



A Preliminary Argumentation on the Objective Existence of Chinese Buddhist “Shifang Tune”: An Indirect Argumentation Based on Documents and Dictation

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Received 30 May 2015; accepted 4 August 2015

Published online 26 September 2015

Abstract

Extensive fieldwork experience has shown that a large number of Buddhist temples have used several verbal concepts based on geographical classification. The paper takes more comprehensive collection, integration and dialectical analysis of these concepts, and analyzes their essence and common characteristics. The author finds that the essence corresponds to the regions where the melodies spread, and there are local and nonlocal types of cases, suggesting that there may be a super regional melody system similar to Taoist “Shifang grace song” in Buddhist music, so takes “Shifang Tune” as the unified name and research objective. Meanwhile, the paper analyzes its source region and spreading route, etc., in order to reveal the nature, characteristics and regularity of Buddhist melodic system, lay a foundation for further study of the morphology of Buddhist music, and promote the research of Buddhist music to a better development.

Key words: Buddhist music; Shifang tune; classification; verbal concepts; source; common form; style

Hu, W. G. (2015). A Preliminary Argumentation on the Objective Existence of Chinese Buddhist “Shifang Tune”: An Indirect Argumentation based on Documents and Dictation. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 11(9), 41-47. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/ccc/article/view/7511> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/7511>

INTRODUCTION

Taoist Quanzhen ritual music has a prevalent “Shifang grace song” throughout China which has been recognized

in academic circles. “Shifang grace song” is a joint product of Taoist unique music inheritance mode and Quanzhen Shifang Jungle system, which preserve the tune by the unique way of “oral teaching”. The system of Taoist priest’s wandering and central deployment system of the ruling class are the objective factors to promote the formation of the super regional characteristics of Taoist music.

Buddhist jungle system has been formed in the Tang Dynasty, and Quanzhen jungle system has been built precisely by emulating Buddhism. Buddhism also implements wandering system which enables abbots to wander among various jungle temples and interact with each other. The interactions are bound to provide an objective condition for the formation of the “super-regional” (Pu & Cao, 1992) Buddhist ritual music. Is there also a prevailing tune throughout the country in Buddhist ritual music? Although today’s Buddhist monks and scholars make no specific efforts to demonstrate this issue, some scattered Buddhist music articles mentioning monks’ verbal concepts show that there is a “super regional” singing system in major temples throughout China, but the Buddhist community and academia have not yet drawn enough attention to this phenomenon to form a consensus, not to speak of special research and unified naming. This article intends to analyze based on this hypothesis and existing materials in order to demonstrate this phenomenon for further researches.

1. VERBAL CONCEPTS SPREAD AMONG MONKS

Buddhist monks around China have different verbal concepts for Buddhist singing, which have been quoted in scholars’ research thesis after their case investigations. In this article, the author classifies these concepts in accordance with the regions where the monks belong to, and puts the different verbal concepts from the same

region or monks in parallel to reveal the current situation of verbal concepts from the monk community.

1.1 Southern system, Northern System

These are verbal concepts of monk Tuochen from Tayuan Temple and monk Huanmin of Foguang Temple. "According to monk Tuochen from Tayuan Temple and monk Huanmin of Foguang Temple. Temple music can be roughly classified into Southern and Northern two systems, and are represented by southern Sichuan Mount Emei and northern Mount Wutai." (Chen, 1981, p.56)

1.2 Southern tune, Northern tune

"Southern tune" and "Northern tune" are the verbal concepts shared by the monks from southern Shanxi temples, among whom the monk from Shanxi Linfen Jingtou Temple accurately described them.

According to Fakong in our temple, he began to study singing in northern tune, then the Southern tune, and now is good at both. Northern tune is faster. Southern tune is slower. I think Southern tune is pleasant, but when sing along with lay Taoists I sing in northern tune more often. (Yang, 2003, p.487)

1.3 Old Northern Tune

The previously mentioned "Northern tune" is also the verbal concept of Mount Wutai monks. Additionally, they express the concept of "old northern tune" which has been told by monk Changshan from Daidingluo Temple.

Monk Changshan from Daidingluo Temple said that the monks in Mount Wutai called Southern tune as Northern tune to show their sarcasm, and the Southern tune should include most of Northern China and Beijing Zanbai, and the traditional system of Mount Wutai has been called as old northern tune. (Han, 2010, p.80)

1.4 Southern Fanbai, Northern Fanbai

Southern Fanbai and Northern Fanbai are the verbal concepts by the monks from Northern temples such as Luoyang Baima Temple and Songshan Shaolin Temple.

According to the memories of the monks from Luoyang Baima Temple and Songshan Shaolin Temple, their Zanbai and Zhuyuan were sung in Northern tune before 1940s, then in Southern tune, returned to Northern tune in the beginning of 1950s, and changed back again to Southern tune in the beginning of 1980s. (Hu, 1992, p.80)

1.5 Dinghu Accent, Southern Accent and Northern Accent

Dinghu accent, Southern accent and northern accent are the verbal concepts by the monks of Yulin Baoxiang Temple, "the Buddhist music of Baoxiang temple belongs to Chinese Buddhist Southern system. The abbots are mostly from Guangdong in history, such as the first Zupu master from Guangdong Yangjiang Jingye Temple. Its Buddhist music is Dinghu accent based. Dinghu accent is also called as a southern accent which is different from "northern accent" and represented by

Guangdong Zhaoqing Dinghushan Qingyun Temple. Buddhist ceremonies of Baoxiang temple have been more implemented by learning from Guangdong Zhaoqing Dinghushan Qingyun Temple." (Li, 2011, p.100)

In addition, "Southern accent" and "northern accent" are also verbal concepts by Master Zhengxian from Guangzhou Guangxiao Temple, "Buddhist rituals in Guangzhou are mostly sung in northern accent, but there are one or two temples retaining southern accent. They are quite a few and their accent is localized." (Zhan 2013, p.81)

1.6 Jiangsu Tune

Jiangsu tune is the oral statement by Master Jiecheng in Guangzhou Guangxiao Temple, "Jinagsu temples have a Jiangsu tune, and their rituals are mostly sung in Jiangsu tune" (Zhan, 2013, p.76).

Chanhe Ban, Kaiyuan Ban, Waijiang Ban, Conglin Ban, Xianghua Ban, Bendi Ban, Chanhe Ban, Shanhe Ban, Kaiyuan Ban, Waijiang Ban, Xianghua Ban, Bendi Ban, Congling Ban and Waijiang Ban are all verbal concepts by Master Shihuiyuan from Chaozhou Kaiyuan Temple. According to the interpretation of Shihuiyuan, Chanhe Ban, Shanhe Ban and Kaiyuan Ban are equivalent, Waijiang Ban and Conglin Ban are equivalent, Xianghua Ban and Bendi Ban are equivalent.

"Monk has been originally known as Chanhezi. Monk has six virtues, thus is called as Chanhe" (Shi, Chen, & Su, 1995, p.5).

"It's also known as Shanhe, because Chan and Shan are pronounced the same in Chaozhou accent, only different in speaking manner" (Ibid.).

According to the old saying of Kaiyuan Temple, Chanhe Ban was originated in the first year of Emperor Qianlong of Qing Dynasty, and was introduced by the monks who came to revive Kaiyuan Temple. This is why the tune is called as Kaiyuan Ban. (Ibid.)

In addition to presiding over Huashoutai, the master also presided over Danxiashan Biechuan Temple, Guangzhou Haichuang Temple, and rejuvenated Chaozhou Kaiyuan Temple. He conducted Buddhist ceremonies in strict accordance with the norms and regulations. For example, morning and evening chantings, consecration and other rituals have been sung in Chanhe Ban, which is different from Zhejiang jungle singing (Waijiang Ban). (Ibid., pp.5-6)

Buddhist ceremony is compared as planting flower. As the old saying goes, borrow others' flowers to practice one's own blessing, which is another reason for the naming of this tune! Bendi Ban appeared firstly in Chaozhou, in Qing Dynasty there was Chanhe Ban, and in the early Republic of China there was Jiangzhe Jungle tune (called as Waijiang Ban by Chaozhou people), therefore Xianghua Ban is the oldest local tune in Chaozhou. (Ibid.)

1.7 Guangfu Ban

Guangfu Ban is the verbal concept from overseas Chinese and monks in Hong Kong, Macao as well as Southeast Asian countries.

Guangfu Ban was originated in the Buddhist singing of Guangzhou. Like Guangdong music, this name was firstly called by other places. Guangfu Ban cannot be now heard in the Buddhist temples in Guangzhou, but spread to Hong Kong, Macao, Southeast Asia and Thailand. It is said to have the possibility of being lost in Hong Kong, and has not been preserved completely in Southeast Asia. The temple which preserves it completely and still applies in a full set in Buddhist activities is Thailand Huazongge Temple. Name of Guangfu Ban has also been spread by the above-mentioned regions and countries. (Chen, 1999, p.3)

1.8 Xiajiang Accent, Sui Accent, Sichuan Accent

Xiajiang accent, Sui accent, Sichuan accent is the verbal concepts from the monks in Luohan Temple, of which the first two are the same concept.

Chongqing people are used to call Yangtze River below Wuhan as Xiajiang, thus Luohan Temple's tune is originated in Xiajiang. Buddhist ritual music is also incapable to escape from the impacts of local music, and many Buddhist rhymes still imply the appeals of Jiangnan melodies such as Molihua tune, Sijige tune and Changcheng tune when gradually changed by Buddhism. In inheritance Sichuan monks are used to call it as Xiajiang accent, or Sui accent. (Zhong, 1999, p.107)

During the process of Buddhist ritual, in order to meet the aesthetic needs of ordinary people, Sichuan monks have gradually integrated the local familiar music into ritual music. The monks called this music as Sichuan accent to highlight the local flavor. (Ibid.)

In addition, the monks in Mount Emei Fuhu Temple have the same statement, "Mount Emei Buddhist music belongs to Southern system, which our masters call as Xiajiang accent" (Li, 2003).

"According to Fuhu Temple's current abbot, Fuhu Temple's fanbai has also been affected by the tunes of Sichuan opera in the process of spreading. It has evolved by oral teaching from generation to generation, and integrated with many local accents and folk tones in Sichuan and Mount Emei. Its singing is flowing, moving, and well known to Leshan and Emei people, thus the nuns in Fuhu Temple call their Fanbai as Sichuan accent" (Ibid.).

1.9 Jiangzhe Accent, Changsha Accent

Jiangzhe accent and Changsha accent are the verbal concepts of Hunan Buddhist Association president Master Boming.

According to Changsha Buddhist Association president Master Boming, there were old ritual singings in Changsha, such as Changsha folk song, huagu opera, whose lines were narrated in local accent to be easier understood for donors. However, the pronunciation of Changsha accent is too rigid for Buddhist thought, while the pronunciation of Jiangzhe accent is more soft and acceptable. When monks came from Jiangzhe with jiangzhe accent, many local monks gave up the rigid Changsha accent and switched to speak in Jiangzhe accent. Therefore, a lot of Hunan monks went to study in Xiajiang regions, especially in Tianning Temple before 1949. However, chant is easy to learn, accent is hard to change. Some monks still narrated a certain lines in Hunan accent. (Wu, 2005)

1.10 Shifang Tune, Difang Accent

Shifang Tune and Difang accent are verbal concepts of Yunnan monks.

In the family of Chinese Buddhism, a part of Buddhist music are traditional tunes, such as the quoted. This part of traditional tunes have been spread widely in all major Buddhist temples in China. They have been considered as the orthodox Buddhist music by the Buddhist circles, and called as Shifang Tune by Yunnan Buddhists. (Mei, 1993)

Another part are regionally popular tunes, which have been spread in several provinces or adjoining provinces, or even in a region, a county, and not used out of these areas. This kind of Buddhist music has been developed based on local folk songs, so Kunming Buddhists called such tunes as Difang accent. (Ibid.)

1.11 Chan Accent, Ping Accent, Liushui Accent

The three accents are the names to Tianning Temple Buddhist chant. "Chan accent is represented by Southern Zanbai chant in Changzhou Tianning Temple, also known as Ping accent. It has a calm rhythm and an elegant style" (Yang, 2012) "It has been called as Liushui Ban because of its smooth and melodious singing." (Ibid.)

1.12 Baohuashan Accent, Lü Accent, Baohua Accent, Poxia Accent

Lü accent, Baohua accent and Poxia accent are the names by the Buddhist circle for Baohuashan Buddhist chant.

Baohuashan accent is called as "Lü accent", also known as Poxia accent or Baohua accent. According to legend, it gets this name because it's originated in Nanjing Baohuashan Longchang Temple. Its singing is high and clearly paused, has a simple and powerful style. (Ibid.)

In summary, the author combines the verbal concepts cited in several isolated case studies to find their intrinsic law, and lays a foundation for the analysis and re-classification of the original concept.

2. ANALYSIS AND CLASSIFICATION OF VERBAL CONCEPTS

Buddhist monks have their own reasons to produce the verbal concepts of singing, and the author will analyze the sources of the original concept.

Southern system and the Northern system have been proposed based on the North-South geographical differences. Mount Wutai is located in northern China, so monks in Mount Wutai Tayuan Temple call the singing in the south as southern system.

Southern tune and Northern tune were also created by the monks in Shanxi Province, but the monks in Southern Shanxi and Mount Wutai have different classifications:

According to the monks in southern Shanxi, the differentiation of Buddhist singing is based on the boundary of the Yangtze River. North of the Yangtze River uses Northern tune, and south of the Yangtze River uses Southern tune (Yang, 2003, p.492).

Monks in Mount Wutai Daidingluo temple use the classification system of "Old North" to refer to the traditional northern system, and distinguish it from the "Northern tune" which they are using. The latter in fact refers to "Southern tune". The reason it became Northern tune is because this singing was introduced from Beijing and other northern regions. This objectively demonstrates that the Buddhist music from the south of the Yangtze River has been widely applied in the North.

Southern Fanbai and Northern Fanbai were also differentiated based on the boundary of the Yangtze River.

Verbal concepts indicate the fact that the temples in northern China widely use Buddhist music from the south of Yangtze River, and that northern temples have an original singing system of their own.

The concepts of so-called "northern accent" and "Southern accent" are treated differently in the South and North. Monks in Yulin Baoxiang Temple consider "Southern accent" to be equivalent to "Dinghu accent" of Qingyun Temple, and would sing it in Cantonese. This suggests that the so-called "Southern accent" may just be derived from local Buddhist music, while northern accent may reflect a mix of external accents from the north of the temple.

According to Master Jiecheng in Guangzhou Guangxiao Temple, the vast majority of Guangzhou temples use Jiangsu tune, but Master Zhengxian from the same temple considers that "Northern accent" is widely used in Guangzhou temples, and "Southern accent" is used less and is only a endemic singing. This reflects that Jiangsu tune and "northern accent" are probably the same concept. Lingnan monks call it as "northern accent" because this tune was spread in the north of Lingnan region. However, Master Jiecheng was born in Zhejiang (Zhan, 2013, p.76), since Jiangsu and Zhejiang are almost at the same location, he does not follow the verbal concept of Lingnan monks.

Chaozhou monks' "Kaiyuan Ban" was named because it's originated in Kaiyuan Temple, and "Bendi Ban" refers to Chaozhou local Buddhist singing. The spreading of these local singing concepts indicates that Chaozhou region also uses external singing. According to the oral statement of Shihuiyuan, external singing refers to "Waijiang Ban" and "Jiangzhe Jungle Ban".

Another Lingnan singing "Guangfu Ban" means that it was initially spread in Guangfu, because the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia called Guangzhou as Guangfu.

"Xiajiang tune" was named by Sichuan monks because the singing came from the lower reaches of Yangtze River which is close to the Jiangnan area. "Sichuan accent" was derived based on "Xiajiang tune" by adding the elements of Sichuan folk music, which means that "Sichuan accent" and "Xiajiang tune" are the variants of the same singing system.

Just as its name implies, Jiangzhe accent came from Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, and Changsha accent was

a Hunan local singing. When local people combined the two concepts, it means that Jiangzhe Buddhist singing has spread to Hunan Province.

Shifang Tune was named by Yunnan monks because the singing was used in most parts of China. Difang accent was only used in some regions and derived from folk music.

Baohua accent was named because it's mainly spread in Nanjing Baohua Temple Lüzong temple.

In addition to geography, verbal concepts also correspond to sect, style and Buddhist teaching.

Chan accent was named because it's used in Chanzong temple, and Lü accent was named because it's used in Lüzong temple.

Ping accent and Liushui Ban are the oral statements of Tianning Temple monks, both pointing to rhythm characteristics, only different in the rhythmic pattern. Ping accent was named because of its steady and lingering rhythm, and Liushui Ban was named because of its smooth melody.

Chanhe Ban and Xianghua Ban were named based on Buddhist teaching. Though have different names, they are essentially the same with Kaiyuan Ban and Bendi Ban which were named based on geographical considerations.

Through the analysis of these verbal concepts, the author finds that most of the verbal concepts point to the geographical scope where these singings spread, which may imply that each region also uses external singings while using its local singing. But these are just the oral statements of monks. Have any scholar proposed his opinion? So the author will analyze the views of the scholars who cited these verbal concepts.

3. SCHOLARS' RE-ANALYSIS OF CONCEPT ANALYSIS

Scholars throughout China have recorded monks' verbal concepts by case study and quoted them in their thesis. These scholars can be roughly classified into two kinds of attitudes, agreeing and questioning. This paper will classify the two attitudes and make corresponding analysis to the questioning viewpoint.

Scholars who recognize the monks' verbal concepts mostly take them for academic research.

Chen Jiabin, a questioner, holds that "the credibility of the concepts of southern system and northern system remains to be further studied" (Chen, 1981).

Chen Jiabin did not entirely agree with the concepts of monks, but he did not continue the in-depth study¹. Nevertheless, his rigorous academic attitude is worthy of recognition.

Hu Yao has a personal opinion on the concepts of "Southern Fanbai and Northern Fanbai". Namely,

¹ Chen Jiabin did not publish any thesis afterwards.

Looking from northern and southern music scores, both melodies were derived from the same source. While other tunes in Northern Fanbai, particularly the “Yingfu music”, are different from the South. In modern times, Southern Fanbai and Northern Fanbai have two connotations: One means two different singing styles within one tune, and the other means two unrelated tunes. (Hu, 1992, p.82)

This view contains two connotations: Firstly, northern and southern temples shared the same singing system, only changed in different spreading areas; secondly, Buddhist music has a “core” and an “extension” (Pu, 2003). “Yingfu music”² has more flavor of folk music because it’s oriented to ordinary people.

The author believes that Hu Yao has an objective and empirical opinion. He took surveys on many Buddhist temples and Buddhist activities around the country, and collected a large number of music materials³, so he could firstly find the similarities and differences of Buddhist music in different regions by listening. Secondly, Hu Yao has a certain musical form analysis capability⁴, and is able to verify the similarities and differences of Buddhist music from a rational point of view.

In summary, Hu Yao’s opinion helps explain the fact that temples around the country have shared a unified singing system. So is there a potential unified law in monks’ verbal concepts of singing? The following will further explore this issue.

4. AN RESEARCH ON THE THE POTENTIAL REGULARITY OF MONKS’ VERBAL CONCEPTS OF SINGING

Monks’ verbal concepts of singing reflect one fact: Temples around China have used external singing in varying degrees. Because the monks talked about singing regional style based on their own locations, it’s necessary to integrate these disparate concepts and take study from a broader perspective and from the height of regularity. Is there any regularity in these phenomena of mixing external singing and local singing presented by the verbal analysis? Whether foreign singings are disorganized or have a common source? The following section will further explore this issue.

With regard to the division of Northern system and Southern system, the northerners’ so-called Southern system is derived from the Buddhist singing in the south of Yangtze River, but since some northern monks hold that southern singing came from Tianning Temple in

Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces (Hu, 1992, pp.81-82; Ni, 1986; Qin, 2006), some hold that it’s represented by Mount Emei (Chen, 1981), we are unable to determine the geographical center where it’s produced.

Looking at the verbal concepts of southern monks, their so-called common source for external singings is easy to see. Guangdong Buddhist community’s so-called Waijiang Ban (also known as Jungle Ban) refers to the singing from Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces; Hunan Buddhist community explicitly mentioned that they used the Jiangzhe accent from Tianning temple; Sichuan monks’ “Xiajiang tune (accent)” also refers to the singing from the downstream of Yangtze River, which is roughly consistent with the location of Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces; Although Yunnan monks proposed the concept of “Shifang Tune” only, they have widely used *Yin Sheng Fo Shi* which is prevalent in Mount Tiantai Guoqing Temple in Zhejiang Province. This music score has been collated by lay Buddhist Huang Zhilong who have roamed around Jiangsu and Zhejiang for a long time, so their so-called “Shifang Tune” is actually based on Jiangsu and Zhejiang; Additionally, Lingnan monks’ “Northern accent” is actually the same with Jiangsu tune, but since Lingnan is located at the south of Jiangsu and Zhejiang, this name was derived thereof.

Although the oral statements of southern monks indicate that there is a geographical center where the super regional singing was produced, is the singing originated in Jiangsu and Zhejiang really the so-called Southern Fanbai?

Since monk Tuocheng and monk Huanmin from Mount Wutai both believe that the southern system is represented by Mount Emei, it means that the entire southern Buddhist music will take Mount Emei as a model, and Mount Emei will be the birthplace of Southern Buddhist music. Therefore, Southern Buddhist music will be based on Sichuan folk music, which also reflects that Southern Buddhism has been spread from this center out to the periphery.

However, historical documents are inconsistent with the above reasoning.

In the period of Emperor Xizong of Tang Dynasty, Master Huitong and his sister Huixu came to Mount Emei to establish Heishui Temple, and rebuilt Puxian Temple, Yanfu Temple, Zhongfeng Temple and Huayan Temple. Until this time the five temples of Mount Emei began to take shape. (Lin, 1990)

However, since Buddhism has flourished in Jiangnan as early as in the period of Emperor Liangwu of the Southern Dynasty, the prosperity of Emei Buddhism should be later than Jiangnan. Emei Buddhism got flourishing after external monks came to Sichuan, and these monks would naturally use their familiar music rather than Sichuan folk music in rituals, thus the argument that “Southern system” is represented by Mount Emei is unreasonable.

Therefore, taking into account the verbal concepts of today’s monks, Southern Fanbai can only be originated in

² “Yingfu Music” is the music used by folk monks in relief rituals, generally not used in temples.

³ Most music scores are recorded by himself. He has also collected the music scores containing earlier scholars’ surveys and scores used in temples.

⁴ Hu Yao’s analysis has concerned “music collection”, “melody”, “scale”, “turning method” and other factors.

Changzhou Tianning Temple. Since Tianning Temple is close to Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, it can be deduced that the so-called Southern system, Southern FanBai or southern tune of the northern monks actually derives their origins from Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces.

5. OFFICIAL PROPOSAL OF THE CONCEPT OF "SHIFANG TUNE"

Based on the above analysis, we can speculate that there is a super regional singing system in Chinese Buddhism, which was probably originated in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces where Buddhism has prevailed for a long time. As the singing has been gradually expanded to different regions and temples in varying degrees, some temples have a long-term hybrid use of local singing and external singing. Unraveling mystery to restore truth is the purpose of this article. To draw the attention of academia, the author decides to unify their names as "Shifang Tune" to identify the phenomena and characteristics of the prevalence of this singing system.

Based on the above analysis, we can make a preliminary speculation on the characteristics of "Shifang Tune":

"Shifang Tune" is a Buddhist singing originated in Jiangnan region, and has now been spread to Southwest China, Central South China, Lingnan, North China, East China and Central China.

Based on the concepts of "Ping accent" and "Liushui Ban" describing the singing of Jiangzhe Tianning Temple, we can initially conclude that this singing has two characteristics "steady, lingering rhythm" and "flowing melody", which are basically consistent with Jiangnan music style.

Although from the verbal concepts we can preliminarily determine the original area for "Shifang Tune", but the monks, after all, are "outsiders" of music, they cannot demonstrate the regional characteristics of singing through music analysis. Therefore, relying solely on monks' verbal concepts is insufficient to identify the regional characteristics of "Shifang Tune". Only when we make contrast on the ritual music of temples in different regions from an empirical and macro perspective, we can figure out that what songs are similar with "Shifang Tune". What songs have inconsistent melodies? What's the framework for similar songs? Are they really consistent with Jiangnan music style? What's the similarity degree of them? How did they evolve in different regions? What's the characteristics of the changes? These issues need to be further studied in next section.

CONCLUSION

This article aims to take an in-depth study on the regional styles of singing based on Buddhist monks' verbal

concepts, and prove that there may be singing similar to Taoist "Shifang grace song" within Chinese Buddhism. It was probably originated in the historically important area—Jiangsu and Zhejiang, spread all over China along with the development of Buddhism, mixed with local singings and even gradually replaced local singings.

Determining the objective existence and regional characteristics of the singing system has an important significance for the further research of Chinese Buddhist music. When we firstly conduct macro comparative analysis on Buddhist ritual music in different regions, we can make the typical morphological characteristics of Jiangnan music as a reference to verify that whether the basic melody framework is suitable; Secondly, once the basic framework of a singing has been established from an empirical point of view, it will help us explore the variations in its spreading, and lay a foundation for demonstrating the current situation and developmental law of Chinese Buddhist music from a macro perspective; Finally, once it has been confirmed to spread in Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces, it will also help us analyze the special relationship between Chinese Buddhist music and Wuyue culture from a cultural background, and so will promote explorations on the history and aesthetic characteristics of Buddhist music. In this way, Buddhist music research will be greatly improved.

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