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Having female performers from the inner palace join hands [lit. join sleeves] and sing of their troubles in order to extend the pleasure of your officials, is this not almost the same as lord and minister playing around together? This was certainly a contributing factor to the Tang's decline and collapse. How can one not take heed?!

以禁中女伶連袂歌怨以盡臣下之權，豈不幾於君臣相譴邪？唐之所以衰亂不振者，彼誠有以召之也。可不戒哉！<sup>33</sup>

In the face of these anxieties about the moral status of contemporary music, the Northern Song court carried out a nearly continuous series of efforts to reform music and restore it to ritual purity. Over a century of such efforts culminated in the extraordinary 1104 decision to use the length of Emperor Huizong's fingers as the basis for creating standardized pitch pipes.<sup>34</sup>

While the court theorists sought to reform music and dance as a foundation for governing, scholars debated their usefulness for personal cultivation. Some argued for a continued place for music and dance in the education of upper-class men. Thus Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–86), in his *Precepts for Family Life* (*Jiafan* 家範), stipulated that boys who reached the age of thirteen should begin to study music, recite poetry, and dance the *shao* (a dance mentioned in the *Book of Ritual*).<sup>35</sup> But, as evident in Liu Bin's comments above, many other Song men seem to have felt that participation in dance and music was no longer a desirable or even appropriate activity for scholars. Sima Guang's contemporary Zhang Zai 張載 (1020–77) warned that, in his own day, even the music of the classical *qin* was “not far from [the sounds] of Zheng and Wei.”<sup>36</sup> Likewise, the