [as he] passed by the hill;		
曰有心也哉此賢 (- <i>en</i>) — — —	[the basket carrier] said: How considerate is this wise man!		
〈第二疊泛聲同此〉	(The harmonics of the second movement are the same)		
醉翁嘯咏 (- <i>aeng</i>) —	The Drunken Old Man whistled and chanted,	12	
聲和流泉 (- <i>en</i>) — — —	the sound echoing with the running creek.		
醉翁去後 —	After the Drunken Old Man departed,		
空有朝吟夜怨 (- <i>on</i>) — — —	only laments remain, days and nights.		
山有時而童巔 (- <i>en</i>) — — — — —	Occasionally, the mountains are barren;	16	
水有時而回淵 (- <i>en</i>) — — — —	occasionally, the water returns.		
思翁無歲年 (- <i>en</i>) — — — —	The Old Man is remembered from year to year.		
翁今為飛仙 (- <i>en</i>) — — — — —	Now the Old Man must have become an immortal,		
此意在人間 (- <i>ean</i>) — —	leaving behind this affection in the mundane world.	20	

(cont.)

蘇軾《醉翁操·並引》 Su Shi, *To the Tune “Qin Music for the Drunken Old Man,” with Preamble*

試聽徽外兩三弦 (-en) Try to listen for the stringed [instruments]
|| — || — — beyond these *hui*-markers.

Imperfect rhyme or euphonic words: “然, 圓, 天, 娟, 眠, 前, 賢, 泉, 巔, 淵, 年, 仙, 弦” -en (*xianyun*);
“彈” -an (*hanyun*);
“山, 間” -ean (*shanyun*);
“言” -on (*yuányun*);
“咏” -aeng (*jingyun*); and
“怨” -on (*yuànyun*).

- ① See Ouyang Xiu's *Guitian lu* 2.24.
② It refers to a story of Confucius recorded in the *Analects* 7.67. The basket carrier described Confucius as a considerate and persevering man. Here the basket carrier thinks Ouyang the Drunken Old Man is as wise as Confucius.

The story of Ouyang and Shen's friendship and Shen's *qin* melody was probably widely circulated before 1082. As Ouyang and his essay *Note on the Pavilion* became more famous, so too did Shen's *Chant of the Drunken Old Man*. This explains why Cui Xian could play and notate Shen's melody. As Su Shi noted, there had been numerous attempts to compose suitable lyrics for the widely known *Chant of the Drunken Old Man* melody as these scholar-artists would want their names to be attached to the prestigious *qin* community centered on Ouyang.

The story, with its exciting plot and rich allusions, painted scholar-artists in a positive light. The story traces Ouyang's banishment and the way he subsequently regained his office, authority, and power. Shen features prominently in the story. He is portrayed as being kind to a desperate stranger and having the good fortune to befriend such a prominent figure, famed for his literary skill and moral rectitude. The story recounts how their friendship was built on mutual respect for one another's literary ability and esteem for each other's mastery of their respective arts (Ouyang's literary and Shen's musical abilities). Many scholar-officials have experienced political setbacks and banishment in Chinese history, and Ouyang's exile in Chuzhou must have been a source of comfort for them over the centuries. These scholar-officials would likely have found solace in Shen and Mei's lifelong friendship, which provided them with

a peer who truly understood and appreciated their scholarly and artistic abilities. In this light, Shen and Mei are exemplary figures. Ouyang, Mei, and Shen's friendship was also an outstanding model of narrative. The strength of the story lies in the fact that their relationship began at a low point in the scholar-artist's career, suggesting that the friendship was unsullied by ambitious agendas or sycophancy and was treasurable and likely to last. Shen's first acquaintance with Ouyang in Chuzhou defines one of the best versions of friendship. At the center of this web of relationship was Shen's *qin* music. Understandably, literary works that describe or are related to Shen's melody became very popular among the scholar-artists.

Su Shi was clearly one of the best lyricists among the group of scholar-artists who wanted to be associated with the community of Ouyang, Shen, and Mei. He devoted tremendous efforts to producing these lyrics. The emotions and narratives conveyed in the lyrics accord with those of Ouyang and Mei. The leading rhyme group Su uses is the *-en*, which connects most lines of the lyrics. The other ending characters are not randomly chosen, but are probably all euphonic words to the leading rhyme group. The format of Su's lyrics could well be an exemplary *diaozi* by the reckoning of the *qin* textbook by Zequan and others.⁷⁴ For example, the first line, "*langran*," generated two slow sounds, followed by the sounds from line 2 to the first character of line 5, "*qingyuan, shuitan, xiang kongshan, wu*," then the player and/or singer took a breath, and continued with the remaining character and line 6 "*yan, wei Weng*." Notably, most of the sounds are level tones.

For the lyrics that could accord with the *qin* melody and be cited by Zequan and others' *qin* textbook, Su's version could be sung well while the *qin* was played. Huang Tingjian once wrote that Su's lyrics were judged to accord with the *qin* melody.⁷⁵ Possibly singers of the time did not favor singing lyrics composed before Su's contribution. It was strange that Ouyang was claimed to be an excellent *qin* player, but no *qin* players and singers adopted his song lyrics and poems. This might reflect that composing lyrics for the *qin* melody (*diaozi* in this case) required a set of techniques significantly different from playing the *qin*. In a similar way, being an excellent piano player does not mean one can write good lyrics for piano music.

Although we do not know how well Su played the *qin*, he truly knew *qin* music and how to compose suitable lyrics. A *qin* lyricist faced complicated problems that writers of poems, songs, and *ci* did not have to manage. For

74 ZQHS, 55.

75 QSS 17:1017.11600.

example, a *ci* writer needed to attend to the content, tonal patterns, rhymes, and length of lines of each tune. On top of these, a *qin* (*diaozi*) lyricist needed to make his lyrics accord with the *qin* melody.⁷⁶ More challenging work was involved in writing the *qin* lyrics.

The lyrics composition trend lasted until the end of the twelfth century. Many other scholar-artists of later generations followed this trend of using Shen's melody to compose lyrics. Even Xin Qiji, a famous scholar-artist and general of the Southern Song, was involved in and composed lyrics related to the lore about Ouyang and Shen, using Shen's melody. Given all that we have described above, it is not surprising to see so many prominent scholar-artists embracing this musical and literary tradition centered around the *qin*.

76 How the *qin* song lyrics and melodies contributed to the composition of *ci* merits detailed exploration.

Conclusion

1 Summary

This book addresses the interrelated cultures of tea, aromatic substances, and music in the lives of the scholar-artists in the Northern Song period. The three practices—making tea, burning aromatic substances, and playing the *qin*—were all ephemeral artistic practices that left few records to interpret. By carefully integrating textual, material, and ethnographical evidence, and cross-referencing it with simulation experiments, we argue that the three types of ephemeral arts were cultural, economic, and artistic constructs of the scholar-artists.

Chapter 1 introduces the three cultures and illustrates how elites of the Northern Song engaged in them. The elites shared their sensory experiences when partaking of these, thus formulating similar values and shared perceptions. A detailed discussion of how tea was prepared in the Northern Song period is based on the results of tea preparation simulation experiments. We argue that the appreciation of the cultures of tea and aromatic substances became popular not only because they were effective health products, but also because they were cultural constructs favored by the scholar-artists. The chapter also introduces the important prosodic and melodic patterns of Chinese poetry to aid in discussing how the elites constructed music of the *qin* and poems.

Chapter 2 explains how the scholar-artists obtained the materials needed for the three types of cultures. It explores the economic and material networks of tea, aromatic substances, and the *qin*. Raw materials such as tea leaves, utensils, aromatic timber, and timber for making the wooden boards of the *qin* had to be acquired from regions distant from the metropolitan areas. The common acceptance of the materials by people from a broad social spectrum inside and outside the Chinese-speaking areas reflected that the governments of the time were incentivized to exert tight control over these industries. The difficulty in producing, transporting, and distributing these materials associated with the ephemeral arts made them rare and precious.

Chapter 3 delineates how the scholar-artists constructed their images in both textual and non-textual media. The scholar-artists used paintings and literary works to, explicitly or obliquely, project their participation in the three cultures and their shared ideal of living a reclusive life, fully detached from worldly strivings. By exchanging literary works, inheriting values from their mentors, and passing their beliefs on to their disciples, the scholar-artists

defined, re-defined, consolidated, and strengthened their common values, ideals, and perceptions among their friends, colleagues, and supporters, whether they were real-life acquaintances, or whether they were indeed fond of the practices.

2 The Formation of Scholar-Artist Communities

Having illustrated how the scholar-artists culturally, economically, and artistically constructed the three types of ephemeral arts, we now understand that a set of values and perceptions surrounding them were created and disseminated among social, political, and cultural groups. This set of values and perceptions would serve to link the different members of the group. The shared materials, sensory experiences, and ephemeral practices were part of the process of connecting the community.

Community formation was a process in constant flux. Its ever-changing essence also impacted the changing membership of the group. Members could maintain relatively solid relationships, such as those that existed between Ouyang Xiu, Su Shi, and Huang Tingjian or between Huizong and Cai Jing, but the bonds between members were not set in stone. Rather, individuals aspiring to join a certain group take steps to convince the group that they were of the same mind and spirit and would contribute to the community. Shen Zun's approach to Ouyang Xiu, who finally joined his group, exemplifies this.

The production processes of tea, aromatic substances, and *qin* defined the shape, size, color, smell, texture, and other features of the materials, thereby determining how the scholar-artists perceived them. At the same time, the scholar-artists' cultural, economic, and artistic choices also defined, in turn, how the materials should be produced. A circular process resulted, with the materials and the users, mutually shaping each other. Prior to the publication of the *Daguan Treatise*, tea bowls with a variety of glaze colors were popular among scholar-artists; however, the authors privileged the dark-glazed Jian ware. The scholar-artists' choices and the production of tea bowls thus constituted a mutually interactive relationship. In turn, the tea bowls, and other materials contributing to community formation, shaped the scholar-artists' tastes, and provided sources of perception and imagination for them to construct their images.

The five sensory experiences, and practices such as whisking the tea and plucking the silk strings of the *qin*, constituted other essential factors contributing to community formation. Very few scholars were aware of their power and potential; in fact, they created some of the most striking forces in changing the

formation of a community. The shared choices of the color of the tea foam, the taste of the tea, the sound of the *qin* and the melodies from reading aloud the poems, the smell of the burning aromatic substances, and the sensations of the fingers whisking the tea and plucking the strings—all these were the forces that connected community members when they found themselves in each other's company in a shared space, like sitting around a table at a literary gathering or relaxing in the cave depicted in *Mountain Villa*. Spatial proximity, similar ephemeral practices, and shared experiences provided scholar-artists with sources of imagination of how they were close to each other, both physically and mentally.

Rather than suggesting that people were influenced merely by unchanging social norms to form groups,¹ we have analyzed how the formation process provided standards, requirements, expectations, imagination, and inspiration to community members.² The scholar-artists, materials, sensory experiences, and ephemeral practices mutually shaped each other. The expectations and imagination generated from their interactions would inspire the next generation of scholar-artists to inherit or reject their values and perceptions. In any case, the bond between the scholar-artists within the group would be consolidated. Group identity was strengthened by constructing outsiders, such as members of inferior social rank (e.g., porters) and drinkers who liked adding salt and milk to their tea. The more outsiders they created, the more scholar-artists could distinguish themselves from others, and the more solid the bond among themselves became. The bond could, however, disintegrate rapidly. Community formation was also ephemeral.

Investigating the formation of the scholar-artist communities in the Northern Song enables us to probe several understudied issues in the history of Chinese art. We now better understand how the scholar-artists made and drank tea, burned aromatic substances, and generated euphonic melodies by playing the *qin* and reading their poems aloud, and what these ephemeral practices meant to them. These issues are also crucial to the political, economic, and cultural histories of the Northern Song as they reflect how governments, merchants, scholar-artists, and ordinary people were involved in the industries.

Their involvement in the cultural, economic, and artistic construction of the three types of practices prompted us to revisit another core issue of Chinese art history: the role of creativity in the scholar-artist communities. We have been obsessed with the idea of discovering individual creativity in the history

1 See Le Bon 1960, 79–116. Giddens 1984, 25.

2 Cf. Murck 2000, 28–50. Powers 2015, 364.

of art. Did the scholar-artists employ only their individual creativity in the three ephemeral arts, or did they launch their practices upon others' foundation, namely, were their practices results of collaborative creativity? Our analysis has revealed a common core of practices, experiences, and values that generated literary and artistic works with similar themes across regions and generations, so much so that it becomes necessary for us to reassess our emphasis on individual creativity and to give collaborative creativity the consideration that is its due. Collaborative creativity, in this context, does not mean a work produced by a group of artists working together, such as a painting created by multiple hands. It refers to the expression of creativity from a community of scholar-artists. It does not focus on the individuals and is not a conglomerate of creative inputs from all individuals. Collaborative creativity is the immediate result of the mutual interactions of all the creative productions of all the members in a community.

If the scholar-artists indeed lacked motivation and/or perhaps did not even participate in some of these activities, how can we ascribe individual creativity to them concerning these arts? We are not certain whether Su Shi really liked the smell of burning aromatic substances or whether he could play the *qin* well, even though he could write sophisticated poems about these arts. As we lack information about his motivation and actual participation in the two types of ephemeral arts, we cannot know about the degree of his individual creativity in these arts. We can also question whether the scholar-artists' participation in these arts sprang from their individual freedom and creativity or was primarily meant to fulfil the expectation and imagination of other community members. The scholar-artists, materials, sensory experiences, and ephemeral practices mutually shaped each other, so fixating on the idea of individual creativity ignores the interactive processes and contributions from peer members, materials, sensory experiences, and ephemeral practices. Unique and original personal expressions seem to be blurred in the community formation process.

Instead, we see how the exchanges of expressions, mutual interactions, and shaping of values and perceptions in the scholar-artists' literary works define the collaborative creativity of the communities. For example, the prescribed tea-tipping practice meant that the scholar-artists were performing the same, repetitive actions to achieve the ideal color of the tea foam. This is not to suggest that we should completely abandon the discourse of their individual creativity. Overemphasizing either collaborative or individual creativity would obscure our interpretations of the scholar-artists' physical and mental worlds. The concept of collaborative creativity will need to be addressed appropriately in art historical studies.

3 Methodological Reflections on the History of Art

The historical study of tea, aromatic substances, and *qin* music prompts us to revisit the methodologies adopted in the field of art history. First, we need to distinguish the different sources of evidence and be aware of the extent to which we can or cannot integrate them. Past studies of tea history often conflated evidence from literary works with that from tea texts; however, in this study, these types of evidence are separated into Chapter 1 and Chapter 3. In Chapter 1, we mainly rely on tea texts and argue that tea was a cultural construct, in contrast to tea as represented in artistic constructs discussed in Chapter 3. Not differentiating between the two incurs the risk of blurring reality and artistic representation.

This study also shows that simulation experiments and ethnographical studies can contribute greatly to art historical research on ephemeral practices. The ephemeral arts leave scant records, yet their sensory impact on people in the past and at present is likely comparable, thus we can use the results of simulation experiments and ethnographical studies as complementary references. Although we cannot completely reconstruct the sequence of actions, the ephemeral actions required in the tea-tipping practice in the Northern Song might resemble what we did in our experiments to some extent, allowing us to achieve a more holistic understanding of the tea-tipping practice. This proves to be a useful tactic in the study of ephemeral arts.

The approaches adopted in the study of poetry in this book also have further implications for studying the prosody of Chinese literature. We attain a deeper understanding of the poets' intended messages by taking into consideration the audial elements, such as the tonal patterns, *ping/ze* distinctions, and melodies of the poems. These factors are important in showing how a poet would construct his relationship with his correspondents, such as displaying respect to his superiors by resonating in the same rhyme schemes. Furthermore, we should not overlook the words intended for euphony; these, along with rhymed words, would have their euphonic and melodic patterns conveyed when read aloud. Along this line of thinking, the responding poems were not simply reiterations of the previous poets' messages, but they altogether were products of artistic construction through collaborative creativity among members of the scholar-artist communities. The resonations of the sound patterns were acoustic carriers of the scholar-artists' intended messages, showing how the members of different generations inherited and passed on values and perceptions. Ignoring these elements puts us at risk of overlooking an essential part of the thinking processes of the poets. In addition, the poems written for exchanges, echoes, and/or word play should not be discounted in the history

of literature, as long as they were sophisticatedly crafted. This book shows that poems written for these purposes were no less significant as evidence of the mental worlds of the scholar-artists.

Historians of literature may need to develop an awareness of the various types of evidence used in this book. To understand Northern Song poems about tea-making, cultivation and transportation of tea, the tea-tipping practice, and porters' lives are important clues leading us to explore the stories behind the writing of the poems. Postulating which methods of making tea the poet was describing can change how we understand the settings, scenarios, and contexts described in the poems. We cannot entirely rely on the poets' descriptions of tea-making methods that they did not necessarily endorse, because their bias could shape their narrative. Consulting and comparing other kinds of evidence prompt us to locate the historical background and realities behind the poems, which help us distinguish the poets' own favorite methods and their stereotyped objections to the practices of others. Filling out our knowledge of the social, cultural, and material backgrounds of the ephemeral arts can help us see more clearly the artistic creations that they inspired.

4 Impact on Contemporary Issues

The implications of our research inquiries in this book are not limited to the Northern Song period. They can shed light on how we think about contemporary issues, such as how people form or disintegrate groups in today's world. The far-reaching impact of Benedict Anderson's book, *Imagined Communities*, has compelled us to revisit the foundations of community formation in the modern world. We should be aware of other factors that contribute to the community formation process, including not just the people, but also materials, sensory experiences, and ephemeral practices. It is too easy to overlook these elements if we focus only on the internal world of human beings. Abraham Maslow's famous theory of human motivations puts self-actualization and psychological needs on top of the hierarchy of human motivations, while physiological needs are defined as "less prepotent" and less dominating. Eating ice cream to express the desire for love is important, as Maslow argues, whereas eating it "to cool the mouth" or as "a casual appetitive reaction" is deemed "relatively unimportant."³ These well-known theories are in need of re-examination given the rich evidence discussed in our study.

³ Maslow 1943, 392, also 372, 387–95.

In fact, as discussed in this book, the physiological aspects include the interplay of materials, sensory experiences, and ephemeral practices in community formation. They are not “less prepotent” or “unimportant;” rather, they are essential forces determining how a community forms and disintegrates. They constitute the perception basis of certain cultures, states, groups, and communities. Not acknowledging their power and potential will lead to disastrous consequences. For example, sensory experiences and ephemeral practices can alter how we perceive people. Fan Chengda criticized the local governments for not repairing the roads because he was physically not comfortable and unaware of the differences between the materials, sensory experiences, and ephemeral practices in his world and in the world of the porters. If we are unaware of these differences in other people’s worlds, we will easily allow our implicit, long-held assumptions to dictate our judgments of others. For example, will we judge others by the color and coarseness of their skin, their lingering odor, and seemingly rude manners and actions? These judgments are unfounded, yet how often do we fall prey to such erroneous steps of deduction from day to day? Were police officers implicated in George Floyd’s death in Minneapolis in the United States on May 25th, 2020, aware of the differences between their world and Floyd’s?⁴

Tragedies occur from time to time, but we learn that we should be aware of the differences between the people, materials, sensory experiences, ephemeral practices, and other factors that form our familiar community or distinguish ours from those of others. By becoming sensitive to these factors, acknowledging their potential and power, critiquing their impact upon us, and avoiding coming to baseless judgments about them shall we live a better life.

4 Klemko and Brady 2020.

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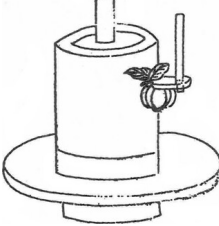

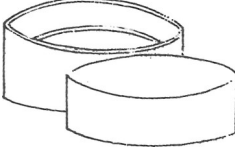

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Tea Utensils

Ancient illustrations after Shen'an Laoren's *Chaju tuzan* (ZLCH, vol. 1: 150–55). For a detailed study of the *Chaju tuzan*, see Zhu Xinyi 2014. Other images by Lau Kai-yiu.

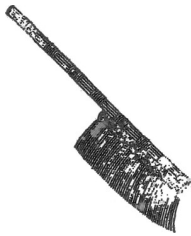
Utensils illustrated in the <i>Chaju tuzan</i>	Functions	Experiment utensils
 Crusher	Crushing tea leaves into powder	Not used in our experiments
 Grinder	Grinding tea leaves into powder	
 Sift	Sifting	

(cont.)

**Utensils illustrated
in the *Chaju tuzan***

Functions

Experiment utensils



Sweeping powder
left on the crusher
or grinder



Brush



Pouring water



Ewer



Whisking the tea
paste



Whisk



Containing the tea



Bowl

APPENDIX 2

Images of Water at Different Temperatures







Water at different temperatures. Top left: 50.1°C; top right: 79.0°C; bottom left: 92.7°C; bottom right: 97.5°C. All following images were made by Lau Kai-yiu and the author's team.

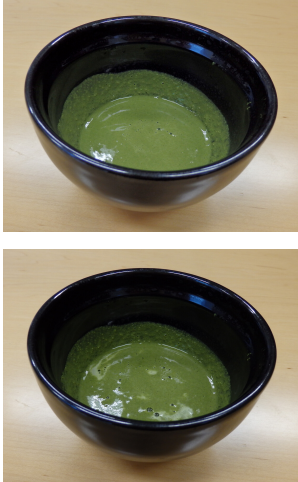


Process of One of the Simulation Experiments of Tea-Tipping

Procedure	Images	Notes
Tea leaves		Taking out the tea and avoiding the hands touching it.
Grinding		Using the mortar to grind the tea leaves into powder and obtaining 4 <i>qian</i> of powder, about 16 g.
Sieving and weighing		Sieving the tea powder and selecting the very refined powder.




(cont.)

Procedure	Images	Notes
Heating the water		Using hot water from a water-drinking machine. Beginning temperature is 85.3°C and the ending temperature 52.2°C.
Warming the bowl		Warming the tea bowl with hot water.
Depositing tea powder into the bowl		Depositing the tea powder into the bowl.
First round of tipping water into the bowl; infusing tea powder with water		Tipping hot water into the bowl and turning the infused tea into tea paste.

(cont.)

Procedure	Images	Notes
Whisking	 <p>(The above two images show the condition of the infused tea before whisking.)</p>	<p>Whisking the infused tea 70 times during 60 seconds after each time's tipping; 90-degree vertical whisking.</p> <p>Description in the <i>Daguan chalu</i>: 量茶受湯，調如融膠。環注盞畔，勿使侵茶。勢不欲猛，先須攪動茶膏，漸加擊拂，手輕筴重，指遶腕旋，上下透徹，如醇蘗之起麵，疏星皎月，燦然而生，則茶面根本立矣。</p>
Second round		<p>Tipping more water and whisking.</p> <p>Description in the <i>Daguan chalu</i>: 第二湯自茶面注之，周回一線，急注急止，茶面不動，擊拂既力，色澤漸開，珠璣磊落。</p>
Third round		<p>There are still bubbles and the foam has not formed completely.</p> <p>Description in the <i>Daguan chalu</i>: 三湯多寡如前，擊拂漸貴輕勻，周環旋復，表裡洞徹，粟文蟹眼，泛結雜起，茶之色十已得其六七。</p>

(cont.)

Procedure	Images	Notes
Fourth round		<p>Description in the <i>Daguan chalu</i>: 四湯尚蓄，筥欲轉稍寬而勿速，其真精華彩，既已煥然，輕雲漸生。</p>
Fifth round		<p>Description in the <i>Daguan chalu</i>: 五湯乃可稍縱，筥欲輕盈而透達，如發立未盡，則擊以作之。發立已過，則拂以斂之，結浚靄，結凝雪，茶色盡矣。</p>
Sixth round		<p>The foam is thicker and the action of whisking slows down. Description in the <i>Daguan chalu</i>: 六湯以觀立作，乳點勃然，則以筥着居，緩繞拂動而已。</p>

(cont.)

Procedure	Images	Notes
Seventh round		<p>Total amount of water used is 170 ml.</p> <p>Description in the <i>Daguan chulun</i>: 七湯以分輕清重濁，相稀稠得中，可欲則止。乳霧洶湧，溢盞而起，周回凝而不動，調之咬盞，宜均其輕清浮合者飲之。</p>

Length of Time, Whisking Frequency, and Angle of Inclination of Whisking

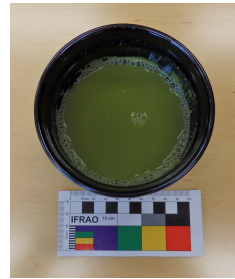
Various experiment settings

Results (after seven rounds' tipping water)

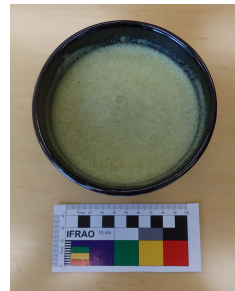
Reference experiment (whisking the infused tea 70 times during 60 seconds after each time's tipping; 90-degree vertical whisking; total amount of water used is 170 ml; water temperature 85°C)



Comparison experiment (30 times in 60 seconds each round; 90-degree; other criteria the same)

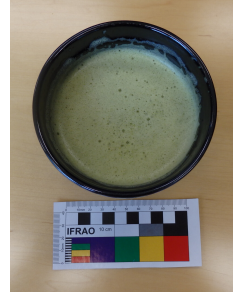


Comparison experiment (90 times in 60 seconds each round; 90-degree; other criteria the same)



*(cont.)***Various experiment settings****Results (after seven rounds' tipping water)**

Comparison experiment (70 times in 30 seconds each round; 90-degree; other criteria the same)



Comparison experiment (70 times in 90 seconds each round; 90-degree; other criteria the same)



Comparison experiment (70 times in 60 seconds, only one round; other criteria the same)



Comparison experiment (70 times in 60 seconds each round; 45-degree oblique whisking; other criteria the same)



Glossary

- ai, xue* 靄, 雪
An-Shi 安—史 (安祿山, 703–757; 史思明, 703–761)
Anhui 安徽
aoti 拗體
Baicha 白茶
baiduru 白督褥
Baihu renshen tang 白虎人參湯
bainaqin 百衲琴
Baiqintang 百琴堂
baiye 柏葉
banzaiche 般載車
Baofeng Qingliangsi 寶豐清涼寺
Bazheng san 八正散
Beijing 北京
Beijing Palace Museum 故宮博物院
Beiyuan 北苑
Bencao shiyi 本草拾遺
Bo Yi 伯夷 (active late Shang)
boshanlu 博山爐
Cai Jing 蔡京 (1047–1126)
Cai Xiang 蔡襄 (1012–1067)
Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133–192)
Canton/Guangdong 廣東
cao 操
Cao Taihou 曹太后 (d. 1079)
Cao Zhi 曹摭 (active 11th century)
Caocha 草茶
caonong 操弄
cha 茶
Chang xinchang cheng Shengyu 嘗新茶
呈聖俞
Changsha 長沙
chanoyu 茶の湯
Chaozhou 潮州
Chazhong zayong—zhucha 茶中雜
詠·煮茶
Chen Cangqi 陳藏器 (ca. 687–757)
Chen Jing 陳敬 (active Southern Song)
Chen Pengnian 陳彭年 (961–1017)
Chen Shiwen 陳師文 (fl. 1110)
Chen Yang 陳暘 (1064–1128)
Cheng Yujian 成玉礪 (active 1111–1117)
Chengdu 成都
chenxiang 沉香
Chongan 崇安
Chongning 崇寧
Chongyang Creek 崇陽溪
Chuci 楚辭
Chunlei 春雷
Chuzhou 滁州
ci 詞
Ciyun he Yongshu Chang xinchang zayan
次韻和永叔嘗新茶雜言
Ciyun Huang Luzhi chimu 次韻黃魯直
赤目
Cizhou 磁州
Confucius 孔子 (ca. 551–ca. 479 BCE)
Cui Xian 崔閑 (active 11th century)
Cui Zundu 崔遵度 (954–1020)
dacao 大操
Daguan 大觀
Dahongpao 大紅袍
Dalongfengcha 大龍鳳茶
Dangyang Yuquan 當陽玉泉
danzhuye 淡竹葉
Daoshuikeng 倒水坑
Darenfu 大人賦
Dasheng 大晟
Dashengyue 大晟樂
dian 點
diancha 點茶
diao 調
diaozi 調子

- dihuang* 地黃
dim sum 點心
ding 鼎
 Ding Du 丁度 (990–1053)
 Ding Wei 丁謂 (966–1037)
 Dingzhou 定州
 Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555–1636)
Dong Qichang xingcao shu lin Songsijia juan 董其昌行草書臨宋四家卷
dongyun 東韻
doucha 鬥茶
 Du Ruhui 杜如晦 (585–630)
 Duanwu 端午
duo shi zuo xin 多士作新
 Fan Chengda 范成大 (1126–1193)
 Fan Li 范蠡 (ca. 536–448 BCE)
 Fan Zhen 范鎮 (1008–1089)
 Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989–1052)
fang 方
 Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (579–648)
Feng ru song 風入松
Feng ru song ge 風入松歌
fengzhao 鳳沼
fu 敷
 Fujian 福建
 Fujita 藤田
fuling 茯苓
Fushen tang 茯神湯
futanmu 傅檀木
 Fuyang 阜陽
 Fuzhou 撫州
 Fúzhou 福州
fuzi 附子
gan 甘
 Gan River 贛江
gancao 甘草
gang 綱
 Genghis Khan 成吉思汗 (1162–1227, r. 1206–1227)
gengmi 粳米
gengyun 庚韻
 Genyue 艮岳
ginseng 人參
gong, shang, jue, zhi, yu 宮商角徵羽
gongfucha 功夫茶
gouqi 枸杞
 Guan 官
guan 貫
 Guangxi 廣西
 Guangzhou 廣州
Gucao shierzhang 古操十二章
 Guilin 桂林
Guizhi tang 桂枝湯
 Guo Xiangzheng 郭祥正 (1035–1113)
guqin 古琴
guchenban 古欖板
 Hainan 海南
han 寒
 Hangzhou 杭州
Hanjiao 漢椒
 Hanlin Academy 翰林院
hanyun 寒韻
 Hebei 河北
Heda Zizhan 和答子瞻
 Henan 河南
 Hong Chu 洪芻 (ca. 1064–?)
 Hongzhou 洪州
 Houzhu 後渚
hua 滑
hua tu you xi 畫圖猶喜
 Huang Binhong 黃賓虹 (1865–1955)
 Huang Ru 黃儒 (active 11th century)
 Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045–1105)
huangjing 黃精
huangshu 黃熟
 Huangzhou 黃州
huashigang 花石綱
 Hubei 湖北
hui 徽
huiwei 徽位

- huiyun* 灰韻
 Huizong 徽宗 (1082–1135, r. 1100–1125)
Hujiao 胡椒
 Hunan 湖南
 Immortal of Tea (Chaxian) 茶仙
 Ji Yun 紀昀 (1724–1805)
 Jian Creek (Jianxi) 建溪
 Jian'an 建安
 Jiangsu 江蘇
 Jiangxi 江西
 Jiangxia 江夏
jiangzhenxiang 降真香
 Jian'ou 建甌
Jianshi cheng zhu shiguan 監試呈諸試
 官
 Jianyang 建陽
Jianzhan 建盞
Jianzhou tongpan 建州通判
jianzipu 減字譜
 Jiaoran 皎然 (active 8th century)
Jiaowei 焦尾
Jiaoyinfa 交引法
Jieshidiao Youlan 碣石調·幽蘭
jiezhou 節奏
 Jin 金
jin 斤
 Jingdezhen 景德鎮
 Jingling 竟陵
jingyun 敬韻
Jingzhe 驚蟄
jinshi 進士
jiu 酒
Jiude song 酒德頌
 Joined Calm Palace 會寧殿
 Juyue 居月 (active Northern Song)
juju 絕句
 Kaifeng 開封
 Kaiyuan 開元 (713–741)
 Kangwang Valley 康王谷
ke 渴
kucai 苦菜
Kumu longyin 枯木龍吟
 Lake Tai (Taihu) 太湖
lamiancha 蠟面茶
langran 琅然
 Lantian 藍田
 Lei Jue 雷鈺 (active 8th–9th century)
 Lei Wei 雷威 (active 8th–9th century)
 Lei Xiao 雷敦 (active 5th century)
 Lei Yan 雷儼 (active 8th–9th century)
Leiqin 雷琴
li 里
li 兩
 Li Gang 李綱 (1083–1140)
 Li Gonglin (Longmian) 李公麟 (龍眠)
 (ca. 1049–1106)
 Li Mian 李勉 (717–788)
 Li Yu 李煜 (937–978)
 Li Yue 李約 (active 8th century)
 Li Zehou 李澤厚
liang 兩
liangcha 涼茶
Liangfu yin 梁甫吟
lianzi 蓮子
Lienü yin 列女引
 Liu Chang 劉敞 (1019–1068)
 Liu Ling 劉伶 (?–ca. 300)
 Liuyi Jushi 六一居士
longchi 龍池
longdanxiang 龍涎香
Longmian shanzhuang tu 龍眠山莊圖
longnaoxiang 龍腦香
 Longquan 龍泉
longyao 龍窯
 Lou Yao 樓鑰 (1137–1213)
 Lou Ze 樓則 (active 8th–9th century)
 Lu Fayan 陸法言 (active 581–617)
 Lu Deming 陸德明 (ca. 550–630)
 Lu Tong 盧仝 (?–835)
 Lu You 陸游 (1125–1209)

- Lu Yu 陸羽 (ca. 733–805)
 Luoning 洛寧
Lushiqin 路氏琴
 Lü Buwei 呂不韋 (?–235 BCE)
 Lü Dazhang 呂大章 (active 11th century)
lücha 綠茶
lüshi 律詩
 Ma Heng 馬衡 (1881–1955)
 Ma Hezhi 馬和之 (active 12th century)
Mantingfang—cha 滿庭芳·茶
mantouyao 饅頭窯
matcha 抹茶
 Mawangdui 馬王堆
 Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣 (1002–1060)
 Meng Yuanlao 孟元老 (active 12th century)
 Mengding 蒙頂
 Method of Fumigating the Imperial Garments of the King of Shu (*Shuwang xun yuyi fa*) 蜀王薰御衣法
 Method of Scenting the Canopy of Li Yu, Ruler of the South of the River (*Jiangnan Lizhu zhangzhongxiang fa*) 江南李主帳中香法
 Mi Fu 米芾 (1051–1107)
 Min River 閩江
ming 茗
Mingyi bielü 名醫別錄
 Mount Jing 荊山
 Mount Lu 廬山
 Mount Shou 首山
 Mount Tai 泰山
 Mount Tiantai 天台山
 Mount Wuyi 武夷山
 Muzhou 睦州
 Nanchang 南昌
 Nanping 南平
 Nanxundian 南薰殿
 Neiguidong 內鬼洞
nong 弄
 Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072)
 Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 (557–641)
paotong 泡桐
paozhi 炮製
 Penglai 蓬萊
 Pengzhou 彭州
 Pi Rixiu 皮日休 (active 9th century)
piancha 片茶
pin 品
ping/ze 平仄
ping, shang, qu, ru 平上去入
pingsheng 平聲
 Puer 普洱
qian 錢
 Qian Chu 錢俶 (929–988, r. 948–978, see Zhongyi)
qianxiang 馥香
 Qidong Tangjiayao 祁東唐家窯
qin 琴
 Qin Guan 秦觀 (1049–1100)
qing qing fu he 輕清浮合
qing qing gan jie 清輕甘潔
 Qingli 慶曆
Qingming 清明
Qingming Shanghe tu 清明上河圖
qingyuan, shuitan, xiang kongshan, wu 清圓，誰彈，響空山，無
qingyun 輕雲
qingyun 青韻
qu 曲
 Qu Yuan 屈原 (active 4th–3rd century BCE)
 Quanzhou 泉州
queshe guli 雀舌穀粒
qusheng 去聲
 Quzhou 衢州
re 熱
 Renzong 仁宗 (1010–1063, r. 1022–1063)

- Rizhu 日鑄
rounian 揉捻
 Ru 汝
 Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210–263)
rudian 乳點
ruwu 乳霧
rusheng 入聲
ruxiang 乳香
 Ruzhou 汝州
Ruzi fang 孺子方
 Ryūkōin 龍光院
 Sage of Tea (Chasheng) 茶聖
sancha 散茶
se 瑟
 Seikadō 靜嘉堂
 Shaanxi 陝西
 Shamen 沙門
shanchang 山場
 Shandong 山東
shang 商
 Shang-Zhou 商-周
 Shangrao 上饒
shangsheng 上聲
shan 杉
shanyun 刪韻
 Shao Buyi 邵不疑 (*jinshi* degree 1038)
 Shaoxing 紹興
shaoyao 芍藥
shaqing 殺青
shashen 沙參
 Shen Gua 沈括 (1031–1095)
 Shen Li 沈立 (1007–1078)
 Shen Zun 沈遵 (active 1040s–1060s or 1070s)
shengjie 生結
 Shenzong 神宗 (1048–1085, r. 1067–1085)
Shenzong shilu 神宗實錄
shexiang 麝香
 Shi Ruli 石汝礪 (active Northern Song)
- Shiba xueshi xiezhen tu* 十八學士寫真圖
shidafu 士大夫
shierlü 十二律
shigao 石膏
Shihuo zhi 食貨志
Shiyuhu shang zuige 石魚湖上醉歌
Shizhi 食治
 Shouyang 首陽
 Shōsō-in 正倉院
 Shu 蜀
 Shu Qi 叔齊 (active late Shang)
Shuangjing 雙井
 Shuiji 水吉
shuijiao 水腳
 Shuilian 水簾
 Shunchang Jiulongshan 順昌九龍山
 Sichuan 四川
 Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086)
songfeng 松風
 Song Yu 宋玉 (active 3rd century BCE)
 Songsijia 宋四家
 Su Che 蘇轍 (1039–1112)
 Su Shi 蘇軾 (1036–1101)
 Sun Jianxing 孫建興
 Sun Mian 孫愐 (active 8th century)
 Sun Shujing 孫叔靜 (1042–1127)
 Sun Simiao 孫思邈 (581–682)
suwen xieyan 粟文蟹眼
 Suzhou 蘇州
 Taipei Palace Museum (National Palace Museum) 國立故宮博物院
 Taiping Xingguo 太平興國
 Taizong (Song) 太宗 (939–997, r. 976–997)
 Tang Shenwei 唐慎微 (active 11th century)
 Tang Taizong 唐太宗 (598–649, r. 626–649)

- Tang Xuanzong 唐玄宗 (685–762, r. 712–756)
- Tang Yi 唐異 (active 11th century)
- tanxiang* 檀香
- tanyun* 覃韻
- Tao Gu 陶穀 (903–970)
- Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456–536)
- Tao Qian 陶潛 (365–427)
- Tao Tang 陶唐 (legendary/ancient figure)
- Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀 (ca. 1315–ca. 1412)
- Tea-Horse Agency 茶馬司
- Temple of Dharma Doors 法門寺
- Temple of Dharma Kings 法王寺
- Tian Zizhi 田紫芝 (active Northern Song)
- Tianfeng Haitao* 天風海濤
- Tingqin tu* 聽琴圖
- Tong Guan 童貫 (1054–1126)
- Tongcheng 桐城
- tu* 茶
- tuhao* 兔毫
- Tuo Tuo (Toqto'a) 脫脫 (1314–1355)
- Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–1086)
- Wang Ling 王令 (1032–1059)
- Wang Renxu 王仁昫 (active 7th–8th century)
- Wang Shen 王詵 (ca. 1038–ca. 1104)
- Wang Shihan 汪師韓 (1707–?)
- Wang Shixiang 王世襄 (1914–2009)
- Wang Shuhe 王叔和 (active 3rd century)
- Wang Tao 王燾 (670–755)
- Wang Xianzhi 王獻之 (344–386)
- Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303–361)
- Wanqintang 萬琴堂
- wei* 味
- Wei Hanjin 魏漢津 (?–1105)
- weidiao* 菱凋
- weiqi* 圍棋
- weiyun* 微韻
- wen* 文
- Wen Tingyun 溫庭筠 (ca. 812–ca. 866)
- Wen Tong 文同 (1018–1079)
- Wen Yanbo 文彥博 (1006–1097)
- Weng Fanggang 翁方綱 (1733–1818)
- Wenhui tu* 文會圖
- Wenjun nong* 文君弄
- Wenwang cao* 文王操
- Wenxueguan 文學館
- wenzipu* 文字譜
- woyun* 沃韻
- wulong/oolong* 烏龍
- wutong* 梧桐
- wuxian yidiao zhong* 無絃一調中
- wuxian yiqu zhong* 無絃一曲中
- wuxian yiyin zhong* 無絃一引中
- wuyun* 霧雲
- xiang* 香
- xiāng, yao, xi, xiàng* 香藥犀象
- xianglu* 香爐
- xiangpu* 香譜
- Xianlielu Huanghuagang 先烈路黃花崗
- xianshu* 弦數
- xianxiang* 線香
- xianyun* 先韻
- xiaocaonong* 小操弄
- Xie Zhiliu 謝稚柳 (1910–1997)
- Xin Qiji 辛棄疾 (1140–1207)
- Xincai 新蔡
- Xiong Fan 熊蕃 (active late Northern Song)
- Xixin san* 洗心散
- xizuo* 戲作
- Xu Bangda 徐邦達 (1911–2012)
- Xu Youren 許有壬 (1286–1364)
- Xuanhe 宣和
- Xuanhua 宣化
- xueshi* (academician) 學士

- xunlu* 熏陸
Xushi 敘史
Ya Xian 崖縣
Yan Liben 閻立本 (?–673)
yan, wei Weng 言, 惟翁
Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿 (709–785)
Yanfugong quyanji 延福宮曲宴記
yang 陽
yang kui di shen 仰窺低審
Yang Wanli 楊萬里 (1127–1206)
Yang Zongji 楊宗稷 (1863–1932)
Yang Zuyun 楊祖雲 (active Northern Song)
yanggu huaxiang 岩骨花香
Yangzi River (Yangzijiang/Changjiang) 揚子江/長江
yanyun 鹽韻
Yanzhou 嚴州
Yaozhou 耀州
Yazhou 雅州
Ye Qingchen 葉清臣 (1000–1049)
Ye Tinggui 葉廷珪 (*jinsi* degree 1115)
Yellow Emperor 黃帝 (legendary/ancient figure)
Yelu Chucai 耶律楚材 (1190–1244)
Yichun 宜春
yīn 陰
yín 吟
yǐn 引
yín zhi cao shang 吟徵操商
yín zhi diao shang 吟徵調商
yín zhi nong shang 吟徵弄商
yín zhi yǐn shang 吟徵引商
Yingzhou 穎州
yiqiang erqi 一槍二旗
yiqiang yiqi 一槍一旗
Yiyang 宜陽
Yiyun he Shao Buyi yi yu zhi pengcha
guanhua tingqin zhi hui 依韻和邵
 不疑以兩止烹茶觀畫聽琴之會
yong 詠
Yongzhou 永州
youdi 油滴
You Yu 有虞 (legendary/ancient figure)
yōhen tenmoku 曜變天目
Yuan Jie 元結 (719–772)
yuányun 元韻
yuànyun 願韻
Yuelü 樂律
Yulinting 遇林亭
yumcha 飲茶
yumu xieyan 魚目蟹眼
yunbu 韻部
yunshu 韻書
yúyun 魚韻
yíyun 虞韻
yùyun 御韻
yùyun 遇韻
Yuzhou Baisha 禹州白沙
Zaoxia tong 竈下桐
Zeng Zao 曾慥 (1096?–1155)
Zequan 則全 (?–1045)
zesheng 仄聲
Zhancheng (Champa) 占城
Zhang Kuangzheng 張匡正 (d. 1058)
Zhang Min 章岷 (*jinsi* degree 1027)
Zhang Wenzao 張文藻 (d. 1074)
Zhang Youxin 張又新 (active 814–846)
Zhang Yue 張越 (active early Tang)
Zhang Zeduan 張擇端 (1085–1145)
Zhang Zhongjing 張仲景 (active 2nd century)
Zhangzong (Jin) 金章宗 (1168–1208, r. 1189–1208)
Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322)
Zhao Ruli 趙汝勵 (active 1127–1189)
Zhao Xihu 趙希鵠 (1170–1242)
Zhao Yeli 趙耶利 (active before 638)
zheguban 鷓鴣斑

- Zhejiang 浙江
 zheng 箏
 Zhenghe 政和
 Zhengshan xiaozhong 正山小種
 Zhenjiang 鎮江
 Zhennü yǐn 貞女引
 Zhenzhong fang 枕中方
 Zhenzong 真宗 (968–1022, r. 997–1022)
 zhi 徵
 zhifa 指法
 zhimu 知母
 Zhipan 志磐 (active 13th century)
 zhīyun 支韻
 zhǐyun 紙韻
 zhìyun 寘韻
 zhizhou 知州
 zhong 重
 Zhongling water 中冷水
 Zhongyi, King 忠懿王 (Qian Chu)
 Zhou Mi 周密 (1232–ca. 1298)
- zhoumian 粥面
 Zhu Changwen 朱長文 (1039–1100)
 Zhu Jiajin 朱家潛 (1914–2003)
 Zhu Quan 朱權 (1378–1448)
 Zhu Tan 朱檀 (1370–1390)
 Zhu Yunming 祝允明 (1460–1526)
 Zhu Zaiyu 朱載堉 (1536–1611)
 Zhuang Chuo 莊綽 (1078–?)
 zhuanyun shi 轉運使
 Zhuge bi 諸葛筆
 zhuyu 茱萸
 zicao 紫草
 zi 梓
 Zizhan yi Zixia Qiuming jianxi liaofu
 xida 子瞻以子夏丘明見戲聊覆戲答
 Zoubi xie Meng jianyi ji xincha 走筆謝
 孟諫議寄新茶
 Zuiweng yin 醉翁吟
 Zuiwengting ji 醉翁亭記

Index

Page numbers in **bold** refer to illustrations. Page numbers followed by a *t* refer to tables. The Northern Song period is not indexed as the whole text is about this period.

- ABBAB rhyming pattern 157
absolute pitches 56–57
Academy of Literacy and Learning (Wen-xueguan) 19
actor-network theory (ANT) 6
adhesive rehmannia root tuber (*dihuang*)
 33–34
-aeng rhyme group 151
agency 6–7
ai, xue (“mist and snow”) 38
alcohol 17, 20, 85, 139
 see also beer
allusions, in literary works 132, 143, 147–148
aloe wood *see* tambac
ambergris (*longdanxiang*) 48, 54, 111
Anderson, Benedict 10, 176
ANT (actor-network theory) 6
Anthology of Chicken Ribs (Jilei bian) (Zhuang Zhuo) 12
Anthology of Mr. Liang Xi (Li Gang) 93
appreciation
 of aromatic substances 2, 42, 49, 50, 51, 135, 161, 171
 of *qin* music 58–59, 66, 70–71
 of tea 27, 32–33, 36, 42, 151–152, 156–157, 171
 see also popularity
Arcane Essential Prescriptions from the Imperial Library (Waitai miyao fang) (Wang Tao) 28, 30
armed forces, provisioning of 89–90
aromatic substances
 as addition to tea 41, 47, 86
 applications of 54–55
 appreciation of 2, 42, 49, 50, 51, 135, 161, 171
 burning of
 containers 54
 fragrance of *see under* fragrance
 fumigation and 53–54
 gathering protocols and 11, 65
 as insect repellents 53, 65
 religion and 49
 see also incense burners
 geographic sources of 109–110
 government control of 111–112
 identification of 49–50
 import of 3
 interrelatedness and *see* tea, aromatic substances and *qin* music
 material evidence of 48
 medical use of 49, 50, 51, 52
 mixing of 52
 in paintings *see under* paintings / murals
 in poetry *see under* poetry
 preservation / processing of 52, 111, 172
 raw materials related to 5
 recreational use of 50, 51
 in Shōsō-in collection 48, 49, 60
 sources on
 medical texts 49, 52
 xiangpu genre 47–48, 50, 52, 55, 109–110, 111, 158
 see also *Xiangpu*
 status of 51, 55, 163–164
 taxation / taxes on 112
 trade routes for 110
 transportation of 110, 122
 value of 111–112
 see also under specific substances
artistic constructs 4–5, 27, 128, 135, 138–139, 142, 143, 148, 151–152, 161, 171–172, 173, 175
Bainaqin (“*qin* of hundreds of pieces”) 115
Baiqintang 116/121
baiye (Chinese arborvitae twig and leaf) 83, 85
banzaiche (carts) 122–123
barbary wolfberry fruit (*gouqi*) 83
beer 17, 146, 147, 155–156
Beijing Palace Museum 21, 22–23, 134–135, 135–139, 139
Benn, James 27, 40/77

- Bo Yi 147
Book of Music (Yueshu) (Chen Yang) 69
Book of the Qin (Qinshu) (anon.) 21, 119
boshanlu (incense burner) 52–53
Brewing Tea by Drawing Water from the River
 (Su Shi) 150, 151
Brewing Tea (Chazhong zayong) (Pi Rixiu)
 21
Brewing Tea in the Exam Court (Su Shi)
 148–149, 150–151
 bribery 93, 95
 bronze bells 56–57
 Buddhism / Buddhists
 aromatic substance burning practices of
 48–49, 161
 depicted on scrolls 134–135, 138
 monastery gardens 87–88
 tea drinking and 27
 see also Zequan
 “bun-shaped kilns” (*mantouyao*) 103
 Bush, Susan 8
- Cai Jing
 aromatic substances and 111
 calligraphic work of 19, 24n27, 132
 Huizong and 12, 14, 17–18, 132–133, 172
 on large force of officials 94
 on luxury items 13
 musical theory and 57
 poetry of
 on *Listening to the Qin* 20–21, 25, 74,
 129–132, 133
 on *Literati Gathering* 17, 18–20, 74,
 128, 130, 133
 as scholar-artist 8–9
 tea and 12, 91–92, 93–94, 95–97
- Cai Xiang
 on additions to tea 41, 47, 86
 on *Dalongfengcha* 47
 on ewers 44
 as fiscal commissioner 88
 inventing tea brand 88, 98
 on medical qualities of tea 28
 as scholar-artist 8
 on tea bowls 34, 42–43
 on tea color 38–39
 on tea contests 36n70, 38
 on water temperature 34, 35, 39
- Cai Yong 21, 115
- calligraphy 19, 24n27, 132
Camellia sinensis see tea
 camphor (*longnaoxiang*) 41, 48, 51, 55n125,
 86
 candles, scented 54
 Canton (Guangdong) 28n42, 77, 109, 110,
 121, 122
 Cantonese 110
cao (*qin* melody) 64, 65, 71, 73, 129–132,
 166n73
 see also *caonong*
 Cao Taihou, Empress Dowager 64
 Cao Zhi 64–65, 71, 74, 129, 132
Caocha (tea brand) 80
caonong (*qin* music category) 65, 129–130,
 132
 see also *cao*, *dacao*, *xiaocaonong*
Capital (Marx) 92
 carts 122–123
 ceramics
 transportation of 122
 see also tea bowls, tea utensils
cha see tea
chanoyu (tea ceremony) 2
Chant of the Drunken Old Man (Mei Yaochen)
 165–166, 165t
Chant of the Drunken Old Man, with Preamble
 (Ouyang Xiu) 164, 165t
Chant of the Drunken Old Man (Zuiweng yin)
 (Shen Zun)
 in general 164, 165t, 168
 Su's lyrics to 166–168
 Chen Cangqi 115–116
 Chen Jiejin 17
 Chen Jing 48
 Chen Pengnian 72–73
 Chen Shiwen 30, 52, 86
 Chen Yang 69
 Cheng Yujian 64, 71, 129
Cheng Yujian's Treatise of the Qin (Cheng
Yujian qintun) 64
chenshui 159
chenxiang (tambac) 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54,
 109, 110
 China-fir wood (*shan*; cunningghamia) 61,
 113–114, 114t, 116
 Chinese arborvitae twig and leaf (*baiye*) 83,
 85
 Chinese catalpa wood (*zi*) 113–114, 114t, 120

- Chinese parasol wood (*wutong*) 21, 113–114, 115, 120
- chromatic scale 56–58
- Chuci* (Qu Yan or Song Yu) 146
- Chunlei* (“Spring Thunder”) *qin* 116, 133
- Chuzhou 164, 165, 168, 169
- Cishan 155
- Classic of Tea (Chajing)* (Lu Yu) 1, 27–28, 40, 42, 145
- Classified and Collected Materia Medica (Zhenglei bencao: Chongxiu Zhenghe jingshi zhenglei beiyong bencao)* (Tang Shenwei et al.) 28, 30, 31, 49, 111, 115–116
- clothing, fumigation of 54
- coastal glehnia root (*shashen*) 30, 31–32, 99
- coffin boards (*guchenban*) 115–116
- collaborative constructs 11
- Collected Rhymes (Jiyun)* (Ding Du et al.) 72, 74
- common monkshood daughter root (*fuzi*) 84
- communities
- formation of 6–11, 172–177
 - imagined 10, 176
 - see also *qin* communities, scholar-artist communities
- Compendium of Song Dynasty Government Documents (Songhuiyao jigao)* 86–87
- Comprehensive Anthology of Books about the Qin (Qinshu daquan)* 63, 117–118
- Comprehensive Collection of Essays of the Song Dynasty (Quan Songwen)* 12
- Comprehensive Examination of Literature (Wenxian tongkao)* 97
- Confucianism / Confucianists 18, 134, 138, 154
- Confucius 168
- constructs see artistic constructs, collaborative constructs, cultural constructs, economic constructs, political construct
- copper 144, 146
- creativity 10–11, 173–174
- crowd psychology 6
- Cui Xian 166
- Cui Zundu 65, 66
- cultural constructs 4–5, 32–33, 51, 55, 56, 65, 70–71, 98, 99, 171, 173, 175
- cunninghamia wood (China-fir; *shan*) 61, 113–114, 114f, 116
- dacao* 65
- see also *caonong*
- Dalongfengcha* (Large Dragon-phoenix Tea) 47, 88, 98
- Daoism 24n27, 26–27, 48
- Daoshuikeng Canyon 76, 78
- diabetes 154
- diancha* 33, 36
- see also tea-tipping process
- diao* (*qin* melody) 129, 130
- diaozi* (*qin* melody) 64, 65, 71, 129, 130, 131, 166n73, 169–170
- dictionaries of rhymes (*yunshu*) 71–73
- dihuang* (adhesive rehmannia root tuber) 34–34
- Ding Du 72
- Ding Wei 47, 88, 98, 147
- see also *Legends of the Heavenly Aromatic Substances (Tianxiang zhuan)*
- dove’s feather patterns (*zheguban*) 102
- “dragon kilns” (*longyao*) 102, 103, 104, 105, 107, 108
- Driem, George van 27
- drying techniques 31, 82, 84, 85
- Du Ruhui 19
- Daguan Treatise* see *Treatise of Tea during the Daguan Reign (Daguan chalu)*
- Dunning, T.J. 92
- Ebrey, Patricia 94–95
- economic constructs 4–5, 97, 98, 99–100, 109–110, 173
- Egan, Ronald 27, 148
- en rhyme group 169
- encore, in *qin* music 65, 74
- ephemeral actions / practices
- in general 3–4, 5, 142–143, 171–172
 - community formation and 9–11, 128, 172–174
 - hand movements 67
 - historical research on 175
 - qin* playing and 68
- Essential Prescriptions Worth A Thousand Tael of Gold (Qianjin yaofang)* (Sun Simiao) 29–30
- Essential Records of Tasting Tea (Pincha yaolu)* (Huang Ru) 81–82
- Essential Records of the Qin Garden (Qinyuan yaolu)* 63, 64, 119

- euphony
 of *qin* music 4, 21
 in tonal patterns 26
 words / rhymes and 71, 146, 147, 150, 153,
 154, 157, 163, 164, 166, 168, 169, 175
see also imperfect rhymes
- ewers 36, 44–45, 46, 100
- exam systems 151
- Expanded Rhymes (Guangyun)* (Chen Peng-
 nian) 72–73, 74, 133
- experiments *see* tea-tipping process
- export, of tea 98–100
- “eyes of fish and crabs” 34–35, 39, 148, 150
- Fan Chengda 114, 123, 126, 177
- Fan Li 153
- Fan Zhongyan 65–66, 143–148
- Fang Xuanling 19
- Feng ru song (qin melody)* 21, 25n32, 131
- fenru* 155
- fertilizers 79
- Fifty-two Prescriptions (Wushier bingfang)*
 31, 82
- finger techniques 67–70
- Finger Techniques of Tian Zizhi* 67
- Finger Techniques of Yang Zuyun* 67
- Five Pitches 73, 131
- Floyd, George 177
- food, medicine and 29–30
- formation, use of term 7n26
see also under communities, ephemeral
 actions / practices, scholar-artist com-
 munities
- Four Tone Registers 73
- Fozu tongji* (Zhipan) 64n65
- fragrances
 of aromatic substances
 in general 47
 appreciation of 50, 51, 135
 ephemerality of 3–4
 generation of 2–3
 as a construct 4
Listening to the Qin and 133–134
 of tea in the mouth 39–40, 41, 42,
 47
see also aromatic substances
- francolins 159
- frankincense (*ruxiang*) 2, 48, 49, 109,
 112
- Freer Gallery collection (Washington, D.C.)
 60, 62
- friendships 164–166, 168–169
- fruits 17
- Fujian area
 ewers from 45, 46
 map of 77
 road conditions in 124
 tea bowls from 2, 43
 tea contests in 36n70, 38
 tea cultivation in 76, 78, 79
 tea farmers / laborers in 87
 tea from 75
 tea-tipping practices and 39
- Fujian Provincial Museum 43, 45, 46, 104
- fumigation, of clothing 54
- futanmu* (sandalwood) 120
- fuzi* (common monkshood daughter root)
 84
- gan* (“lingering sweetness after bitterness”)
 39, 40
- geography 121
- Giddens, Anthony 6, 7, 8
- gold 118–119
- gouqi* (barbary wolfberry fruit) 83
- government
 aromatic substances and 111–112
Expanded Rhymes and 74, 133
 expenditure of 94
 herbal medicines and 86
 offices responsible for rituals, banqueting
 etc. 155
 taxes *see* taxation / taxes
 tea policies of
 in general 88–91
 export of tea and 98–100
 product differentiation and 96–97
 reforms of 90, 91, 94–96
 tea gardens and 88
 tea revenues and 91t
 tea trade centers and 89, 90, 95
 vouchers issued by 90
- “grain patterns and crabs’ eyes” 34, 38
- Grand Canal 106, 121, 122, 123
- green tea 2, 33, 86
- Guangdong (Canton) 29, 77, 109, 110, 121,
 122
- Guangxi 49, 77, 109, 114, 121, 122, 149

- Guangzhou 2, 101, 112
guchenban (ancient coffin boards) 115–116
 Gulik, Robert H. van 62
- Hainan Island 47, 110, 150, 151
 Hangzhou 76, 110, 112, 150
 Hanlin Academy 153, 156
 “hare’s fur” patterns (*tuhao*) 34, 42–43, 43, 102
 harmony 71
 Harrist, Robert 8, 134
 health benefits, of drinking of tea 1, 26, 27–28
 heating techniques 84–85
 “Heavenly Wind, Sea Waves” (*Tianfeng Haitao*) *qin* 116
 “heaven’s eyes” pattern (*yōhen tenmoku*) 2, 102
 heaviness or substance (*zhong*) 39, 40, 42
 Hebei 102, 140–141, 141
 Henan 53, 81–82, 121, 140–141
 herbal medicines
 different functions of same 83
 preservation of
 in general 31, 82
 compared to tea 83–86
 government authorization of 86
 as substitutes for tea 27–30, 31
 see also medicines
- History of the Song Dynasty (Songshi)* 57–58, 65, 66, 80, 81, 92, 94–95
 Hoh, Erling 27
 Hong Chu 48, 51, 52, 53
Hongzhou Shuangjing (tea brand) 80, 88
 horses 98–99, 123
 hot energy (*re*) 27, 29, 30
hua (smoothness) 39, 40, 42
 Huang Binhong 21224
 Huang Jie 24227
 Huang Ru 81–82
 Huang Tingjian
 Buddhism and 161
 Hong Chu and 48
 Ouyang Xiu and 7–8
 poetry of
 on aromatic substances 10, 158–159, 161–164
 on tea 152–153, 155, 157
 tonal patterns in 162–163, 162t
- Su Shi and 7–8, 152, 156, 163, 172
 on Su Shi’s lyrics 169
 tea gardens of family of 88
huangjing (Siberian Solomon’s seal rhizome) 85
huangshu (“yellow and mature”) 49, 50, 110
 Huangzhou 152–153, 156
hui-markers 61, 70, 118–119
 Huizong, Song Emperor 22
 books of *see Treatise of Tea during the Daquan Reign*
 Cai Jing and 12, 14, 17–18, 132–133, 172
 Daoism and 23227
 finger lengths of 57
 paintings attributed to *see Listening to the Qin, Literati Gathering*
 poetry of, on *Literati Gathering* 18, 19–20, 128, 130
qin collection of 116
 as scholar-artist 8–9
 tea and
 construction of tea culture 12, 45, 47, 108–109
 favored by 75
 reform policies of 91–92, 93–94, 95–97
- Hunan area 31, 123, 124
 hyperthyroidism 154
- I Lo-fen 17, 128
 illegal trading 92–93, 95, 112–113
Imagined Communities (Anderson) 176
 imperfect rhymes 146, 147, 150, 153, 154, 168
Imperial Pharmacy (Taiping Huimin Hejiju fang) (Chen Shiwen et al.) 28, 30, 52, 111
In Appreciation of the Gifts of the Poem and the Shuangjing Tea from Huang Luzhi, I Replied in the Same Rhyme (Su Shi) 154
 incense burners 23, 24, 53, 54, 100, 101, 160
Intoning the Same Rhymes, Resonating with Shao Buyi, After the Rain, Gathering of Brewing Tea, Viewing Paintings, and Listening to the Qin (Yiyun he Shao Buyi yi yu zhi pengcha guanhua tingqin zhi hui) (Mei Yaochen) 13, 25–26
Invigilating the Exams and Submitting [This] to Exam Officers (Jianshi cheng zhu shiguan) (Su Shi) 151

- jade 118–119
 Jian ware 42–43, 43, 104, 172
 Jian'an White Tea 33, 75, 76, 98, 108, 122
 Jiangxi area 76, 80, 87, 88, 123, 124, 154
jiangzhenxiang (rosewood) 48, 49, 120
Jianzhan see Jian ware
jianzipu (music notation) 67–69, 70, 166
 Jiaoran (monk) 21
Jiaowei (“Scorched-tail”) *qin* 115
Jiaoyinfu (method of submitting vouchers) 90
jiezou, use of term 64n165
jiu, use of term 17n10
Jiude song, Quan Jin wen (Liu Ling) 146–147
 Joined Calm Palace 13
- Kaifeng 81, 115
 Khitans 140–141
 kilns
 ancient 103–104, 105, 106, 107–108, 107, 108
 distribution of 102
 modern day 106–107, 106
 “*Kumu longyin*” (“Withered Wood, Dragon’s Roar”) 60, 62
- lacquer 60–61, 117–118
lamiancha (wax-surfaced tea cakes) 85, 97
 landscapes / gardens
 in *Listening to the Qin* 142
 in *Literati Gathering* 20, 142
 in *Painting of the Villa in the Longmian Mountain* 142
 see also tea gardens / plantations
- Large Dragon-phoenix Tea (*Dalongfengcha*) 47, 88, 98
 Latour, Bruno 6, 8
 Le Bon, Gustave 6
Legends of the Heavenly Aromatic Substances (*Tianxiang zhuan*) (Ding Wei)
 in general 47
 on appreciation of fragrance 49
 aromatic substance burning practices 48–49
 on geographic sources 109–110
 on identification of aromatic substances 49–50
 incorporation in Hong’s *Xiangpu* 48
- Lei family (*qin*-makers) 59, 119, 120–121
 Lei Wei 116
 Lei Xiao 31, 50, 52, 83–86
 see also *Master Lei’s Treatise on Drying and Processing*
leikuai 155
Leiqin (*qin* made by Lei family) 59–60, 133
 Li Gang 93
 Li Gonglin 9, 134–135, 135–137, 138, 141, 142, 173
 Li Mian 115
 Li Yue 149, 151
 Li Zehou 148
lianzi (lotus seeds) 30
 “light clouds” (*qingyun*) 38
 “lingering sweetness after bitterness” (*gan*) 39, 40
Listening to the Qin (*Tingqin tu*) (Huizong attrib.) 22–23
 aromatic substances on 25, 133–134
 authenticity of 21n24
 authorship of 21, 24
 dating of 21, 24, 25n30
 iconography of 24–25
 landscapes / gardens in 142
 li container in 24n27, 25, 53
 poetic colophon on 20–21, 25, 74, 129–132, 133
 qin music / instruments on 22–23, 24–25, 133
 sequence of activities in 129
 tea preparation, *qin* and fragrance in 25
 tea utensils in 142
- literary constructs see artistic constructs
 literati, use of term 8
Literati Gathering (Huizong attrib.) 15–16
 attribution 14, 17
 dating of 17, 20, 25n30
 description of 14, 16–17
 landscapes / gardens in 20, 142
 poetic colophons on 17–20, 74, 128, 130, 133
 political agenda of 128–129
 qin music / instruments on 14, 16
 sequence of activities in 16–17, 25
 tea in 14, 15–16, 16–17, 20, 25
 tea utensils in 142

- literati gatherings
 incense burning in 142–143
 on paintings *see Listening to the Qin, Literati Gathering, Painting of the Villa in the Longmian Mountain*
 political importance of 132
 sequence of activities in 13, 16–17, 25, 65, 129, 142
 sequence of *qin* melodies in 64, 65, 131–132
 sequence of tea serving in 25–26, 133
 tea preparation and drinking in 139–140, 142–143
- literature
 allusions in 132, 143, 147–148
 aromatic substances in *see under* poetry
 poetry
qin music / instruments in
 in lyrics *see* lyrics
 of Ouyang Xiu 164, 165*t*
 tea in *see under* poetry
- Liu Chang 165*t*
 Liu Jingmin 110
 Liu Ling 145–146
 Loehr, Max 8
longdanxiang (ambergris) 48, 54, 111–112
longnaoxiang (camphor) 41, 47, 49, 51, 55, 112, 5, 86
longyao (dragon kilns) 102, 103, 104, 105, 107, 108
 loose tea (*sancha*) 97
The Lore of the Chinese Lute (Gulik) 62
 lotus design 53, 54
 lotus seeds (*lianzi*) 30–31
 Lou Ze 119
 Lu Deming 19
 Lu Fayan 72
 Lu Tong 145–147, 149, 150
 Lu Yu
 on enriching tea with other flavours 40
 on health benefits of tea 27–28
 promoting tea 32
 on tea utensils 42
 on water quality 35, 155
 on water temperature 34
see also Classic of Tea
- Lugong (Duke of Lu) 149
luo (whelks) 159
luojia (*operculum* of a whelk) 159
Lushiqin (Mr. Lu's *qin*) 116
 luxury items 13, 26, 88, 109
 lyrics to *qin* melodies 165*t*
 difficulties in 169–170
 singing of 169
 of Su Shi 165*t*, 166–168, 169
see also poetry
- Ma Heng 21*n*24
 Mair, Victor 171*n*0, 27
mantouyao (“bun-shaped kilns”) 103
 map, of Southern China 77
 Marx, Karl 92
 Maslow, Abraham 176
Master Lei's Treatise on Drying and Processing (Leigong paozhi lun) (Lei Xiao) 31, 34, 52, 82, 83–86, 111
matcha 2
Materia Medica see Classified and Collected Materia Medica
 measurement units 57
 medical texts 28–29, 31, 47, 49–52, 82–83
 medicines
 aromatic substances as 49, 50, 51
 food and 29–30
see also herbal medicines
 meditation 161–162
 Mei Yaochen 13, 25–26, 157, 165–166, 165*t*, 169
 melodies
 in poems 74, 175
see also qin melodies
- Meng Yuanlao 122
Mengding (tea brand) 80
 Mi Fu 9
 microtones 70
see also tones
 “milky fog” (*ruwu*) 38
 millet 57
Miscellaneous Notes from the Guixin [Street (Guixin zazhi)] (Zhou Mi) 122
Missing Zizhan while Brewing Tea in the Officers' Quarters, Using the Previous Rhyme Set (Huang Tingjian) 154, 155
 “mist and cloud” (*wuyun*) 37
 “mist and snow” (*ai, xue*) 38
Monk Juyue's Qin Production (Seng Juyue qinzhi) 117–118, 119

- Monk Zequan's Phrasings and Finger Techniques* (*Zequan Heshang jiezou zhifa*) 64, 129
- Mount Wuyi area 76, 78, 87, 104, 122, 123, 124
- Mountain Villa* see *Painting of the Villa in the Longmian Mountain*
- Mr. Lu's *qin* (*Lushiqin*) 116
- music see *qin* music
- musical notations 63
see also *jianzipu*, *wenzipu*
- musk (*shexiang*) 41, 48, 50, 51, 52, 55ⁿ25
- Nanchang 123, 154
- National Palace Museum (Taipei) 14, 15, 16, 24ⁿ27
see Taipei Palace Museum
- Neiguidong Canyon 76, 78
- nomadic people 1–2, 89, 98–99
- nong* (*qin* melody) 129, 130, 131
see also *caonong*
- Note on A Banquet in the Extended Blessings Palace* (*Yanfugong quyan ji*) (Cai Jing) 13
- Note on the Pavilion of the Drunken Old Man* (*Zuiwengting ji*) (Ouyang Xiu) 164, 165^t, 168
- Note on Three Qin* (*Sanqin ji*) (Ouyang Xiu) 119
- Notes by Dream Creek* (*Mengxi bitan*) (Shen Gua) 116
- o rhyme group 153ⁿ46
- oil-drop patterns (*youdi*) 102
- On the Outer City* (*Shuofu*) (Tao Zongyi) 12
- oolong* tea see *wulong* / *oolong* tea
- Ouyang Xiu
in general 154
essay of 164–166, 165^t, 168
Fan Zhongyan and 66
Huang Tingjian and 7–8
on *hui*-markers 119
on *Leiqin* 59
Mei Yaochen and 157, 165–166, 169
qin playing by 10, 65, 169
on reforms 91
Shen Zun and 164–166, 168, 169
- Su Shi and 7–8
on water quality 35
ownership, of tea gardens 87–88
- Painting and Private Life in Eleventh-century China* (Harrist) 134
- Painting of A Literati Gathering* (*Wenhui tu*)
see *Literati Gathering*
- Painting of Listening to the Qin* (*Tingqin tu*)
see *Listening to the Qin*
- Painting of the Riverside Scenes in the Qingming Festival* (*Qingming Shanghe tu*) (Zhang Zeduan) 138–139, 138, 139, 142
- Painting of the Villa in the Longmian Mountain* (*Longmian shanzhuang tu*) (Li Gonglin) 134–135, 135, 136–137, 138, 141, 142, 173
- paintings / murals
aromatic substances in
in general 142–143
of Li Gonglin 134–135, 138
Listening to the Qin 25, 133–134
of Zhang Zeduan 139
- qin* music / instruments in
Listening to the Qin 22–23, 24–25, 133
Literati Gathering 14, 16
- tea in
in general 142–143
of Li Gonglin 134–135, 135, 136–137, 138
Literati Gathering 14, 15–16, 16–17, 20, 25
tomb of Zhang Kuangzheng 140–141, 141, 142
of Zhang Zeduan 138–139, 138, 139, 142
- Palace Museum (Beijing) see Beijing Palace Museum
- paozhi* (processing techniques) see preservation / processing
- Pengzhou rebellion (Sichuan, 1077) 87, 93
- Pi Rixiu 21
- Pian, Rulan Chao 66–67, 68
- piancha* (tea cakes) 97
- pin* (*qin* melody) 64
- pin* (*song*) 25, 40
- pine wind (*songfeng*) 20–21, 25, 131, 148, 150–151
- itches 56–57, 63, 70, 73, 131

- poetic colophons
 on *Listening to the Qin* 20–21, 25, 74,
 129–132, 133
 on *Literati Gathering* 17–20, 74, 128, 130,
 133
- poetry
 aromatic substances in
 in general 158
 by Huang Tingjian 158–159, 161–164
 by Su Shi 160
 chanting of 19–20
 in colophons *see* poetic colophons
 in lyrics *see* lyrics
qin music / instruments in
 by Cai Jing 20–21
 of Mei Yaochen 13, 25–26
 reclusive ideal in 148, 151, 156
 “reverse rescue” pattern in 130
 rhymes in *see* rhymes
 on tea
 in general 176
 by Fan Zhongyan 143–148
 by Huang Tingjian 152–153, 155,
 157
 by Lu Tong 147, 149, 150
 of Mei Yaochen 13, 25–26
 by Su Che 40–41
 by Su Shi 148–149, 150–151, 153–154
 tonal patterns in 74, 130–131
see also under specific poems and poets
- political construct 12, 45, 47, 71, 72, 132–
 133
- popularity
 of burning of aromatic substances 2, 14,
 171
 of tea contests 1374, 143
 of tea drinking 2, 14, 26–27, 99, 100,
 171
see also appreciation
- porters
 food and accommodation 125
 losses and 125
 sensory experiences of 125–127
 working conditions of 123–125
- Portraits of the Eighteen Scholars* (*Shiba
 xueshi xiezhen tu*) (Yan Liben) 19, 128
- Prescriptions from the Imperial Pharmacy*
 (*Taiping Huimin Hejiju fang*) *see* *Impe-
 rial Pharmacy*
- Presenting in Jest Two Poems with A Gift of the
 Canopy-scent from the South of the River*
 (Huang Tingjian) 158–159, 162–164
- Presenting the Shuangjing Tea to Zizhan*
 (Huang Tingjian) 152–153, 157
- preservation / processing
 in general 34, 50
 of aromatic substances 52, 111
 of herbal medicines 31, 82
 of tea
 in general 81–82
 to add value 97
 compared to herbal medicines 83–
 86
 modern methods 86
- processing (*paozhi*) techniques *see* preser-
 vation / processing
- pronunciation 73
- prosody
 in general 175
 rhyme in *see* rhymes
 tonal patterns in *see* tonal patterns
- provisioning, armed forces 89–90
- punishments, for illegal trading 92–93, 112–
 113
- Qi Xia 80, 91f, 111, 112
- Qian Chu, King Zhongyi of Wuyue 115
- qianxiang* (aromatic timber) 49, 109–
 110
- qin* communities 65–66
- Qin Cutting Methods of Biluozi* (*Biluozi zhuo-
 qinfa*) (Shi Ruli) 119–120
- Qin History* (*Qinshi*) (Zhu Changwen) 58,
 65–66, 129
- qin* instruments
 in general 3
 absolute pitches and 56–57
 assembly of 119–121
 finger techniques 67–70
 legends about 115
 in literature *see under* literature
 materials used for
 in general 5, 21
 lacquer 60–61, 117–118
 metal and stone 118–119
 procurement of wood 114–116
 silks 118
 taxes on 115

- transportation of 121–122
 types of wood 113–114, 114*t*
 melodies of *see qin* melodies
 music of *see qin* music
 on paintings *see under* painting /
 murals
 players of *see qin* players
 in poetry *see under* poetry
 from Song period 60–61, 62, 119
 sound volume of 59, 61, 133
 stringless 21, 132
 from Tang period 59–60, 116, 119,
 133
 unearthed from tombs 116–117
see also under specific instruments
- qin* melodies
 in general 21, 63
 in Cai Jing's poetry 129–132
 categories of 64, 129, 166*n*73
 lyrics to *see* lyrics to *qin* melodies
 sequence of 64, 65, 131–132
see also under specific songs and melodies
- qin* music
 in general 56
 appreciation of 59, 66, 70–71
 audial distinctiveness 70–71
 community construction and 65–
 66
 as a construct 4, 70–71
 encore in 65, 74
 ephemerality of 3–4
 Five Pitches in 73
 gathering protocols 11, 65
 interrelatedness and *see* tea, aromatic
 substances, and *qin* music
 melodies *see qin* melodies
 on paintings *see under* paintings /
 murals
 in poetry *see under* poetry
 political implications of 56, 58
 reconstruction of 63
 before serving of tea 25–26
 tablatures 66–67
 tonality of 62–63
 visual spectacle of 59
see also qin instruments
- qin* music, appreciation of 59, 66, 70–71
 “*qin* of hundreds of pieces” (*Bainaqin*)
 115
- qin* players
 finger techniques of
 notation of 67–69
 tone generation and 69–70
 gestures of 68*n*187
 outstanding 65–66
 virtues of 58–59
see also under specific players
- qin* tablatures 63, 66–67
- Qingming* scroll *see* *Painting of the River-
 side Scenes in the Qingming Festival*
- qingyun* (“light clouds”) 38
- Qiu Caizhen 132*n*16
- Quanzhou 110
- re* (hot energy) 27, 29, 30
- rebellions 87, 93, 155
- reclusiveness 148, 151, 156
- Records of Clouds and Mist Passing the Eyes*
 (*Yunyan guoyan lu*) (Zhou Mi) 116
- Records of Tea (Chalu)* (Cai Xiang) 28, 35,
 36*n*70, 47
- Records of Tea (Mingchuan lu)* (Tao Gu) 40
- redroot gromwell (*zicao*) 85
- reforms
 of exam system 151
 of tea trade 90, 91, 93–94, 95, 108
 of Wang Anshi 151
- Register of Mounting A Simurgh (Canluan lu)*
 (Fan Chengda) 114, 123
- Reminiscences of the Eastern Capital*
 (*Dongjing menghua lu*) (Meng Yuanlao)
 122–123
- Renzong, Song Emperor 64, 88
- Resonating with the Governor's Associate,*
Zhang Min's Song of Tea Contests (Fan
 Zhongyan) 143–148
- revenue 91*t*, 112
- “reverse rescue” pattern 130
- Rhapsody of the Great Man (Daren fu)* (Sima
 Xiangru) 154
- rhymes
 ABBAB rhyming pattern 157–158
 -*aeng* rhyme group 151
 dictionaries of 71–73
 -*en* rhyme group 169
 Four Tone Registers 73
 government-authorized systems 74, 133
 imperfect 146, 147, 150, 153*n*46, 154, 168

- o rhyme group 153n46
- in poetic colophons
 - on *Listening to the Qin* 20, 74
 - on *Literati Gathering* 18–19, 74
- as political constructs 72, 132–133
- tonal patterns and 71–73
- u rhyme group 153n46
- uwng* rhyme group 18–19, 20, 74, 132–133
- Rhymes of the Tang (Tangyun)* (Sun Mian) 72
- Rizhu* (tea brand) 80
- road conditions 123–124
- rosewood (*jiangzhenxiang*) 48, 49, 120
- Ruan Ji 155, 156
- ruwu* (“milky fog”) 38
- ruxiang* (frankincense) 2, 48, 49, 109, 112
- Ryūkōin Temple (Japan) 44
- sancha* (loose tea) 97
- sandalwood (*futanmu*) 120
- sandalwood (*tanxiang*) 2, 48, 49, 52
- scented candles 54
- scholar-artist communities
 - in general 7
 - ephemerality of actions and 9–11, 128, 172–174
 - exchange of tea and poems in 152
 - fluidity of 7, 172
 - formation 6–9, 172–174
 - outsider creation and 173
 - requirements and expectations 10, 173
 - role of creativity in 10–11, 173–174
 - shared values of 5
 - uniqueness of 5
- scholar-artists
 - in general 8
 - appreciation of *see* appreciation
 - imitation of literary styles among 157–158
 - individual vs. collaborative creativity 10–11, 173–175
 - shared sensory experiences 4–5, 9, 11, 172–173
 - use of term 8
- “Scorched-tail” (*Jiaowei*) *qin* 115
- sedan chair carriers 123
- sensory experiences
 - of porters 125–127
 - of scholar-artists 4–5, 9, 11, 172–173
 - while playing *qin* 71
- servants 141, 141, 142
- Shaanxi 53, 102, 103
- Shaanxi Academy of Archaeology 103
- shan* (China-fir; cunninghamia wood) 61, 113–114, 114t, 116
- Shangshan Zhangren 147
- Shang-Zhou period 49
- Shaoxing 80
- shashen* (coastal glehnia root) 30, 31–32, 99
- Shen Gua 116
- Shen Zun 164–166, 168–169, 172
- shexiang* (musk) 41, 48, 50, 51, 52, 55m125
- Shi Ruli 119–120
- shipwrecks 48
- Shiyuhu (Stone Fish Lake) 155
- Shōsō-in collection (Japan) 48, 49, 60
- Shu Qi 147
- Shuangjing* tea 80, 88, 154, 156
- shuijiao* (“water’s feet”) 36–37, 38, 45
- shuiya* 159
- Siberian Solomon’s seal rhizome (*huangjing*) 85
- Sichuan area 60, 80, 87, 93, 99–100, 126
- silks 118
- silver 99, 118–119
- Sima Guang 91, 156
- Sima Xiangru 154
- “Six-ones Householder (Liuyi Jushi)” *see* Ouyang Xiu
- Small Dragon Tea Cakes 88, 98
- Smith, Paul 98
- smoothness (*hua*) 39, 40, 42
- Solitary Orchid in the Mode of Towering Rock (Jieshidiao Youlan)* 63, 67
- song* (pine) 25
- Song Huizong *see* Huizong, Song Emperor
- Song of Tea Contests* (Zhang Min) 143
- Song of Wind Entering the Pine Forest (Feng ru song ge)* (Jiaoran) 21
- Song on the Stone Fish Lake (Shiyuhu shang zuige)* (Yuan Jie) 155
- Song period
 - aromatic substances in 48
 - qin* instruments from 60–61, 62, 119
 - qin* legends in 115

- qin* melodies in 63
qin tablatures in 66
 tea contests in 147
 tea in 33
 texts on *qin* from 21
 transportation in 122
songfeng see pine wind
Song Dynasty Musical Sources and Their Interpretation (Pian) 66–67, 68
Spelling Rhymes (Qieyun) (Lu Fayan) 71–72
 spouts of ewers 36, 44–45, 100
 “Spring Thunder” (*Chunlei*) *qin* 116, 133
 status
 of aromatic substances 51, 55, 163–164
 community formation and 6
 of Lei family 59
 of tea 2, 45, 47, 108, 163–164
 Su Che 40–41, 91, 141
 Su Shi
 aromatic substances and 161
 Buddhism and 161
 at Hanlin Academy 153, 156
 Huang Tingjian and 7–8, 152, 156, 163, 172
 on *Leiqin* 59–60
 Loehr on 8
 lyrics of 165*t*, 166–168, 169
 Ouyang Xiu and 7–8
 poetry of
 in general 21
 on aromatic substances 10, 160, 162–164
 on tea, tea brewing and tea drinking 148–149, 150–151, 154
 tonal patterns in 162–163, 162*t*
 on tea and fragrance 13–14
 Sui-Tang period 71–72
 Sun Jianxing 106
 Sun Mian 72
 Sun Simiao 29–30
Supplementary Notes of Famous Medicine Practitioners (Mingyi bielu) 49

 Taipei Palace Museum 14, 15–16, 24*n*27
 Taizong, Song emperor 88, 112
 Taizong, Tang Emperor 18, 19, 128–129
 tambac (*chenxiang*) 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54, 109, 110

 Tang period
 qin instruments from 59–60, 116, 119, 133
 tea cultures during 3, 27, 150
 Tang Shenwei 30, 41
 Tang Shiwen 116
 Tang Taizong see Taizong, Tang Emperor
 Tang Yi 65, 66
 Tang-Song period 27, 75, 86, 153*n*46
tanxiang (sandalwood) 2, 48, 49, 52
 Tao Gu 40
 Tao Hongjing 49
 Tao Qian 21, 132
 Tao Tang 18–19
 Tao Zongyi 12
 taxation / taxes
 on aromatic substances 112
 on tea 89–90, 93–94
 on wood 115
 tea (*cha*)
 in general 1
 additions to 41, 47, 86
 appreciation of 27, 32–33, 36, 42, 151–152, 156–157, 171
 brands see tea brands
 classic texts on 1
 cultures surrounding see tea cultures
 with *dim sum* 2
 drinking of see tea drinking
 fragrance of 41–42
 growing of see tea cultivation
 interrelatedness and see tea, aromatic substances, and *qin* music
 making of see tea preparations
 in paintings see under paintings / murals
 in poetry see under poetry
 popularity of see under popularity
 preservation / processing of see under preservation / processing
 reclusive ideal and 148, 151, 156
 serving of 2, 25–26, 133
 status of 2, 45, 47, 108, 163–164
 substitutes for 27–30, 31
 taxes on 89–90, 93–94
 terminology 36
 trade in see tea trade
 transportation of 122
 as tribute to royal court 88

- types of 2, 97, 97*t*
see also under specific types of tea
 as value added commodity 97–98
- tea, aromatic substances, and *qin* music
 interrelatedness of
 in general 3–5, 12–14, 142–143, 171–172
 in paintings *see* paintings / murals
 in poetry *see* poetry
- tea bowls
 color of 34
 dark blue glazed 42–43, 172
 “hare’s fur” patterns 34, 42–43, 43, 102
 “heaven’s eyes” patterns 2, 102
 as Japanese national treasures 2*n7*
 Jian ware 42–43, 43, 104, 172
 in *Literati Gathering* 16
 with support 103
 types of 100, 102
 yohen-tenmoku 44, 44, 102
- tea brands 80, 98
see also under specific brands
- tea cakes 82, 85, 88, 97, 97*t*
- tea ceremonies 2, 32
- tea color 36, 38–39
- tea contests 4, 36*n70*, 38, 143–148
- tea crushers 33–34, 209, 209
- tea cultivation
 in general 172
 in Fujian area
 modern day 76, 78, 79
 in Northern Song period 80
 manpower needed for 86–87
 in other areas 80
 picking of buds 81
 selection of leaves 81
 yields 80, 88
 yin / yang in 75
- tea cultures
 in general 1, 3
 idealization of 26, 96
 influences on 12, 27*n36*, 45
 politics and 45, 47
 spread of 27
 during Tang period 3, 27, 150
- tea drinking
 effects of 147
 health benefits of 1, 26, 27–28
 in literati gatherings 139–140
 on paintings *see under* paintings
- poetry on *see under* poetry
 popularity of *see under* popularity
 on tomb murals 141
- tea farmers 87, 92–93
- tea foam
 contests for best 4, 36*n70*, 38, 143–144
 whisking process and 36–39, 37, 214–218
- tea gardens / plantations
 in general 76, 78, 79
 manpower needed in 86–87
 ownership of 87–88
- tea laborers 87
- tea policies *see under* government
- tea preparations
 in general 32–33
 as ceremony 32
 classic texts on 12–13
 as a construct 4, 32–33
 difference in 40–41
 ephemerality of 3–4
 experiments 40
 foam *see* tea foam
 materials used for *see* tea, tea utensils
 in paintings *see under* paintings
 in poetry *see under* poetry
 procedure in *Daguan Treatise* 33–39, 43
 taste, texture, and fragrance in 39–42
 tea color in 36, 38–39
 tipping process 36–39, 44–45, 143, 175, 212–216
 on tomb murals 140–141, 141
 tools for *see* tea utensils
 water quality in 34, 35–36
 water temperature in 34–35, 39, 155, 211
 whisking of tea 36–39, 40, 214–218
- tea serving 2, 25–26, 133
- tea trade
 export of 98–100
 illegal practices in 92–93, 95
 on paintings 138–139, 139
 revenue of 91*t*
 state policies *see under* government
 state run centers 89, 90, 95
 tea-horse trade 98–100
- tea utensils
 in general 42
 ewers 36, 44–45, 46, 100
 materials used for 5, 34

- in paintings 142
 production of 100, 102
 see also kilns
 tea bowls *see* tea bowls
 tea crushers 33–34, 209, 209
 in tomb murals 141, 141
 Tea-Horse Agency 99–100
 tea-horse trade 98–100
 tea-tipping (*diancha*) process 36–39, 44–
 45, 143, 175, 212–216
 terminology, for tea 36
 thirst, quenching of 26, 27, 29–30
Tianfeng Haitao (“Heavenly Wind, Sea
 Waves”) *qin* 116
 Tibet / Tibetans 99–100
 tipping (*diancha*) process *see* tea-tipping
 (*diancha*) process
 Tōkyō National Museum 63
 tomb murals 140–141, 141
 tonal patterns
 in general 25–26, 175
 in Cai Jing’s poetry 20, 74, 130–131
 in Huizong’s poetry 18n14, 74
 in poetry exchange of Su and Huang
 162–163, 162t
 as political constructs 72
 rhymes and 71–73
 see also tones
 tones 18, 21, 70, 130, 156, 162–163
 see also Four Tone Registers, microtones,
 tonal patterns
 Tong Guan 17
 trade routes, for aromatic substances 110
 transportation
 of aromatic substances 110, 122
 carts used in 122–123
 of ceramics 122
 geography and 121
 manpower used in 123–127
 see also porters
 of persons 123–124, 125
 of *qin* materials 121–122
 of tea 122
 by water 125
Treatise of Tea during the Daguang Reign
 (*Daguang chalum*) (Huizong et al.)
 in general 12–13
 on appreciation of tea 42
 on ewers 44–45
 on fragrance of tea 41–42
 on harvesting of tea 81
 as marketing tool 96, 108
 on medical qualities of tea 28
 other tea-making styles and 41
 politics and 45, 47
 on processing of tea 82, 83–86
 on spoilage 125
 on tea bowls 172
 on tea preparation procedure 33–39, 43
 on two kinds of *xiang* 42
Treatise on Exogenous Febrile Disease (Shang-
han lun) (Zhang Zhongjing) 28
 tuckahoe 29
tuhao (“hare’s fur” patterns) 34, 42–43, 43,
 102
 Tuo Tuo 94
 turban snails / whelks 158–159
Twelve Qin Melodies (Gucao shierzhang)
 (anon.) 21
Two Poems in Reply to Zizhan’s Replies
 (Huang Tingjian) 161–164
Two Poems Resonating with Huang Luzhi on
Burning Incense (Su Shi) 10, 160, 162–164

 -u rhyme group 153n46
 -uwng rhyme group 18–19, 20, 74, 132–133

Veritable Records of Shenzong’s Reign (Shen-
zong shilu) 156
 virtues, of *qin* players 58
 vouchers 90

 Wang Anshi 91, 151, 156
 Wang Cheng-hua 24–25, 128
 Wang Huifang 49
 Wang Shen 9
 Wang Shixiang 60
 Wang Shuhe 29
 Wang Tao 28, 30
 Wanqintang 116n11
 water in tea preparation
 quality of 34, 35–36
 temperature of 34–35, 39, 155, 211
 “water’s feet” (*shuijiao*) 36–37, 38, 45
 wax-surfaced tea cakes (*lamiancha*) 85, 97
 Wei Hanjin 57
 Wen Tong 9
 Wen Yanbo 149, 151

- wenzipu* (music notation) 63, 67–69, 70
 Western Han period 31, 82
 whelks / turban snails 158–159
 whisking of tea 36–39, 40, 214–218
 white tea 33n59
 White Tea (*Baicha*) 33
 wild tea plants 79, 80
Wind Entering the Pine Forest (*Feng ru song*)
 21
 see also Feng ru song
 “Withered Wood, Dragon’s Roar” (*“Kumu longyin” qin*) 60–62
 wood / timber for *qin*
 in literature 21
 procurement of ancient 115–116
 procurement of new 114–115
 taxes on 115
 types of 113–114, 114t
 workshops, for *qin*-making 120–121
Writing to Thank Remonstrator Meng for Sending the New Tea (*Zoubi xie Meng jianyi ji xincha*) (Lu Tong) 147, 149, 150
 Wuhu (Five Lakes) 153
wulong / oolong tea 2
wutong (Chinese parasol wood) 21, 113–114, 115, 120
wuxian 21
 Wuyi, Mount *see* Mount Wuyi area
wuyun (“mist and cloud”) 37

xiang (fragrance in the mouth) 39–40, 41, 42
xiang, use of term 2n8
 see also aromatic substances
Xiangpu (Hong Chu) 47–48, 51, 52, 53
xiangpu genre 47–48, 50, 52, 55, 109–110, 111, 158
xiaocaonong 65
 Xie Zhiliu 24
 Xin Qiji 170
 Xiong Fan 12n4
 Xu Bangda 21
Xuanhe Beiyuan gongcha lu (Xiong Fan)
 12n4
Xuanhe Period Catalogue of Antiquities
 (*Xuanhe bogu tulu*) 118
 Xuanhua area 140
 see also tomb murals
xunlu (aromatic substance) 109

 Yan Liben 19, 128
 Yan Xiaoxing 115
 Yaneva, Albena 6–7
 Yang Yuanzheng 60, 61
 Yangzi River 80, 106, 121, 123
 Yanzhou 114–115
 Ye Qingchen 35
 Ye Tinggui 48
 “yellow and mature” (*huangshu*) 49, 50, 110
 Yellow Emperor 146
 Yelü Chucai 116
yin / yang 75
yin (*qin* melody with chanting) 21, 129, 130–131
yin (*qin* melody) 21, 63n164, 131, 166–168
yohen tenmoku (“heaven’s eyes” pattern) 2, 102
yohen-tenmoku bowls 44, 44, 102
 You Xiuling 13n4
 You Yu 18–19
youdi (oil-drop patterns) 102
 Yu Yunshui 114t
 Yuan Jie 154, 155–156
 Yulinting kiln cluster 104, 105, 106, 107–108, 107, 108
yumcha (tea with *dim sum*) 2
yunshu (dictionaries of rhymes) 71–73
Yunyu 153
Yutang 153

Zaoxia tong 21
 Zeng Zao 111
 Zequan (monk)
 on finger techniques 68–69
 on Five Pitches 73, 131
 on *qin* melody categories 64, 166n73
 qin textbook of *see Zequan’s Techniques*
 mention of 71, 132
Zequan’s Techniques 64–65, 67, 74, 129, 130, 132, 169
 Zhang, Cong Ellen 122
 Zhang Kuangzheng 140
 Zhang Min 143
 Zhang Wenzao 140
 Zhang Youxin 35
 Zhang Yue 116, 119
 Zhang Zeduan 138–139, 138, 139, 142
 Zhang Zhongjing 28–29
 Zhangzong, Jin Emperor 116
 Zhao Renjie 114t

- Zhao Ruli 82
 Zhao Xihu 116–117
 Zhao Yeli 67
zhéguban (dove's feather patterns) 102, 159
 Zhejiang area 76, 80, 87, 106, 114, 115, 123
 Zheng Minzhong 59n141, 60, 61, 132n16
 Zheng Peikai 12n4
 Zhipan 64n165
zhong (heaviness or substance) 39, 40, 42
 Zhongling water 146
 Zhou Mi 116, 122, 133
 Zhu Changwen 58–59, 64, 65, 129, 166n73
 Zhu Jiajin 21n24, 24
 Zhu Quan 146
 Zhu Tan, Ming Prince 116
 Zhu Zaiyu, Ming Prince 56
 Zhu Zizhen 12n4, 27
 Zhuang Zhuo 12
zi (Chinese catalpa wood) 113–114, 114t, 120
zicao (redroot gromwell) 85
 zithers *see qin* instruments

This book explores one of the central questions among many disciplines: how communities are formed. It investigates this question through the perspectives of scholar-artist communities in Northern Song China. You will learn how some of the then popular ephemeral artistic practices, such as whisking tea, burning aromatic substances, and playing and listening to *qin* music, were performed. Through these practices related sensory experiences were generated. The formation process of communities involved many other aspects such as the interplay among people, materials, ephemeral arts, and sensory experiences, which is hard to identify in pure textual sources.

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