

## MASTER'S THESIS

### The emperor's music: the creation of a poetic tradition from the Han dynasty music bureau

Tingle Jr, Joseph Edwin

*Date of Award:*  
2012

[Link to publication](#)

#### General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent URL assigned to the publication

**The Emperor's Music:  
The Creation of a Poetic Tradition from the Han Dynasty Music  
Bureau**

**TINGLE JR, Joseph Edwin**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements**

**for the degree of**

**Master of Philosophy**

**Principal Supervisor: Prof. CHEN Zhi**

**Hong Kong Baptist University**

**August 2012**

## **Abstract**

The following dissertation offers an analysis of the development, expansion, and abolition of the Han dynasty Music Bureau through a consideration of the poetry it collected, recorded, and patronized. Inquiry is made regarding the relationship between this early Music Bureau poetry and that of the traditional *yuefu* genre of folk-songs and literati compositions. It is the hope of the present study that a renewed focus on the *yuefu* poetry of the Han dynasty will lead to further reconsiderations and, in turn, greater understandings of *yuefu*'s special place in the Chinese poetic tradition.

The first chapter of the following dissertation is an introduction, which expounds upon the main arguments of the thesis and acquaints the reader with information regarding the Music Bureau. The introduction also provides an over view of some of the most important scholarship consulted. The second chapter illustrates the early Han ritual system through a reading of several "Anshi fangzhong ge" ritual hymns, and places them in a greater historical and philosophical context. The third chapter examines the expansion of the Music Bureau under the reign of Emperor Wu of Han; while the fourth chapter discusses the interplay between folk-songs and literati imitations in the earliest anthologies of *yuefu* poetry. Finally, the fifth chapter is the conclusion, and suggests that the form and thematic contents of *yuefu* poems be considered in launching a greater discussion on the beginnings of *yuefu* poetry as a discernible literary tradition.

## Table of Contents

Declaration.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Chapter One: An Introduction .....	1
Chapter Two: The Seventeen “Chamber Songs to Put the World at Peace” .....	20
Chapter Three: Emperor Wu’s “Hymns of Suburban Sacrifice”.....	41
Chapter Four: Beyond Ritual Music: Literati Yuefu, Dances of Bells and Drums, Concerted Pieces, and the Legacy of the Han “Folk” Song.....	72
Chapter Five: A Conclusion.....	101
Yuefu Bibliography .....	105
Curriculum Vitae .....	113