

FOUR-STRINGED MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

The octagonal body is inlaid with pieces of ivory and covered with snake-skin. Four silk strings are attached to the arm. The bow passes between the strings, so that it requires close attention to play without touching the wrong string. The Chinese name for this instrument, *Hu k'in* (that is, "lute of the Hu"), hints at a foreign importation and probably an Iranian origin of the instrument. It is found also in Chinese Turkistan, Mongolia, and Amur region.

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