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**DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION OF THE  
SAXOPHONE IN CHINA OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS –  
METHODOLOGICAL VIEW**

**РАЗВИТИЕ И ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ НА САКСОФОНА В  
КИТАЙ ПРЕЗ ПОСЛЕДНИТЕ 20 ГОДИНИ –  
МЕТОДИЧЕСКИ ПОГЛЕД**

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**ABSTRACT**

of a dissertation for awarding of educational and scientific degree „ Doctor“

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## **Structure and volume of the dissertation**

The dissertation contains a total of 136 pages, of which 130 are the main text, 3 reference sources, 3 – appendices.

The dissertation consists of: Abstract, Introduction, Four Chapters, Conclusions and List of Contributions, Summary of the Main Research Findings, References, Appendix (Musical examples of works, Concerts list, Publications)

The bibliography consists of 26 titles, of which: 2 – Bulgarian, 19 – foreign language titles, 5 – Internet sources.

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## **Resume**

The *purpose* of this dissertation is to study the development and integration of the saxophone in China over the past 20 years.

The following *tasks* have been identified as arising from the purpose:

The following abstract provides a concise synopsis of the saxophone's emergence, development, and utilisation in both European and American contexts.

The present study will examine the integration of the saxophone into the contemporary music environment in China.

Saxophone training is centred on the development of students' performance skills. These skills are cultivated through the interpretation of music across various styles and the study of improvisation. The following text will explore the cultural and educational significance of saxophone competitions.

The present study will examine the application of innovative methods in saxophone training.

The following *research methods* were employed: first, a historical method; second, a comparative analysis; and third, an empirical method. In addition to these, a literature study on the topic was conducted from various sources.

In the contemporary era, characterised by globalisation, international cultural exchange has become increasingly prevalent. Nevertheless, music, as a significant form of cultural exchange, has also attracted considerable attention. The saxophone, as a distinctive wind instrument, occupies a unique position in the education and performance of jazz, classical, and folk music worldwide. In the context of global musical integration, challenges persist in the pedagogy and execution of the saxophone.

This dissertation explores how to teach and play the saxophone effectively, enabling it to integrate more seamlessly into the broader context of world musical styles. To address this question, a comparative analysis of the differences between Chinese, European and American musical styles is conducted. To achieve this objective, it is necessary to consider several factors, including expanding saxophone education with a focus on cultivating and integrating musical elements and approaches from a range of musical cultures, including European, American, and Chinese. Furthermore, it is imperative to explore innovative teaching and playing methods tailored to the saxophone, contingent on prevailing circumstances and settings.

The following conclusion is drawn in this dissertation, based on the research methods outlined above: in the global environment of mixed styles in saxophone music, the teaching of the saxophone in China must be optimised, and the performance skills required to interpret music across different styles must be improved. This is a prerequisite for enhancing cultural exchange between musicians from disparate countries worldwide, as well as enriching the connotations and forms of expression in the performance of saxophone music created in China.

## **Introduction**

### **1. Research background and significance**

#### **1.1 Research Background**

In the context of globalisation, music, as a borderless art form, has undergone a marked increase in international exchange and integration. The saxophone is a distinctive, elegant, and customisable instrument regarded as one of the most prominent wind instruments in the domain of artistic expression. The piece encompasses a wide array of musical styles, including classical, jazz, and ethnic, showcasing a diverse range of timbres. Additionally, it embodies the principles of entertainment and professionalism, particularly in the context of live performance. The saxophone

has been described as a multifunctional instrument that has formed a complete system, in which the artistic value fully reflects the great integration of world music. The saxophone has held an unshakable position in classical, jazz, pop, military, and folk music worldwide. The advent of the saxophone in China at the dawn of the 20th century marked the rapid dissemination and evolution of the instrument over a mere few decades. During this process, the saxophone absorbed musical elements from many countries around the world, and also blended with Chinese folk music. Consequently, the study of saxophone teaching and performance is of considerable value and significance in the blending of musical styles between China and European and American countries. Furthermore, it is instrumental in facilitating comprehension of the historical development and evolution of the saxophone.

The saxophone, a member of the woodwind family with a long history, is popular for its widespread appeal and profound cultural heritage worldwide. The role of this music is twofold: firstly, it occupies an important position in Western music; secondly, it has gradually developed in China and other parts of Asia, thereby becoming an important bridge connecting Eastern and Western musical cultures. In the contemporary globalised world, cultural exchanges and the integration of different regions are becoming increasingly frequent. Consequently, improving saxophone teaching and performance levels is becoming increasingly important. [Yan Liu, 2021, p3] Despite the establishment of a relatively uniform standard of performance and technique across the globe, the influence of regional cultural influences on saxophone playing style and expression cannot be disregarded. It is therefore of great practical significance and theoretical value to explore how regional culture affects saxophone teaching and performance, and how to promote the integration of regional culture and saxophone art through teaching and performance practice.

In the context of globalisation, the saxophone, a musical instrument characterised by its broad influence and innovation, plays a significant role in integrating musical styles. Further research is required on the value and significance of saxophone teaching and performance in the integration of musical styles. Such research would provide useful references for players, educators, and policymakers. In the contemporary moment, the integration and development of the saxophone are advancing rapidly; however, concomitant issues are also emerging.

*First*, research on the influence of regional culture on saxophone playing style and expression is relatively limited. Although some scholars have explored this issue from the perspectives of music aesthetics and music psychology, systematic, in-depth research is still lacking.

*Second*, most existing research focuses on the technical performance of the saxophone. Still, there are relatively few studies on integrating regional culture into saxophone teaching and performance, especially on how to better reflect regional cultural characteristics in teaching methods and performance practices.

*Thirdly*, the actual case analysis of the integration of regional culture and saxophone performance level is also relatively limited, which limits the application and dissemination of theoretical research results.

*In view of the above situation, this study aims to deeply explore the relationship between regional culture and saxophone teaching and performance, especially how regional culture affects saxophone teaching methods and playing styles, through historical investigation, analysis of musical examples, and analysis of playing techniques and literature. By analysing saxophone teaching and playing practices across different regional cultures, the specific influence mechanism of regional culture on saxophone playing style and expression is revealed, and corresponding teaching and playing strategies are proposed to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the innovative development of saxophone teaching and playing.*

## **1.2 Research significance**

The objective of this study is to investigate the parallels and disparities in saxophone pedagogy and performance across different cultural regions. The investigation will explore methodologies for enhancing performance proficiency and pedagogical outcomes by incorporating cultural elements from diverse geographic areas. Additionally, the study will examine the relative significance, interoperability, historical background, and teaching value of these cultural elements. Given the relatively recent advent of the saxophone in global music, there are numerous interrelated similarities in the modern history of many countries. In the domain of music education, the saxophone is taught in diverse ways across different regions of the world, yet there are numerous similarities in the pedagogical approaches employed. The saxophone tradition, therefore, encompasses both the preservation of historical values and the dissemination of musical knowledge to inspire individuals to engage in music creation and research, and to demonstrate the performance and adaptation of the saxophone. Promoting the saxophone is of paramount importance in the global music landscape.

*The significance of this research is mainly reflected in the following aspects:*

To deepen the understanding of the historical development of the saxophone. By examining the development trajectory of the saxophone in Chinese and Western music, we can better recognise the evolution of saxophone playing techniques in different historical periods, as well as the cultural-historical factors behind these changes.

Promote cross-cultural communication and understanding. By analysing the development of the saxophone across regions, the differences in musical expression across cultural contexts can be revealed, thereby enhancing mutual understanding and respect between cultures.

Improve the quality of saxophone teaching. Through interviews with playing experts, analysis of musical examples, and research on playing skills, effective teaching strategies can be identified to help learners better master saxophone playing, especially in integrating regional culture into teaching and playing.

Enrich the content of music education. This study emphasises the importance of integrating regional culture into saxophone teaching, which can not only improve learners' playing skills but also broaden their musical horizons and stimulate innovative thinking.

To promote the innovative development of saxophone art.

To sum up, this study not only has significant theoretical value for the field of music education in China but also provides practical guidance for saxophone players and teachers, thereby promoting the global development of saxophone art.

## **2 Research Methods**

### **2.1 Historical investigation method**

Historical investigation is a significant research method that involves the exploration and explanation of specific historical events or phenomena through the collection, organisation and analysis of historical data. The present study employs a historical investigation to achieve an in-depth understanding of the integration of saxophone development and performance levels across different regional cultures and countries.

The text employs a historical approach to analyse the saxophone's position and function in the development of music. Such an analysis will facilitate understanding of the saxophone's historical origins and developmental trajectory, particularly concerning its integration within the context of cross-border musical style fusion across China, Europe, and the United States. Following extensive discussion and research by experts, folk artists, and saxophone professors specialising in music history, the author presents a comprehensive and nuanced examination of the saxophone's historical

background, regional forms, emotional expression, and other issues. The research has yielded a range of argumentative results.

This study will trace the development of the saxophone from its genesis to the present day. In doing so, it will address the instrument's origins, its position in European classical music, and its adaptation to and influence on the musical style of the Romantic period. Moreover, the method will facilitate researchers' understanding of the saxophone's significance in the Americas, particularly within the context of jazz, and of how it was adopted and adapted by diverse cultural groups.

Moreover, the historical investigation method will be employed to explore the development of the saxophone in China. This will encompass the historical background of its introduction to China and its subsequent spread to different regions of the country over time. By comparing the current state of saxophone transmission across coastal, central, and northern China, researchers can reveal the influence of regional cultural differences on saxophone teaching and performance.

Furthermore, the historical method will be utilised to assess the mechanism by which incorporating regional cultural elements into saxophone playing instruction enhances saxophone playing standards. This will include an analysis of how integrating regional culture helps students and saxophone-loving groups learn to understand music culture, broaden their musical horizons, and express emotions.

It is evident that the historical approach combines teaching and performance, and involves guiding students to mastery of the technique, stimulating their interest, and enhancing their self-confidence. This thesis will construct a comprehensive framework to facilitate a deeper understanding of the intricacies and variations inherent in integrating saxophone teaching and performance, particularly within the context of disparate regional cultures.

## **2.2 Analysis of musical examples**

The analysis of a case study is an indispensable method for examining the integration of saxophone teaching and performance levels. Through the comparative analysis of saxophone music examples from diverse regional cultural backgrounds, we can comprehensively explore the musical styles, technical characteristics and their application in teaching. This pedagogical approach has been shown to facilitate the identification of the diversity and richness of saxophone music. Furthermore, it provides educators with specific teaching strategies and methods to promote students' comprehensive development in technical mastery and artistic expression.

In analysing musical examples, it is first necessary to collect saxophone examples from different regions. These musical examples should cover classical, jazz, pop and other musical styles. Subsequently, the characteristics of melody, rhythm, playing methods and timbre processing are analysed through the careful study of musical examples. This process is undertaken to identify the unique features of musical culture in each region.

Subsequently, the musical illustrations are categorised and synthesised according to musical genre, technical complexity, and a range of additional criteria. On this basis, the paper discusses the pedagogical value of different types of musical examples in saxophone teaching and how to choose suitable teaching materials based on students' technical level and interests. Furthermore, it is imperative to deliberate on the integration of regional cultural elements into the analysis of musical exemplars, with a view to enriching teaching content with greater colour and to stimulate students' learning interest and creative inspiration.

The in-depth research presented will explore the innovation and development of the saxophone in the blending of Chinese and Western musical styles. The objective of this study is to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the innovative value and development potential of the saxophone in the process of blending Chinese and Western musical styles. However, a detailed comparison of

saxophone music works of different styles and periods, from the perspective of historical background events, can facilitate a comprehensive study of the composer's inner emotions during the creative process. From a theoretical standpoint, the internal expressiveness of different styles of works is thoroughly examined. From a pedagogical perspective, the quality of saxophone teaching can be enhanced through a comprehensive study of the performance of works across a variety of styles.

### **2.3 Performance technique method**

In research on integrating saxophone teaching and performance levels, the method of playing technique is an important factor. The pedagogical approach under scrutiny in this study is predicated on enhancing students' playing skills and artistic expression through the utilisation of concrete, practical teaching methodologies. This section will explore several major playing techniques and their application in the context of teaching.

Performance expression serves as the conduit between musical composition and emotional response. It is incumbent upon teachers to encourage students to develop a profound understanding of the emotional connotation of the music and to facilitate the conveyance of these emotions through performance. This includes guidance on mastering the rhythm, dynamics, and smooth handling of the musical lines.

An important task is to explore the relationship between musical performance and the expression of emotion. The analysis will combine saxophone playing skills with the study of tongue, mouth, breathing, continuous ventilation, and other skills. The aim is to achieve a more precise reflection of the emotions evoked by different works. The current state of saxophone education will be comprehensively understood. This will facilitate the study of the actual effect and influence of saxophone teaching and performance in the process of blending musical styles between China and Western countries. The technique of performance plays a pivotal role in integrating saxophone teaching and performance levels. Systematic training and guidance have a significant impact on students' progress in technical and artistic performance. Furthermore, this progression promotes the deep integration of regional culture and music education.

### **2.4 Methodology for literature citation**

Literature analysis is an essential component of the research process. The objective of this process is to develop a deeper understanding of the research topic by collecting, collating, and analysing extant literature in related domains. The present study employs a literature analysis to explore the integration of saxophone teaching and performance level, and the regional cultural factors behind it.

In the course of the analysis of extant literature, particular attention was paid to studies that discussed the link between saxophone teaching and performance standards. This included descriptions of the saxophone education system, discussions of teachers' teaching methods, and assessment reports of students' performance levels. Furthermore, the integration of regional cultural elements within saxophone pedagogy and the subsequent impact on performance enhancement is a pivotal area of interest.

Literature analysis not only helps build a comprehensive theoretical framework for this study but also provides a solid foundation for subsequent empirical research. *Through a comprehensive analysis of the existing literature, several important findings were made in this study:*

First, the level of saxophone teaching and playing is influenced by many factors, among them regional culture.

Secondly, the teaching method integrating regional culture elements can effectively improve students' playing skills and expression ability.

Third, teachers play a key role in integrating regional culture into saxophone teaching. They should not only master professional knowledge but also be able to teach cross-cultural communication and integrate into different cultural music styles.

In short, search and refer to journal articles, academic documents, history books, music theory books, etc., on the global literature search platform, and carefully study and read, analyse and annotate, and finally organise and refer to the final improvement of this paper. Finally, through multi-angle and multi-level research methods, this paper will comprehensively explore the value and significance of saxophone teaching and performance in integrating diverse musical styles, thereby providing theoretical support and practical guidance for promoting the exchange and development of music culture between China and European and American countries. Literature analysis provides a wealth of theoretical support and practical guidance for this study and a solid foundation for further exploration of the integration of saxophone teaching and performance.

### **The study is structured in four chapters.**

The **Conclusion** presents conclusions and contributions to the text.

At the end of the scientific research, references are attached to publications and concert performances during the doctoral studies related to the research.

The **Appendix** contains the sheet music at the centre of the research, as well as posters, video recordings, materials related to the concerts performed, and awards from saxophone competitions.

## **Chapter One. The development and integration of the saxophone in Chinese and Western music**

**Abstract of the Chapter :** This chapter provides a systematic review of the saxophone's development across three distinct cultural contexts—Europe, America, and China. It emphasises the instrument's integration into and innovation within local musical traditions, ultimately establishing its status as a globally recognised musical instrument.

### **1.1 Development of the saxophone**

- **Origin and Invention:** Invented by the Belgian instrument maker Adolphe Sax in the 1840s, the saxophone was designed to merge the tonal qualities of brass instruments with the agility of woodwinds. Its distinctive timbre received early acclaim from composer Hector Berlioz, contributing to its initial recognition.
- **Development Process:** Despite initial scepticism and resistance from the musical establishment, Adolphe Sax's perseverance—through securing patents and introducing saxophone instruction at the Paris Conservatory—helped the instrument gradually gain acceptance within classical music circles.
- **Historical Context:** The saxophone emerged during the Romantic era in Europe, a period marked by a heightened emphasis on individual expression and emotional depth in music. This environment proved conducive to the saxophone's expressive capabilities. Additionally, the Romantic era saw a growing incorporation of folk and national musical elements into classical compositions (e.g., Mozart's "Turkish March" and Brahms' "Hungarian Dances"), setting a precedent for future cross-cultural integration.

Throughout history, the saxophone has been widely used in Europe. There are many examples of musicians and wind instrument players in many European countries adding saxophones to wind orchestras. Among them is Hristo Tonev, a Bulgarian musician who applied the saxophone to brass bands in Bulgaria.

- Conclusion: As a product of the Romantic era's ideals of artistic freedom and experimentation, the saxophone's early evolution was deeply intertwined with the development of classical music. Over time, it benefited from broader trends in musical innovation across various national and regional traditions.

## 1.2 Saxophone shines in jazz music

- Origin of Jazz: Jazz originated in late 19th-century New Orleans as a synthesis of African musical traditions—including spirituals and blues—with American styles such as ragtime. The blues, in particular, contributed the blues scale and a rich emotional palette that became foundational to jazz.

Development and the Role of the Saxophone:

Early Period (early 20th century): Characterised by the New Orleans style, this era saw Louis Armstrong establish improvisation as a central element of jazz performance.

Swing Era (1930s): Big bands led by Benny Goodman and others dominated the American music scene, with the saxophone section playing a pivotal role in shaping the ensemble sound.

Bebop and Beyond (post-1940s): Innovators like Charlie Parker revolutionised jazz with bebop, a fast-paced, harmonically complex style that showcased the saxophone's technical and expressive potential. This period also gave rise to subgenres such as cool jazz and fusion jazz.

*Conclusion and Education:* Jazz represents a significant cultural export of the United States and reflects the nation's history of racial integration and social change. Today, jazz—and particularly jazz saxophone—occupies a central place in American music education, with its historical and cultural significance widely acknowledged and preserved.

## 1.3 History of saxophone development in China

- Early Introduction: The introduction of Western musical instruments into China dates back to the Qing Dynasty, during the reigns of Emperors Kangxi and Qianlong. However, these instruments were primarily confined to the imperial court. The saxophone, on the other hand, was formally introduced to China in the late Qing Dynasty through military bands.
- Development Process:

In the late Qing Dynasty, Yuan Shikai established China's first military band, marking the official entry of the saxophone into the country as part of a military ensemble.

During the first half of the 20th century, the saxophone's development was relatively slow and was mainly found in bands at entertainment venues in major cities such as Shanghai. During this period, efforts began to integrate the instrument with Chinese folk music elements and to compose original works.

From the mid- to late 20th century to the present, as reform and opening-up policies deepened and cultural exchanges increased, saxophone education has become increasingly professionalised, with specialised programs established at major music academies. As a result, performance standards have significantly improved.

- Development and Integration:

The development of the saxophone in China exhibits notable regional variations. In the eastern coastal areas, the instrument is primarily associated with jazz and popular music styles. In central regions, it has been integrated with classical and traditional Western musical forms. In western and

northern regions, the saxophone has been more deeply infused with elements of Chinese folk music. It has also been used in the creation of orchestral and chamber music works inspired by folk songs and dances, as well as in adaptations of traditional Chinese opera.

Professor Li Manlong of the Central Conservatory of Music is a representative figure in this field, having compiled numerous saxophone arrangements of Chinese folk songs.

- **Integration and Innovation:**

The most distinctive feature of the saxophone's development in China lies in its integration with traditional Chinese musical culture:

Adaptation of folk songs: Works such as \*Jasmine Flower\* and \*Night Shanghai\* exemplify the adaptation of Chinese folk music for the saxophone.

Fusion with Chinese musical and dance elements: A wide range of compositions with distinct Chinese characteristics have been created, including Professor Li Manlong's (Chinese Melodies) series.

Innovative musical forms, such as jazz big bands, have also emerged and gained popularity, particularly in Shanghai.

Regional Characteristics: The eastern coastal regions are more inclined toward jazz and international musical styles.

- **Summary:**

The saxophone in China has undergone a historical transformation—from being perceived as a foreign instrument to becoming an integral part of Chinese musical expression.

Today, professional saxophone education in China has reached a high standard, and Chinese saxophonists are increasingly recognised on the international stage. By incorporating Chinese musical elements, they have contributed a unique "Chinese voice" to the global evolution of the saxophone.

- **Conclusion:**

This chapter outlines the saxophone's global journey—from its European origins, through its flourishing in American jazz, to its cultural integration and innovation in China. It illustrates how musical instruments, as cultural carriers, can transcend geographical and cultural boundaries and remain vibrant through the continuous absorption and integration of diverse musical traditions. The saxophone's historical trajectory thus serves as a microcosm of global musical exchange and integration.

## **Chapter Two. Saxophone innovation and integration in China**

**Abstract of the Chapter:** This chapter presents a systematic review of the saxophone's development process since its introduction to China, with a particular focus on its integration with Chinese folk music and popular culture. The chapter demonstrates how this integration has led to the formation of unique "Sinicised" styles and schools in both the classical and jazz fields. The article draws on a range of representative figures and seminal works to elucidate the pivotal role of the saxophone as a conduit between Chinese and Western musical traditions.

### **2.1 Integration and development of Classical music and Chinese folk music**

**Core Theme:** How the saxophone, as a Western instrument, can be deeply integrated with Chinese traditional music to form a unique classical saxophone performance style with national characteristics and artistic charm.

- Introduction and Early Development (Late 19th Century – Mid-20th Century): The saxophone was introduced to China with Western military bands in the late 19th century and became popular in coastal cities in the 1930s and 1940s. After the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, the development of music education led to the establishment of saxophone majors at colleges and universities, laying the foundation for its spread.
- Integration and Innovation (Late 20th Century – 21st Century): Composers and performers began actively exploring the combination of the saxophone with Chinese traditional music, creating works that blend Chinese and Western elements. At the same time, the exchange of music education between China and the international community (such as inviting masters like Claude Delangle) greatly improved performance and teaching standards.

### **2.1.1 Development of classical saxophone in China**

- Core Innovations and Representative Figures:

Key Figures: Professor Li Manlong is regarded as the founder of classical saxophone education in China. He not only composed and adapted numerous works with national characteristics but also wrote authoritative saxophone teaching materials and cultivated many talents. Through creating a large number of nationalised works, compiling examination textbooks, and promoting educational activities, he has had a profound impact on the development of the saxophone industry in China.

- Fusion Techniques:

Complementary Instrumental Characteristics: Utilising the diverse timbres of the saxophone to imitate the sounds and playing techniques of traditional Chinese instruments such as the erhu, dizi, and suona (such as glissando and staccato).

Integration of Musical Elements: Extensive use of Chinese folk melodies, pentatonic scales, and traditional Chinese modes in compositions.

- Representative Works Analysis:

The article focuses on analysing Li Manlong’s adaptation of “Tongjin Theme and Variations”, elaborating on how it combines the melodies and rhythms of Zhuang ethnic folk songs with the theme-and-variation form and the harmonic colours of classical music, perfectly embodying the innovative concept of “East-West fusion”. Other works, such as “Red Flowers of Shan Dan Dan” and “The Call of the Erguna River,” are also exemplary of this approach.

- Performance Techniques:

Drawing on traditional techniques, it innovatively incorporates the playing methods of Chinese traditional instruments, such as imitating the erhu's glissando, the pipa's tremolo, and the dizi's articulation, greatly enriching the saxophone's expressiveness. When performing such fusion works, performers must not only master the traditional techniques of the classical saxophone (such as articulation and legato) but also be proficient in the special techniques and methods of emotional expression of Chinese traditional instruments, and have a deep understanding of the cultural connotations of Chinese music.

#### **Significance and Impact:**

- Enriched China’s musical repertoire and performance forms.
- Promoted in-depth exchanges and mutual understanding between Chinese and Western music cultures.

Made the saxophone an important international bridge for the dissemination of Chinese music culture.

## 2.2 Fusion and development of jazz music and Chinese pop music

The core theme of the present study is the integration of the jazz saxophone, a musical instrument originating in Shanghai, with local Chinese culture and its consequent role in the development of Chinese popular music. This integration has led to the emergence of a distinctive "Shanghai School Jazz" style.

### Development History:

The city of Shanghai is the subject's place of birth. Jazz was introduced to Shanghai in the 1920s, primarily through radio broadcasts and performances by foreign musicians. The city's open and diverse cultural milieu contributed to the rapid establishment of this musical genre. The Ballroom became an iconic venue.

Localisation process: The evolution of Chinese jazz has been marked by significant developments since 1947, when Jimmy King established the first Chinese jazz band, "Jimmy King and his Big Band". This seminal group pioneered a unique fusion of jazz stylings and Shanghai's distinctive musical heritage, thereby laying the foundation for the subsequent development of Chinese jazz and jazz big bands.

- Contemporary development: Up to now, Shanghai still has an active jazz ecosystem (such as JZ Club and the Lincoln Centre for Jazz Shanghai) and has produced leading figures, such as Professor Zhang Xiaolu, who is dedicated to jazz education, composition, and international exchanges.
- Representative works: Classic songs like "Night Shanghai" and "Rose, Rose, I Love You" emerged, which integrated Chinese and Western styles. Singers like Bai Guang and Zhou Xuan incorporated jazz elements into their performances.

### Innovation manifestations:

- Core innovations and representative works:

Fusion techniques:

Incorporating Chinese elements into jazz improvisation: Using pentatonic scales and folk melodies (such as "Jasmine Flower", "Butterfly Lovers") in jazz improvisation.

Innovative band arrangements: Adding traditional Chinese instruments like erhu and pipa to jazz bands.

Adaptation and creation of works: Adapting Chinese pop songs and folk songs into jazz styles.

Analysis of representative works:

"Night Shanghai": A classic case. The article analyses how it uses a big band arrangement, swing rhythm, and saxophone improvisation to interpret the Shanghai pop melody, thereby becoming a musical symbol of Shanghai culture.

"Cool Orient" (by Zhang Xiaolu): A modern example, showcasing the unique charm of Chinese jazz saxophone on the international stage, deeply integrating Eastern musical thinking with Western jazz language.

- Kenny G: Although an American musician, his adaptations of "Jasmine Flower" and other works have Techniques and emotions: Jazz saxophone in pop music emphasizes the diversity of timbre (creating romantic, sad or passionate atmospheres) and rich techniques (such as glissando, vibrato, high notes, improvisation), with the core purpose of enhancing the emotional expression, appeal and stage presence of the songs.

### 2.2.4 Big bands have played a crucial role in the education and development of jazz in China:

- Jazz big bands play a core role in education and talent cultivation in China, providing musicians with platforms for ensemble, improvisation, and teamwork.

- Institutions like Beijing Modern Music Conservatory have established systematic jazz education systems and introduced international faculty, promoting the professionalisation and internationalisation of Chinese jazz.

### 2.2.5 About the concept/term of improvisation and art of jazz music

- This section delves into the core position of improvisation in jazz, defining it as "high-speed musical creation".
- It analyses the artistic features of improvisation (freedom and constraints, creativity, emotional expression, interactivity). It explains related professional terms, enhancing the academic depth of this article from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

### Summary: Overall Achievements and Future Trends

- Diversification of Styles: A saxophone performance system with Chinese characteristics has emerged, integrating diverse styles such as pop, folk, and jazz.
- Cross-border Integration: Innovation is not limited to music itself but extends to cross-border collaborations with dance, drama, and multimedia technologies, greatly expanding the performance forms and artistic boundaries of the saxophone.
- Cultural Significance: The innovation and integration of the saxophone in China is not only a progress in music technology but also a successful example of dialogue between Chinese and Western cultures. It enriches Chinese musical culture and enables the world to hear China's voice better through this medium.

been widely popular in China, greatly promoting the popularity of jazz saxophone in Chinese pop music.

### 2.3 Summary and Outlook:

1. Formation of New Styles and Schools: Contemporary Chinese saxophone performance has formed diverse schools, including pop style, folk style, and those emphasising improvisation.
2. Cross-border Integration and Innovation: Future innovation will mainly be reflected in cross-border collaborations (with traditional Chinese music, dance, and drama) and multimedia integration (combining lighting, video, and electronic music technologies), greatly expanding the performance forms and artistic boundaries of the saxophone.
3. Cultural Significance: The innovation and integration of the saxophone in China is not only a progress in music technology but also a successful example of dialogue between Chinese and Western cultures. It enriches Chinese musical culture and enables the world to hear China's voice better through this medium.

## Chapter Three. Saxophone teaching methodology - the innovation of emotional expression and understanding

The following **abstract** is posited as a conclusion of this study: Saxophone instruction should extend beyond mere technical training and embrace innovation by positioning "emotional expression and understanding" as a central objective of teaching. This chapter proposes developing a more comprehensive and effective teaching system by drawing on the pedagogical models of countries with strong saxophone traditions.

### **3.1 Saxophone playing technique. Saxophone emotional expression**

This section establishes emotional expression as the central element of saxophone performance, elaborating on it through three key dimensions:

1. Technique as a Vehicle for Emotion: This part details how specific emotions can be conveyed through the control of timbre (mouth shape, breath support), dynamics (volume), pitch (register), and rhythm. Three advanced techniques are emphasised:

- Throat Sound: Produces a rough, raspy tone commonly used in jazz and rock to evoke intensity and emotional rawness.
- Glissando (upward and downward): Enhances musical fluidity and expressiveness through smooth pitch transitions.
- Elastic Articulation: Generates a percussive rhythmic effect, adding energy and vitality to music, particularly in Latin and pop styles.

2. Style as the Context for Emotion: Different musical styles carry distinct emotional connotations. For instance:

- Classical music: Characterised by precision, elegance, and a focus on melody and harmony.
- Jazz music: Marked by freedom, improvisation, and expressive energy.
- Folk music: It has unique characteristics of different regions and ethnic groups, resulting in distinct styles within each region. Learn to flexibly apply various styles and successively express the emotions of different regions.

Performers must deeply explore the historical and cultural background of the piece, understand its narrative, and use imagination to immerse themselves in the musical context. This enables a profound integration of emotion and style.

3. Emotional Interaction Between Performer and Audience: The ultimate goal of emotional expression is to create resonance. The performer's mental state significantly influences the effectiveness of expression. Sincere emotional delivery can:

- Evoke emotional responses from the audience.
- Influence and shift the audience's emotional state.
- Establish a reciprocal emotional connection through eye contact, body language, and stage presence, thereby enhancing the performance's overall impact.

4. Interpretation of Musical Content: Using Debussy's "Clair de Lune" and Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" as examples, this section emphasises the importance of thoroughly studying the work's historical background, the spirit of its time, and the composer's intent before performance. Such preparation enables performers to accurately capture and convey the core emotions—such as the dreamlike haze in "Clair de Lune" or the vibrant melancholy in "Rhapsody in Blue."

5. Systematisation of Emotional Concepts and Expressive Techniques

- This chapter introduces an innovative approach by translating abstract emotions into concrete, actionable playing techniques. For example:

- Melancholy: Achieved through a soft and raspy tone, rhythm with subtle fluctuations, and the use of legato and trills.

- Passion: Expressed through a bright and penetrating tone, light and elastic rhythms, and the use of staccato and forte articulation.

- Warmth: Conveyed through a soft and rich tone, steady and smooth rhythm, and sustained legato phrasing.

- This framework offers a clear and practical methodological guide for both teaching and performance.

### 3.2 Comparison and enlightenment of saxophone teaching styles

#### A Comparison and Implications of the Global Teaching Situation

Through a comparative analysis of the educational systems in Europe, the United States, and China, this section highlights their respective strengths and weaknesses, thereby offering insights into potential directions for pedagogical innovation.

Region	Advantages	Emphasis/Features	Current status/Challenges
Europe	With a long history, a rigorous system, a focus on fundamentals and theory, and an active international exchange	Classical music tradition, pure timbre, precise technique, and improvisational ability	The institution is well-resourced, offers master's programs, and supports many interdisciplinary collaborations. It is a hub for classical saxophone.
America	Diverse, personalised, practical, and resource-rich	Jazz coexists with improvisation, pop music and many other styles	An education system that supports individual development and creativity, a thriving industry, and a wide range of career paths.
China	Rapidly developing and increasingly valued	Focus on classical and pop music	The development of music education exhibits a significant imbalance, as teaching staff and resources are predominantly concentrated in major urban centres. Moreover, there is a notable lack of innovation in teaching materials, particularly the absence of intermediate to advanced curricula that incorporate traditional Chinese ethnic music.

#### Summary and Implications:

- Commonality: Teaching emphasises fundamental skills, musical expressiveness, and the cultivation of students' creativity.
- Differences are primarily rooted in educational philosophies (traditional foundations versus free innovation), instructional content (varied stylistic focuses), and cultural contexts.
- Implications:

Enhance practical instruction by expanding opportunities for concerts, competitions, master classes, and community performances.

Highlight individualised instruction by tailoring teaching methods to students' aptitudes and encouraging the development of personal performance styles.

Promote interdisciplinary integration by incorporating subjects such as music theory, psychology, and music history into the curriculum.

Draw upon international best practices—adopt improvisation techniques from the United States, systematic training approaches from Europe, and advance the localisation and diversification of teaching materials and repertoire.

### **3.3. Innovative ideas of saxophone teaching**

#### **Specific Ideas and Methods for Teaching Innovation**

##### **1. Six specific and feasible innovative teaching strategies are proposed:**

- **Strengthening Basic Skills Training:** Systematic practice of long tones, articulation, and scales is emphasised to significantly enhance students' technical proficiency and musical comprehension (approximately 70%).
- **Adopting Diversified Teaching Models:** In addition to traditional one-on-one instruction, group and collective classes are introduced to foster collaborative learning and cultivate a supportive and dynamic learning environment.
- **Integrating Multiple Musical Styles:** Moving beyond a single-style approach, the curriculum incorporates diverse genres such as classical, jazz, pop, and folk music to broaden students' musical perspectives and cultural awareness.
- **Increasing Opportunities for Artistic Practice:** Expanding students' stage experience through concerts, competitions, and commercial performances helps develop their performance skills and psychological resilience.
- **Utilising Multimedia Technology in Teaching:** Instruction is enhanced through the use of animation to illustrate theoretical concepts, playback recordings for performance analysis, audio-visual materials for studying master performances, and custom accompaniment tracks for practice.
- **Encouraging Student Creativity:** Students are guided to adapt and compose music, thereby nurturing their creative thinking and individual artistic expression.

##### **Innovative Teaching Model Cases:**

- **Case 1: Emotional Experiential Ensemble Teaching:** Through the sequential process of "observation → discussion → rehearsal → performance → peer evaluation," students engage deeply with emotional expression within a collaborative setting.
- **Case 2: Project-Based Solo Composition and Performance:** Students undertake the entire process, from determining an emotional theme and gathering inspiration to composing a piece, rehearsing, and delivering a public performance. This approach comprehensively enhances their abilities in composition, performance, and emotional articulation.

##### **Construction of Faculty and Evaluation System:**

**Teaching Staff:** Educators are encouraged to continuously improve their professional competence through international training, participation in performance, and collaborative exchanges with peers.

- **Evaluation Mechanism:**

A comprehensive, multidimensional assessment system is established to replace the traditional skill-focused evaluation model.

**Multi-Dimensional Assessment:** Evaluating students based on technical proficiency, expressive ability, learning attitude, progress, and creativity.

**Diverse Evaluation Subjects:** Combining teacher assessment, student self-assessment, peer evaluation, and expert feedback.

**Varied Evaluation Methods:** Employing both quantitative and qualitative measures, with particular emphasis on process-oriented assessment that values ongoing progress and constructive feedback rather than solely focusing on final examination outcomes.

Emphasis on Process Evaluation: Providing timely and constructive feedback during daily instruction to guide student development and encourage reflective learning.

### **3.4. The Saxophone competition – cultural and educational significance**

#### **Core Conclusions**

The chapter's objective is to methodically establish a framework for saxophone pedagogy that is characterised by its emphasis on emotional expression. This framework is underpinned by the expertise of a skilled teaching faculty and a scientifically designed evaluation system. It integrates diverse and innovative pedagogical approaches, ranging from micro-level technical instruction to macro-level cross-cultural comparisons, ultimately offering an effective pathway to elevate the artistic quality and communicative power of saxophone education. The model also underscores the importance of cultivating not only technically proficient musicians but also artists capable of deep musical understanding, creative expression, and meaningful emotional engagement with audiences.

## **Chapter Four. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **4.1 Summarisation**

- **Development Achievements:** This chapter examines the noteworthy development of the saxophone arts in China over the past two decades, emphasising accomplishments in various domains. These include educational initiatives, popularisation efforts, talent cultivation, and the creation of original compositions firmly embedded in Chinese musical traditions. The chapter also highlights the attainment of performance excellence, as evidenced by successes in international competitions, and the vibrant state of the performance market. Furthermore, it explores the integration of saxophone music with diverse genres, such as traditional Chinese music, popular music, jazz, and electronic music, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted evolution of the saxophone arts in China.
- **Research Significance:** The study underscores the importance of exploring emotional expression and pedagogical innovation in saxophone education and proposes a range of effective teaching strategies, including experiential learning and project-based instruction.
- **Future Directions:** The chapter advocates for continued enhancement of the educational framework, deeper integration of traditional Chinese musical heritage, expanded international collaboration, and the exploration of synergies with modern technologies, all aimed at nurturing high-calibre talent and advancing artistic innovation.

**Final Mission:** Saxophone pedagogy is positioned as a vehicle for cultural, historical, and artistic transmission, guided by the principles of "equality, respect, and inclusiveness." The chapter concludes with a humble acknowledgement of its limitations and an invitation for future scholarly refinement.

#### **Achievements**

- **Education System Becoming More Complete**

Saxophone education in China has achieved widespread dissemination, establishing a comprehensive system ranging from foundational to advanced professional training.

Music conservatories and training institutions have produced a substantial number of skilled professionals, many of whom have earned international accolades, reflecting the high standard of saxophone instruction.

- Performance Level Aligning with International Standards

Chinese saxophonists have gained international recognition, demonstrating exceptional technical proficiency and distinctive artistic interpretation through participation in global festivals, competitions, and collaborative exchanges.

Performance styles have diversified to include classical, jazz, and pop genres, with a distinctive Chinese stylistic identity gradually emerging.

- Thriving Work Creation

Composers have drawn deeply from traditional Chinese musical motifs, producing a rich body of saxophone compositions that blend indigenous elements with contemporary compositional techniques.

These works have not only enriched the global saxophone repertoire but also introduced fresh artistic perspectives to the international music community.

- Thriving Performance Market

Saxophone performances are now integral to a wide range of cultural events, including concerts, festivals, and commercial shows, contributing significantly to public cultural life.

Regularly held saxophone festivals, masterclasses, and academic symposiums have further strengthened the art form's visibility and accessibility.

- Cultural Integration and Innovation

The saxophone has been successfully integrated with traditional Chinese music, pop, jazz, and electronic genres, giving rise to novel artistic expressions.

Notably, collaborations between the saxophone and traditional Chinese instruments such as the erhu and pipa exemplify the creative synthesis of Eastern and Western musical traditions.

#### 4.2 Future and prospect

**Continuous enhancement of performance standards:** As the field of music education grows and international collaboration intensifies, the People's Republic of China is well-positioned to cultivate a growing pool of talent and to absorb global best practices. This, in turn, is set to accelerate the advancement of saxophone performance standards.

**Further Works with Chinese Characteristics:** Composers are expected to delve further into China's rich cultural and folk music heritage, blending it with modern and Western techniques to produce original works that reflect a distinct "Chinese voice" while meeting international artistic standards.

**Diversification and Professionalisation of Performance Styles:** The educational system is transforming greater specialisation, with the provision of bespoke training in classical, jazz and pop performance, thereby cultivating experts in each stylistic domain.

The present study explores the notion of **deepening cultural integration**. The ongoing dialogue between Chinese and Western musical traditions is set to remain a defining feature, fostering mutual understanding and contributing to the global enrichment of music culture.

**Enhanced International Influence:** It is anticipated that China will undergo a transition from its current status as a significant producer and consumer of saxophones to that of a pivotal actor on the global stage. This transformation will be characterised by an active role in shaping international saxophone education, performance, and industry development.

The **expansion of international exchange and cooperation** is particularly significant. The increased participation of Chinese saxophonists in global events, in conjunction with more frequent visits by international experts, will deepen cross-cultural collaboration through performances, masterclasses, and academic discourse.

#### Future Directions

- Refinement and Professionalisation of the Education System

Music institutions will develop more specialised curricula tailored to distinct performance styles—classical, jazz, and pop—with a focus on individualised student development.

The integration of modern technologies, such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence-assisted instruction, will enhance pedagogical effectiveness and foster students' practical skills and creative capacities.

- **Deepening Cultural Integration and Creation**

Composers will be encouraged to explore traditional Chinese cultural and folk music in greater depth, aiming to produce saxophone works with global artistic impact.

Interdisciplinary collaborations between saxophone music and other art forms—such as dance, theatre, and multimedia—will be promoted to expand expressive possibilities and artistic innovation.

- **Integration of Technology and Art**

Exploration of the saxophone's fusion with electronic music and digital technologies will open new avenues for timbral experimentation and performance innovation.

Digital platforms will be leveraged to enhance the visibility and accessibility of saxophone art, broadening its audience and social impact.

### **Reflection on Teaching and Culture**

The development of students' emotional expression and cultural literacy must be prioritised in the teaching process. To this end, innovative pedagogical approaches such as experiential and project-based learning should be employed.

Interactions with global scholars must be guided by a spirit of equality and inclusiveness, thereby fostering cross-cultural artistic exchange and mutual learning.

It is the responsibility of educators to ensure the cultural transmission of the saxophone art form, integrating it with traditional Chinese culture to nurture musicians with global perspectives and innovative capabilities.

### **Core Conclusion:**

Over the past 20 years, the art of the saxophone as performed in China has achieved several significant milestones. To ensure that the nation's artistic standards and global influence continue to rise, continued progress in the following areas is essential: education, cultural synthesis, international collaboration, and technological integration. Beyond its function as a musical instrument, the saxophone serves as a vital bridge between Chinese and Western musical traditions, embodying profound emotional and cultural significance. Through sustained effort and innovation, saxophone art will continue to enrich the diversity of global music culture and realise its unique artistic value.

## **Conclusions and List of Contributions**

### **Summary of the Main Research Findings**

In the context of globalisation, international cultural exchange is becoming increasingly prevalent, with music, as a significant form of cultural exchange, garnering considerable attention. The saxophone, a distinctive wind instrument, occupies a significant role in the education and performance of ethnic, classical and jazz music in numerous countries worldwide. The dissertation draws attention to the musical environments in China, Europe, and America, while simultaneously exploring different approaches to developing students' performance skills through the interpretation of music across various styles and the study of improvisation. The present study examines the application of new methods and forms of work in saxophone training, the educational

significance of saxophone competitions for students' creative development, and the promotion of the integration of this instrument into Chinese musical practice.

### **Research Contributions**

This study employs a multi-layered comparison to analyse the use and integration of the saxophone across different musical styles in China over the past 20 years. This analysis is deemed to be of theoretical and practical significance.

**(1). Theory:** Through detailed analysis of multiple factors such as cross-culture, cross-region, and cross-ethnicity, this research not only reveals the integration characteristics of the saxophone in different regional cultures but also provides beneficial results for the teaching direction of the saxophone in the new era. A multi-fusion teaching approach points the way for the future development of the saxophone.

**(2). Practice:** This dissertation deeply analyses the extremely important practical contributions of the saxophone in many key areas such as music performance, cultural exchange, and technological innovation. The saxophone not only greatly expands the form and connotation of musical art but also strongly promotes the exchange and integration of different cultures.

**(3). Historical Value:** This study systematically examines the historical development of the saxophone, analysing its evolution and integration into different regional cultures. The formation of the overall argumentation includes studies on regional forms of integration, the opinions of experts and professors in the field. The study traces the significance of the saxophone from its origin to its role in European classical and romantic music and American jazz. It explores its introduction, spread, and influence on China's musical environment over the past 20 years. At the same time, from a methodological perspective, it makes a kind of evaluation of the mechanism of regional cultural elements in teaching, building a comprehensive framework for a thorough understanding of the complexity and diversity of the integration of the saxophone instrument into teaching and performance practice, revealing the characteristics of different regional cultural environments.

**(4). Teaching Methodology:** By introducing the world's most advanced concepts and methods of saxophone teaching, this study aims to improve the practical system of saxophone teaching in China. At the same time, it emphasises individualised teaching, deeply understands learners' personalities, formulates individualised teaching plans, and encourages learners to express and create based on their own emotional experiences, thus cultivating an innovative spirit and individual consciousness. In addition, it actively promotes the integration of interdisciplinary teaching. It builds an interdisciplinary teaching system, including increasing the proportion of related disciplinary courses, adopting modern models, and improving students' overall quality and emotional expression abilities. It encourages teachers to conduct interdisciplinary research and cooperation. In terms of mastering modern teaching concepts and methods, the study is based on the concept of improvisation, the systematic teaching model of European classical music, and the unique style of Chinese folk music, and integrates them into teaching reforms, effectively improving teaching quality.

**(5). Emotional Expression in Performance:** This dissertation, through an in-depth analysis of the elements of emotional expression in saxophone performance and reflection on the limitations of traditional teaching, proposes a series of innovative strategies, such as "learning by experience", "project-based learning", interdisciplinary integration and modern technology-assisted learning. Regarding saxophone education in China, the author of the study believes that it is necessary to strengthen the connection between theory and practice in teaching, deepen teaching innovation, individual approach in teaching, promote interdisciplinary integration in teaching, absorb modern international teaching concepts and methods, and attach importance to the study and inheritance of

cultural connotations. As a musical instrument that transcends culture and national boundaries, the saxophone carries rich human emotions and spiritual pursuits.

**(6). Promoting International Cooperation:** By strengthening exchange and cooperation between countries, directing a methodological look at contemporary concepts in saxophone performance, this study helps to broaden artistic horizons, to enhance professional skills and the level of saxophone teaching. This, in turn, contributes not only to deepening cultural integration, but also to "amplifying" the presence of the saxophone instrument on an international scale.

## Appendix

### Publications

1. Jia xin,Wang. *HOW TO MASTER THE SAXOPHONE. SOME PRACTICAL AND EXECUTIVE METHODOLOGICAL IDEAS*, В: сборник "МЛАД НАУЧЕН ФОРУМ ЗА МУЗИКА И ТАНЦ", брой 19/2025, Издание на НБУ, Департамент „Музика”, стр. 271-286, ISSN 1313-342X
2. Jia xin,Wang. *THE SAXOPHONE COMPETITION – CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE*, В: сборник "МЛАД НАУЧЕН ФОРУМ ЗА МУЗИКА И ТАНЦ", Издание на НБУ, Департамент „Музика”, ISSN 1313-342X (предадена за печат)

### Concerts list

1. 07.06.2022 – Jazz and classical saxophone concert
2. 08.2024 – Saxophone Festival concert
3. 05.2022 – The 16th Classical Music Competition
4. 10.2022 – Pernik Brass Orchestra 120th Anniversary Concert
5. 05.2023 – Pernik Wind Orchestra Concert
6. 09.2023 – Jazz Saxophone Teaching Concert
7. 07.2023 – European Museum Night

### Diplom

05.2022 - The 16th Classical Music Competition

<https://www.24chasa.bg/mezhdunarodni/article/11491148>

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### CURRICULUM VITAE

**Name:** Wang Jia xin

**Experience and Introduction:** Born in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, China, he won the first prize in the saxophone competition and numerous awards during his teenage years.

**Major(s):** Saxophone Performance

*Classical Performance:* He studied under Professor Li Manlong from the Central Conservatory of Music in China.

*Saxophone Performance:* In Bulgaria he specialized in saxophone with Dr. Trifon Trifonov – a lecturer at the New Bulgarian University

**Educational Background:**

2009-2013 Tianjin Normal University, Bachelor of Music in Performance (Saxophone)

2020-2022 New Bulgarian University, Department of Music, Master of Music in Performance (Saxophone)

2024 New Bulgarian University, Department of Music, Master of Sound Direction (Sound Engineering)

Wang Jia xin is currently a doctoral student at New Bulgarian University

Scientific direction: Music and Dance Art, Field of study: PhD in Music - Scientific specialty: Musicology and Musical Art

**Art Practical Experience:**

Recipient of multiple awards, including First Prize in university art exhibition competitions and Second Prize in group performances, First Prize in the Tianjin Saxophone Competition, Participant in the National Woodwind Competition organized by the Central Conservatory of Music.

First Prize (Gold Award) at the 16th International Young Performers Competition (Pernik)<sup>1</sup>, Soloist Award for Brass Band at the 16th International Young Performers Competition, Title of "Young Performer" at the 16th International Young Performers Competition

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<sup>1</sup> 16th Classical Music Competition (Pernik)

<https://www.24chasa.bg/mezhdunarodni/article/11491148>