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**The Development of Zheng in the Digital Age:
An Interplay of Tradition and Modernity**

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I N S Δ M

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF ZHENG IN THE DIGITAL AGE: AN INTERPLAY OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Abstract: The Zheng, a traditional Chinese musical instrument with a history spanning over 2,500 years, has gained widespread popularity and recognition in contemporary China. Its most celebrated pieces are not only familiar to the public but have also contributed to the Zheng's elevated status within the official cultural system, making it an important symbol of Chinese cultural identity in both name and reality. This prominence has naturally drawn the attention of musicologists and educators, who frequently highlight the Zheng's enduring vitality and cultural significance.

Despite its long history as a musical instrument, the Zheng has only recently been recognised as “traditional” by musicologists. Nor should it be overlooked that the emergence of this “tradition” as a concept is inextricably linked to the development of modern audiovisual, communicative and interactive technologies – using the full potential of digital capacities. It joins a series of “traditions” – I will consider modern inventions, whose emergence and development depend on modern technological conditions. At the same time, the “tradition” of Chinese music, to which the Zheng belongs, is not static: as socio-economic and technological conditions change, so do the forms of expression and social functions of the Zheng, becoming a “living tradition” with a rich meaning.

Keywords: Zheng, living tradition, cultural vitality, technological influence, digital age.

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Introduction

The Zheng (箏) is a prominent instrument within the realm of Chinese instrumental music, holding deep cultural significance and representing a rich treasure of musical heritage in China. Historical evidence suggests that the Zheng has been present in the area of modern China since antiquity, particularly during the *Chunqiu* (春秋, Spring and Autumn) and *Zhanguo* (战国, Warring States) periods. Its long lineage has established the Zheng as a pivotal ancestor to various Asian zither instruments, including the Mongolian *Yatga*, the Japanese *Koto*, the Vietnamese *Đàn tranh*, and the Korean *Gayageum* (Cao 1981).

As early as 1951, the sinologist R. H. Van Gulik highlighted the significance of the Zheng in his article, noting its dual purpose in the realm of music. He stated that the Zheng may serve a double purpose. Firstly, it plays a crucial role in both preserving and popularising ancient Chinese music, particularly those lighter genres that are often more accessible to general audiences. This function is vital for maintaining cultural heritage and ensuring that these musical traditions continue to resonate with contemporary listeners. Secondly, Van Gulik pointed out that the Zheng can be utilised to develop a modern, distinctly Chinese music that is approachable for broader circles (Van Gulik 1951, 25). This aspect emphasises the Zheng's potential to innovate and adapt within the context of national life, making it an indispensable factor in the cultural landscape of China.

Traditionally, Zheng music was disseminated through oral tradition, reflecting the instrument's roots in a predominantly agrarian society characterised by relative geographical seclusion and specific socio-cultural atmospheres. This environment fostered a unique musical language that developed in intimate connection with the daily lives and narratives of local communities. The Zheng has been intricately linked to regional life, particularly through its association with ensemble traditions, where it often serves as an accompaniment to local narrative singing. Through this role, the Zheng makes it an integral part of the social and artistic fabric of local life (Ye 2025).

Recognised for its extensive history, which spans more than 2500 years, the Zheng profoundly symbolises Chinese culture (Cao and Knobloch 1985). Its

evolution mirrors the various philosophical, artistic, and social currents. Recent musicological studies and educational textbooks have placed significant emphasis on the vitality of the Zheng, attributing its enduring popularity to its storied past and adaptability. The Zheng's repertoire reflects a rich tapestry of historical contexts, from Confucian ideals in ancient court music to its integration into modern contexts, including collaborations across genres and media. These recent developments demonstrate the instrument's continuing relevance and resonance in contemporary society, making it a subject of ongoing scholarly interest and a focal point for cultural revitalisation initiatives.

It is important to note that the classification of the Zheng as a “traditional” instrument is a relatively recent phenomenon in musicology. Although the Zheng has a long historical lineage, its designation as a “traditional” instrument is largely a product of twentieth-century cultural and academic developments. This status emerged alongside nation-building efforts, the institutionalisation of music education, and the construction of a modern Chinese cultural identity. Thus, the Zheng's “traditional” identity reflects not only recent digital transformations, but also earlier processes of cultural selection, standardisation, and scholarly discourse (Ye 2025). In recent decades, advancements in modern audiovisual, communicative, and interactive technologies have further accelerated and made visible these processes. Such developments align the Zheng with a series of modern traditions, whose emergence hinges on contemporary technological conditions. Importantly, the tradition of Chinese music, to which the Zheng belongs, is not a static entity; as socio-economic and technological contexts evolve, so too do the expressive forms and social functions associated with the Zheng, thereby establishing it as a “living tradition” rich in meaning.

Tradition and identity

Tradition and identity is one of the central themes in the study of culture (Honko 1995). Tradition not only affects individual identity, but also plays a key role in the broader social and cultural context. Tradition plays a vital role in constructing ethnic identity. Anderson posits in his book *Imagined Communities* that ethnic identity is an “imagined community,” where traditional culture and customs form the basis for its construction and sustainability. Through fes-

tivals, rituals, and languages, individuals create a sense of belonging and identify themselves in relation to their group (Anderson 1983). Understanding tradition in this way reframes it as a manifestation of cultural identity, one that is intrinsically linked to the social context in which it exists.

In the Chinese language, the term *chuan tong* (传统) encompasses a broad spectrum of concepts, including ideas, cultural practices, moral values, fashions, arts, systems, and behaviours that have been transmitted across generations (Cihai-Redaktionsausschuss 2009, 321). Instead of perceiving tradition as a static entity defined by absolute “authenticity” and an unbroken continuity of musical culture, it is more productive to approach it as a dynamic, socio-cultural construct (Koch 2020, 14). Tradition is continually shaped and reshaped by the conscious and collective actions of individuals and communities. As such, tradition is not merely a relic of the past but a living entity that engages with contemporary issues and perspectives.

A critical examination of the term “tradition” reveals important nuances that are essential for understanding the cultural trajectory of specific art forms, such as the Zheng, a traditional Chinese instrument. Historian Eric Hobsbawm offers a valuable framework for this analysis by distinguishing between “tradition” and “custom” (Hobsbawm 1983, 1–14). Hobsbawm contends that while customs evolve organically through everyday practices and social interactions, traditions often embody constructed, ritualistic meanings that emphasise continuity with the past. This construction of tradition serves to reinforce specific historical narratives and collective identities, thereby solidifying the role of tradition within a cultural context. Applying Hobsbawm’s conceptual framework to the study of the Zheng reveals how its fluctuating status over time has been influenced by socio-political changes, artistic innovations, and cultural exchanges. As the Zheng has undergone transformations in its musical style, performance contexts, and societal relevance, it has simultaneously maintained certain traditional elements that connect it to its historical roots. This duality of change and continuity highlights the Zheng’s role not only as a musical instrument but also as a cultural symbol. In conclusion, tradition should be viewed as a complex interplay of continuity and change, constructed through collective action and social negotiation. This understanding is vital for appreciating the cultural significance of the Zheng and similar art forms, allowing for a deeper engagement with the ways in which traditions inform and shape cultural identities in the modern world.

Discovering the tradition of Zheng music: Sociocultural dimensions

In the context of research within China, traditional Chinese music refers to music created before the Qing Dynasty (1644 to 1911). There are four main categories of traditional Chinese music in Chinese research discourse: *minjian yinyue* (folk music), *wenren yinyue* (literary music), *gongting yinyue* (court music) and *zongjiao yinyue* (religious music). Folk music is the largest and most popular branch of traditional Chinese music. It can be further divided into five categories: *minjian gequ* (folk songs), *gewu yinyue* (song and dance music), *shuochang yinyue* (narrative song), *xiqu yinyue* (opera) and *minzu qiyue* (instrumental music) (Yang 2008). The Zheng is fundamentally a folk instrument. Up until the 20th century, its music was primarily transmitted orally rather than through written scores. Its notational forms, such as *gongche* and *ersi*, primarily record basic pitch and rhythm, granting significant improvisational latitude (Ye 2025). In essence, as a traditional instrument, the Zheng embodies both fluidity and instability.

The wars and turmoil of the late Qing dynasty led to a decline in the Zheng music of previous generations. The Zheng is lucky to be utilised in regional traditions, serving as an ensemble instrument or as accompaniment for narrative singing. This ensured that its transmission was not entirely interrupted (Wang 2007). In 1911, the last emperor was forced to abdicate, resulting in significant political and social upheaval that profoundly impacted Chinese musical life (Zeng 2003, 330). Following the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912, intellectuals united in their efforts to forge a “national tradition,” which included the preservation and promotion of traditional music (Feng 2005). With the rise of modern national consciousness in China, the Zheng began to receive renewed attention as a symbol of Chinese culture. The traditional Zheng solo pieces known today are largely newly composed, emerging from the research, refinement, and adaptation of regional folk music throughout the 20th century, and gradually evolving into the Zheng solo repertoire we recognise today.

Transformation under digital media

The impact of digitisation in the cultural sphere has increased in recent years. Research emphasises that the internet serves as a vital platform for both accessing digitised music from traditional albums and for engaging with music produced exclusively in digital formats (see Shen 2019; Shirk 2011). This duality signifies a transformative shift, where Zheng music becomes not only more accessible but also flexible in terms of storage and dissemination. Notably, the highly differentiated performance of various Zheng schools and performers has moved towards a highly aesthetic and individual style that is extremely popular compared to other instruments. Zheng music is generally program music that serves to tell a story. Sometimes this is with a philosophical background, or to express an emotional state: for example, the piece *High Mountains Flowing Waters* tells of friendship and the difficulty of finding a soul mate. The notation used, which is not very detailed, gives a great deal of freedom here and allows extremely individual and thus different interpretations. To illustrate, on YouTube three distinct versions of *Lotus Rising from the Water* are played for different lengths of time, namely between almost four to just under eight minutes (Luo 2013; Xiang 2022; Rao 2012). Without modern technologies to archive these performances, they would remain untransmittable temporal fragments. By facilitating the mass production and dissemination of these audiovisual materials, digital technologies have not only reinforced but also broadened the influence and accessibility of national music narratives.

With the burgeoning popular interest in traditional music in contemporary China, the traditional Zheng has found itself at the crossroads of cultural preservation and commercial viability. Two primary modes of capital involvement with national music have emerged, each playing a vital role in the evolution of traditional musical genres within the digital landscape.

The first mode directly drives transformation by reimagining traditional forms to appeal to contemporary audiences. This has given rise to the concept of “New Folk Music” (*xin minyue*), a commercial initiative aimed at revitalising traditional music through modern sensibilities. This approach focuses on aesthetic appeal and marketability, encouraging artists to introduce contemporary compositional techniques and diverse musical styles. The fusion of traditional

elements with modern elements, including dance and multimedia visuals, has resulted in a pop-oriented musical genre that, while distinctly modern, maintains a connection to its cultural roots. However, the journey of reinvention has not been without challenges. Early attempts, such as those made by the “The Twelve Girls Band” (Yang and Michael 2010), faced significant hurdles primarily due to their reliance on traditional media platforms for dissemination. Although their efforts showcased the potential for blending traditional and modern musical expressions, the limitations of traditional media in reaching wider audiences hampered their impact.

The second mode of capital engagement in the transformation of traditional music is emblematic of the characteristics of the digital age, particularly through the phenomenon of platform-generated music. In the Web-2.0-era, digital platforms transcend mere showcases of content; they foster interaction and communication, aligning seamlessly with the participatory and communal essence of music. The strategic utilisation of these network platforms has significantly enhanced the efficiency of communication between music providers and listeners, thus reshaping the landscape of traditional music dissemination.

Case study 1: Mo Yun in BiliBili

A pertinent example of this is BiliBili, a Chinese video-sharing platform comparable to YouTube, which boasts over 170 million monthly active users, with a remarkable 78% of its audience aged between 18 and 35. This demographic trend highlights the platform’s pivotal role in connecting traditional music with younger audiences. Zheng bloggers use this online platform – as well as others – to adapt very well-known pieces of music from animation, film and television, as well as popular music. The two most popular Zheng videos on BiliBili – measured by the number of hits with almost 100 million – are both from the same blogger: Mo Yun, an amateur Zheng player.

As Figure 1 shows, Mo Yun uploads self-performed Zheng music to the platform. By April 2025, Mo Yun achieved first place among all Zheng videos with a Zheng cover of the track “Qian Ben Ying” (2014) by virtual singer Hatsune Miku, with more than 63 million views (Moyun 2014).



Figure 1. Mo Yun performing Qian Ben Ying on the Zheng. Screenshot from a video uploaded by Mo Yun on Bilibili

The song “Yu Quan Tian Xia” is an original song sung by the virtual singer Luo Tianyi. Mo Yun used it as an adaptation prototype and released a cover version on Zheng in 2015. However, the most-viewed video on Bilibili is not the original, but the cover version by Mo Yun (Zheng accompanied by a drum), which has been viewed almost 1.6 million times (Moyun 2015). In addition to these videos, Mo Yun has also covered other works on Zheng and captured a broad spectrum of young fans with her adaptations.

A key feature of Mo Yun’s videos, which may explain their increasing popularity among young Bilibili users compared to similar content, is that most of the songs performed align with the popular ACG (animation, comics, and games) music on Bilibili, closely matching the interests and structure of its user base.

On the other hand, the creativity of the music is also subject to the conditions of digitalisation: in addition to solo playing, there are also opportunities to perform alone as an ensemble – namely, using technical means. In this respect, everyone is able to produce themselves and upload their own videos. This increases the chance of discovering talent and being discovered.

The enthusiasm for anim -music played on the Zheng leads to a multi-layered situation: the Zheng as a traditional musical instrument attracts the attention and love of the younger generation, the performers become idols and benefit from the development of a new area of music and the website gains enormous commercial value. For example, Mo Yun received more than two million coins on BiliBili for the video titled “Qian Ben Ying.” Ten percent of the amount viewers invest in the video is paid out to the blogger. The licensing and operation of online music platforms can therefore generate considerable income (see Yu and Schroeder 2018).

Case study 2: 碰碰彭碰彭Jingxuan in YouTube

These performances not only capture significant attention in China but have also garnered a global audience, demonstrating the universal appeal of the Zheng when fused with contemporary cultural references. An excellent example of this is that of blogger 碰碰彭碰彭Jingxuan, a Chinese student in France, who makes uploads not only to BiliBili but also to YouTube. Due to the cross-platform nature of digital platforms, 碰碰彭碰彭Jingxuan also has a video account on YouTube with around 1.03 million subscribers. The forms of communication in these spaces are visually dominated, allowing media users to see much more of past and present music life around the globe than would be possible without this level. Based on the ranking of the number of views as of April 2025 (Jingxuan 2025), it is evident that the five most popular Zheng music videos are adaptations of globally recognised pop songs (see Table 1).

Popular videos	Number of views (04. 2025)	Publication date
<i>See You Again</i>	15 million	12.11.2021
<i>Mei Li De Shen Hua</i>	13 million	13.11.2020
<i>Smooth Criminal</i>	12 million	03.06.2022
<i>Yi Jian Mei</i>	8 million	11.07.2020
<i>Hua Xin</i>	6 million	07.02.2020

Table 1. Statistics of views of the most popular Zheng music videos on YouTube.

Musically, 碰碰彭碰彭Jingxuan plays the Zheng in the style of popular music, including pieces such as *Qinghuaci* (Celadon)² and *See You Again*. Playing popular music seems to be the best way to fit into this online environment. The combination of Zheng and pop music is undoubtedly an important factor in the popularity of Zheng, and there is no traditional Zheng piece in this ranking. Zheng players perform the music that matches the popular aesthetics on social media. The most popular video is the one for *See You Again*, a pop song originally recorded by American rapper Wiz Kalifa and featuring a guest appearance by Charlie Puth. The song was a worldwide commercial success and has become the most successful single to date. On July 10, 2017, the video for the song became the most viewed YouTube video with around 2.8 billion views (see Figure 2). The popularity of the video itself has led to the creation of cover versions using various instruments. Different interpretations of the same piece of music also reflect the diversity of cultures around the world (France 2017). The Zheng cover version, as one of the components, has also attracted a relatively large amount of attention.

In a global village made up of networks, in an environment of cultural diversity, the audience no longer sees the videos as mere objects, but as symbols with symbolic meaning. Zheng is attributed national qualities on a global level. The exchange between different cultures provides access to an audience that might previously have approached the instrument and its music with a slight distance, thus promoting the spread of Zheng and opening up a wide space for developments in Zheng music.

Maria Neri West wrote in a comment on Jingxuan's video on YouTube (Jingxuan 2022):

This is how it tells you that music is a universal language we share with no boundaries. A Chinese music instrument, a song from a modern era American singer and a French city. The beauty of humanity all in one.

2 Among them, the video with the most likes – over 1.5 million – is the adaptation of the Chinese pop song *Qinghuaci*, a 2007 creation by pop star Jay Chou. Jay Chou's songs are the ones that the post-1990s generation grew up with. *Qinghuaci* is one of Jay Chou's hits, which uses pentatonic tone material to paint a smoky, rainy ink painting of Jiangnan (a concept for a geographical area in China) and also describes the elegance of Celadon. The combination of Zheng and pop culture corresponds to the musical aesthetics of the general public and appeals to a broader audience for Zheng.



Figure 2. “See You Again” performed by 碰碰彭碰彭 Jingxuan.

There is a clear trend in today’s digital media. Commenting on videos builds bridges and facilitates the exchange of information, the expression of feelings and the coordination of actions. Building a bridge between people through globally received pop music, feeling each other’s emotions, no matter how different ethnic, linguistic or cultural backgrounds they may be: everyone shares the same human emotions and is able to communicate through music.

On the international platform YouTube, the players perform pop music in order to communicate with the pop-cultural environment, while the instruments themselves and the costumes of the players become their cultural identity. Individuals imagine “the global” (Mukuma 2010). and at the same time negotiate their “locality” (Darling-Wolf 2014). The individual’s interaction with music may be seen as entertainment at the level of the individual, but more as a symbol at the level of the nation and a group affiliation, and more metaphorically as a social act in different regions of the world. The player plays the Zheng as a cultural symbol to demonstrate her own identification with the nation and her understanding of the national culture. In doing so, she expresses her identity and identifies with what she sees as China. In this context, the Zheng not only plays

a role in ensuring the continuity of tradition, but also in defining Chinese nationality, partly shaping the identity of traditional Chinese culture. At the same time, the use of these same elements in terms of commercial profit-making must be taken into account.

This trend fosters a mutually beneficial scenario for all stakeholders involved in the musical ecosystem. For the Zheng as a traditional Chinese instrument, the exposure through popular content serves to heighten its visibility among youth, nurturing a new generation of listeners and potential musicians. For performers, this intersection with popular culture allows them to expand their repertoire into accessible Zheng music, while achieving personal and professional success. Meanwhile, platforms like Bilibili unlock substantial commercial value by drawing in diverse audiences, amplifying user engagement, and enhancing advertising revenue through increased viewership. In essence, the rise of platform-generated music within the digital landscape exemplifies how traditional instruments like the Zheng can find new life and relevance in an increasingly interconnected world. By leveraging the interactive capabilities of these modern platforms, traditional music not only endures but also flourishes, fostering a rich dialogue between the past and the present.

As a result of these two modes – direct transformation and platform-driven communal innovation – traditional Zheng music is experiencing a renaissance in the digital age. The accessibility of digital tools and platforms means that musicians can experiment, collaborate, and share their interpretations with an audience that transcends geographical boundaries. This vibrant exchange not only enriches the musical landscape but also ensures that the Zheng, along with other traditional forms, remains relevant and resonates with new generations.

Discussion and conclusion: Living Tradition in the Digital Age

In the thought-provoking framework of historian Eric Hobsbawm, the term “tradition” is particularly nuanced. He posits that traditions are not fixed or spontaneously emerging but are instead “invented” and subject to continuous change. This perspective suggests that traditions may be shaped by the elite or can represent a process of reinterpretation and rediscovery aimed at fostering community unity. The Zheng, a traditional Chinese musical instrument, exemplifies such a “living tradition.” It has been redefined in modern China, celebrat-

ed as “Chinese cultural heritage,” and further developed through new media while simultaneously serving as an identity-forming tradition that offers cultural cohesiveness.

Firstly, to briefly discuss what it means that Chinese musical instruments, such as the Zheng, represent a “living tradition” in the digital age. The term “living” means first of all that it is contemporary, meaning the tradition is alive in the present and in constant development. For modern people, digital technology has made all kinds of music easily accessible. This means that music of any kind can be part of the modern spirit. Zheng music is also a living part of the spiritual life of today’s Chinese, even with classic pieces like *Water Flowing Over High Mountains* or *Evening Song in a Fishing Boat*. But “living” also means *change*. The emergence of popular Zheng music is a typical example of a dynamic cultural phenomenon in which traditional instruments and ancient musical forms are adapted to the needs of the zeitgeist.

Secondly, “tradition” also implies *identity*. A Chinese musical instrument such as the Zheng plays a central and reinforcing role under digital conditions.³ Music as a means of expressing identity articulates not only a person’s self-image, but also their social affiliation. What music these people listen to and play can therefore be seen as an expression of what kind of person they want to be. Frith argues: “music taste, in short, is now intimately tied into personal identity” (Frith 1996, 236). One of the phenomena observed in China in recent years is that China’s economic and social development, the rise of national self-confidence, the popularity of Chinese music, and the development of internet technology and new media have occurred almost simultaneously. Digitalisation has fuelled the so-called *national music fever*, and this has led to a strengthening of national identity and an increase in national pride. More importantly, this national pride no longer concentrates only on the material and economic spheres, as in previous decades, but is moving towards a higher level of aesthetic and spiritual aspiration.

3 Digital media are effectively transforming intangible cultural heritage from niche chamber music pieces into pop songs with broad appeal, posing questions about authenticity and cultural ownership. This phenomenon ties into a pressing research inquiry regarding the cultural significance of intangible heritage across the globe. In the context of globalisation, which has frequently resulted in considerable cultural homogenisation, a counter-movement is emerging in many regions that seeks to rediscover and define regional identities. For more on the relationship between the local and the global, see Baumann (2000).

Thirdly, digitisation has effectively dismantled cultural boundaries, placing a nation's traditions within broader contexts that promote cross-cultural exchange and dialogue. This transformation challenges conventional notions of cultural essentialism and fosters a more interconnected understanding of cultural practices. Allen Ewe's comment on this phenomenon can be considered quite representative of the views from different cultural circles: "*This combination of western music with Chinese traditional music instruments is amazing!*" (Allen Ewe, comment on Jingxuan 2022).

The scene in which an *American* melody is played on a *Chinese* instrument in *Chinese* costume, on a street in France, in front of a *French* audience, and uploaded to an *international* online platform to be sampled by listeners from all over the world, is in itself a microcosm of the cultural landscape of our digital age. It is precisely in this constant interaction between ethnicity and nationality, nationality and internationality, that living traditions are constantly reborn and reinterpreted.

In conclusion, the digital transformation of the Zheng exemplifies the evolving relationship between tradition and modernity, demonstrating how cultural practices are continually redefined through new technological and social contexts. This process can also be understood within the broader framework of *World Music*, which, as Connell and Gibson (2004) and Aubert (2007) argue, is less a fixed genre than a cultural phenomenon characterised by the deterritorialisation and recontextualisation of local traditions in global settings. The Zheng's visibility on platforms such as Bilibili and YouTube illustrates how traditional music can transcend national boundaries, fostering new forms of cultural identity and transcultural exchange. Thus, the Zheng serves not only as a symbol of Chinese culture, but also as an active agent in the global circulation and reinterpretation of musical traditions. While this paper has focused on the Zheng's digital transformation, its broader implications for World Music merit further investigation in future research.

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AN INTERPLAY OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY
(summary)**

This article critically examines the transformation of the Zheng in the digital age, positioning it as a paradigmatic example of the dynamic interplay between cultural preservation and innovation. As a living tradition, the Zheng illustrates how local identity is continually negotiated within the broader currents of global cultural exchange. Digital technologies have not only preserved the Zheng as a symbol of cultural heritage but have also enabled its ongoing reinterpretation, adaptation, and creative renewal. The instrument's evolution from an emblem of elite cultural capital to a widely accessible and participatory art form underscores the resilience and adaptability of tradition amid modernity and globalization.

Through this case study, the article addresses key theoretical questions about the nature of tradition in the digital era. It demonstrates that traditional arts are not static relics but active sites of cultural negotiation, memory, and innovation. The Zheng's contemporary development reveals how digital media democratise cultural production, foster new forms of collective identity, and facilitate transnational dialogue. Ultimately, the Zheng's sustained vitality exemplifies the capacity of living traditions to bridge past and present, local specificity and global connectivity, thus contributing to the ongoing reconfiguration of cultural landscapes in the twenty-first century.