

# The Change of Youyang Folk Songs in Chongqing Municipality, China

Can Fan

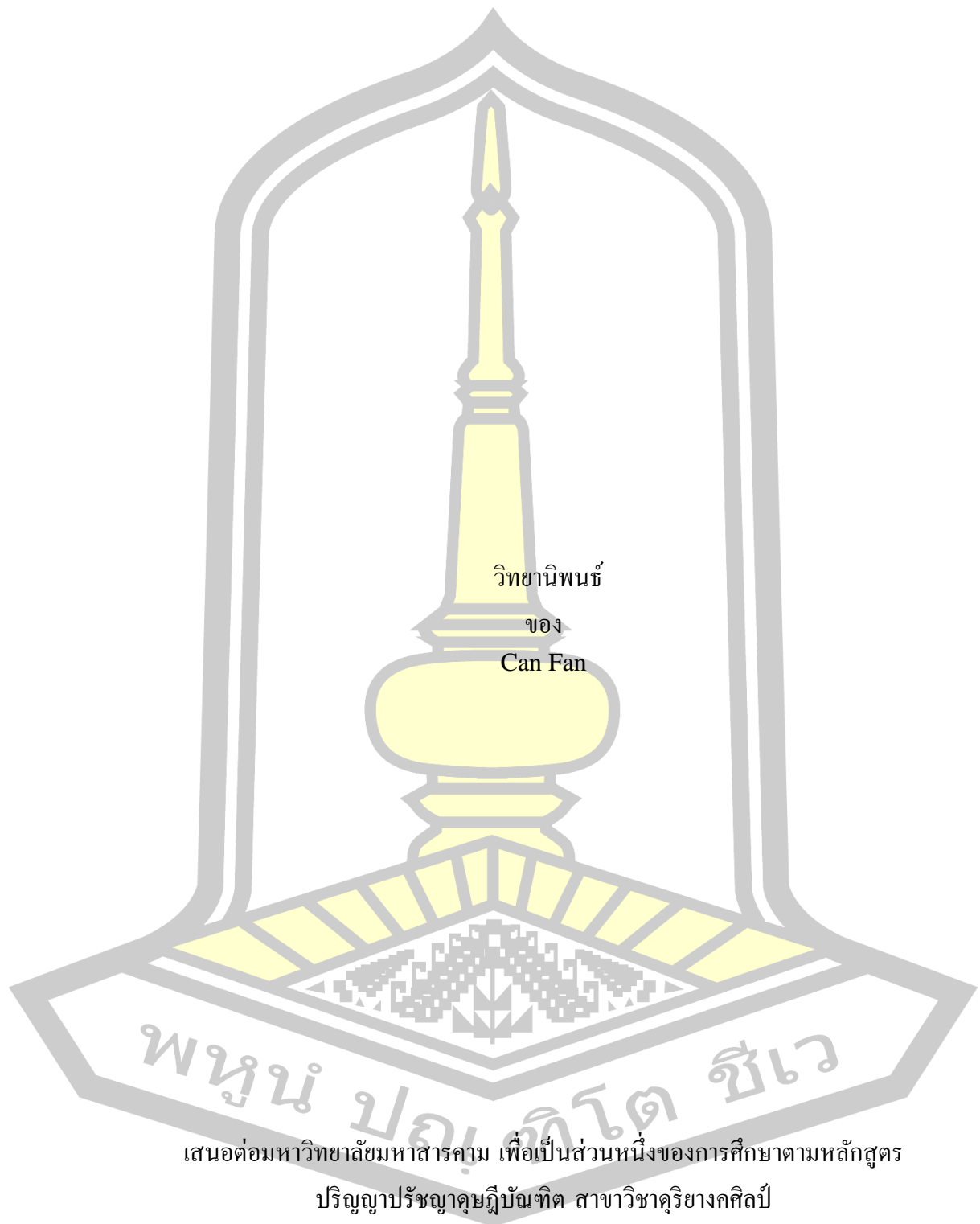
A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for

degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music

April 2024

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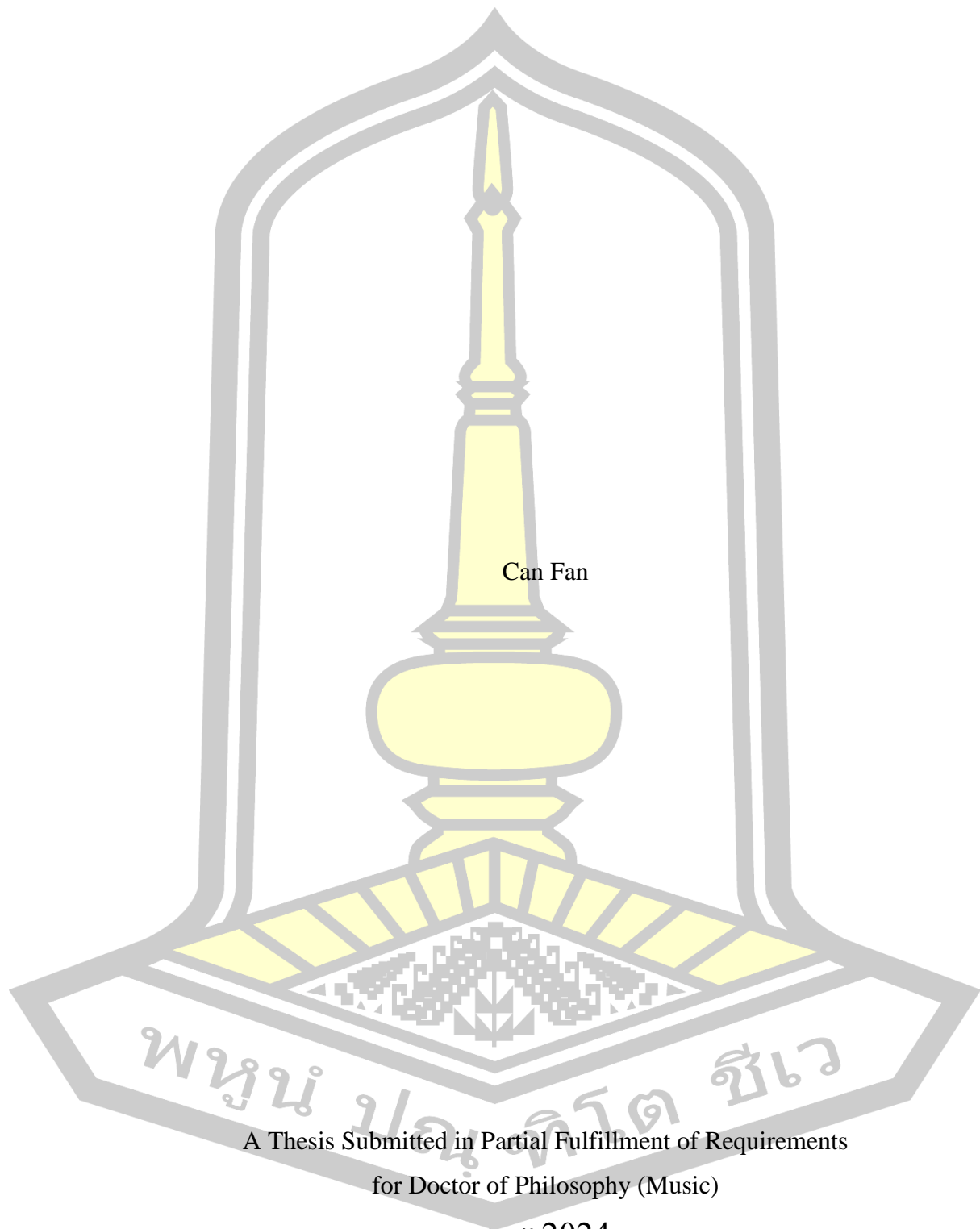
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ปริญญาปรัชญาดุษฎีบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาดุริยางคศิลป์

เมษายน 2567

ลิขสิทธิ์เป็นของมหาวิทยาลัยมหาสารคาม

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for Doctor of Philosophy (Music)

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| <b>UNIVERSITY</b> | Maharakham<br>University   | <b>YEAR</b>  | 2024  |

### ABSTRACT

Youyang folk songs are a traditional form of vocal music characterized by their distinct melodies, lyrics, and singing styles. The objectives of this dissertation were to: 1) Investigate the current status of Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China. 2) Analyze the changes in Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China. 3) Examine the preservation and transmission of Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China. This study adopted qualitative research methods, with interview and observation forms as the research tools. Data were collected on-site through interviews with three informants. The results indicate that:

1. The current status of Youyang folk songs rooted in the Tujia ethnic group's cultural heritage has been a significant part of the region's identity and traditions for generations. The area has introduced specialized folk art courses and cultural engagement, while government initiatives, such as funding and cultural exhibitions, support their preservation and promotion.

2. The changes in Youyang folk songs deeply connect to the Tujia ethnic group's cultural identity and have evolved to encompass various aspects of life and culture. The 1980s marked a turning point in their development, with "Wood leaf Love Song" and "Ala Diao" emerging as prominent features, solidifying Youyang's reputation as the "Hometown of Famous Chinese Folk Songs."

3. The preservation and transmission of Youyang folk songs involve various strategies, including educational integration, artistic engagement in rural communities, and custodian evaluation. Schools and grassroots movements revitalize vernacular culture, while government initiatives support custodians and ensure the continued transmission of these songs, highlighting the region's rich cultural heritage.

**Keyword :** Youyang folk songs, Tujia ethnic, Chongqing, Preservation, Transmission

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

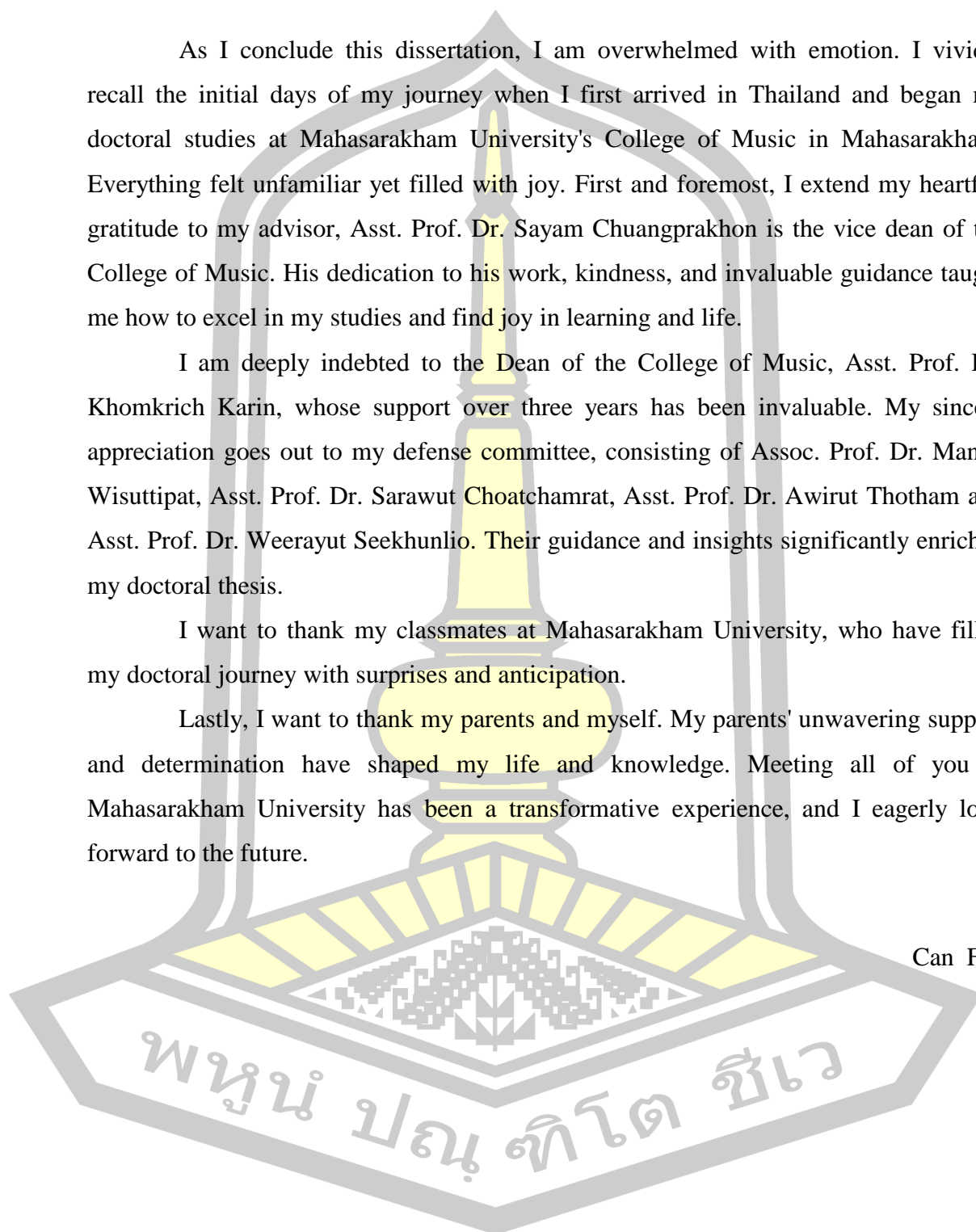
As I conclude this dissertation, I am overwhelmed with emotion. I vividly recall the initial days of my journey when I first arrived in Thailand and began my doctoral studies at Mahasarakham University's College of Music in Mahasarakham. Everything felt unfamiliar yet filled with joy. First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my advisor, Asst. Prof. Dr. Sayam Chuangprakhon is the vice dean of the College of Music. His dedication to his work, kindness, and invaluable guidance taught me how to excel in my studies and find joy in learning and life.

I am deeply indebted to the Dean of the College of Music, Asst. Prof. Dr. Khomkrich Karin, whose support over three years has been invaluable. My sincere appreciation goes out to my defense committee, consisting of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Manop Wisuttipat, Asst. Prof. Dr. Sarawut Choatchamrat, Asst. Prof. Dr. Awirut Thotham and Asst. Prof. Dr. Weerayut Seekhunlio. Their guidance and insights significantly enriched my doctoral thesis.

I want to thank my classmates at Mahasarakham University, who have filled my doctoral journey with surprises and anticipation.

Lastly, I want to thank my parents and myself. My parents' unwavering support and determination have shaped my life and knowledge. Meeting all of you at Mahasarakham University has been a transformative experience, and I eagerly look forward to the future.

Can Fan



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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

### 1. Research Background

Chongqing Municipality, located in central China along the upper stretches of the Yangtze River, is renowned for its diverse ethnic composition and rich cultural heritage. With an area of 82,400 square kilometers, this region boasts varied landscapes ranging from rolling hills to towering mountains and winding rivers, making it a melting pot of traditions and a center for cultural exchange (Duan et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021). Within Chongqing Municipality lies Youyang Tujia and Miao Autonomous County, positioned in the southeastern sector and surrounded by the Wuling Mountain Area. This county is a crucial nexus for cultural interaction and exchange between Chongqing and neighboring provinces like Hubei, Hunan, and Guizhou (Le Mentec, 2006; Zeng & Onlamul, 2023).

The folk songs of Youyang County bear witness to the region's cultural richness, rooted deeply in the traditions of the Tujia and Miao ethnic groups. These songs represent a unique fusion of melodies, lyrics, and rhythms that mirror local ways of life, customs, and beliefs. While evolving over centuries, Youyang folk songs have retained their essence and cultural significance amid shifting social, cultural, and technological landscapes (Tang, 2021). Originating in ancient times with influences from the Qing Dynasty's Bayu song and dance tradition, these songs have adapted and assimilated new elements and themes with the influx of Han Chinese migration into the region (Chen & Chonpairot, 2022).

Despite their cultural significance, Youyang folk songs face challenges in the modern era. Rapid urbanization, globalization, and changing social dynamics threaten the preservation and transmission of these traditional art forms. There is a declining interest among the younger generation in traditional music, compounded by the diminishing conventional modes of transmission, which heightens the risk of cultural erosion and loss. Moreover, the dynamic nature of Youyang folk songs presents a unique research problem. As these songs evolve in response to contemporary influences and technological advancements, there is a need to document and analyze

these changes. Understanding the factors driving the evolution of Youyang folk songs and their impact on cultural preservation is crucial for devising effective strategies for their safeguarding and transmission (Ho & Law, 2012).

This research holds significant implications for preserving and promoting Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality. By investigating the current status of these songs, analyzing their changes over time, and examining strategies for their preservation and transmission, this study aims to contribute to the conservation of Chongqing's cultural heritage. Furthermore, it seeks to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration by drawing insights from cultural studies, anthropology, and musicology. Engaging local communities, cultural organizations, and policymakers, this study aims to raise awareness of the cultural significance of Youyang folk songs and explore innovative approaches to their preservation and transmission (Zhang, 2018). Ultimately, by ensuring the continued vitality and relevance of Youyang folk songs, this research endeavors to enrich the cultural landscape of Chongqing Municipality and inspire future generations to cherish and celebrate their heritage. Through collaborative efforts and community engagement, this study aims to bridge generational divides, stimulate socio-economic development, and preserve the rich cultural legacy of Youyang folk songs for generations to come.

## **2. Research objectives**

2.1 To investigate the current status of Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China.

2.2 To analyze the changes in Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China.

2.3 To examine the preservation and transmission of Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China.

## **3. Research Questions**

3.1 What is the current status of Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China, regarding their prevalence, popularity, and the communities actively involved in their practice and promotion?

3.2 How have Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China, evolved and changed, considering cultural influences, migration, and technological advancements?

3.3 What preservation and transmission methods are employed to safeguard the heritage of Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China, and how effective are these strategies in ensuring this cultural tradition's continued existence and vitality?

#### **4. Research Benefits**

4.1 By investigating the current status of Youyang folk songs, the research provides policymakers with empirical data to formulate informed cultural policies. Understanding the present landscape of Youyang folk songs enables policymakers to develop targeted interventions to support their preservation and promotion within Chongqing Municipality, China.

4.2 Analyzing the changes in Youyang folk songs offers a historical context for preservation efforts. By tracing the historical trajectory of Youyang folk songs and identifying key drivers of change, insights into the adaptive nature of this cultural heritage inform strategies for its sustainable preservation amidst evolving cultural dynamics.

4.3 The research contributes to refining preservation strategies by examining preservation and transmission methods. Identifying successful preservation methods and assessing their impact enables stakeholders to optimize resource allocation, enhance community engagement, and implement targeted interventions to ensure the continued existence and vitality of Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China.

#### **5. Research Definitions**

5.1 The current status refers to the present condition and characteristics of Youyang folk songs, encompassing their performance, preservation, popularity, and cultural significance within the contemporary context. This includes an analysis of recent innovations, achievements, and challenges faced by Youyang folk songs, as

well as the dynamics of their integration into modern cultural practices, such as tourism and digital platforms.

5.2 The change refers to the traditional songs undergoing adaptations over time, influenced by socio-political, cultural, and technological factors. These changes include alterations in lyrical content, thematic evolution, dissemination methods, and functional types within Youyang folk songs. These changes reflect the dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity, local and external influences, and historical and contemporary contexts, affecting narrative, lyrical motifs, thematic emphasis, and dissemination mediums.

5.3 The preservation refers to a comprehensive approach to safeguarding and transmitting cultural heritage, such as Youyang folk songs, through initiatives, training programs, educational integration, and publication. It involves establishing training institutions, cultural centers, and curricula to ensure the continuity of traditional knowledge. Activities include compiling teaching materials, organizing workshops, and producing publications.

5.4 Transmission refers to the intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge, practices, and traditions, especially in Youyang folk songs. It involves formal education, mentorship, community engagement, performance activities, and publication initiatives. Key components include active participation, integration of cultural traditions into education, innovation, and technological advancements. Effective transmission strategies preserve cultural heritage, revitalize it, and contribute to cultural diversity and identity preservation.

## **6. Research conceptual framework**

This research uses qualitative methods like questionnaires, observation forms, and interviews. Drawing on Western music theory, Chinese music theory, and ethnomusicology, the study analyzes the dynamic evolution of these songs. The research process includes selecting sites, using appropriate tools, managing data, conducting rigorous analysis, and presenting precise data for comprehensive insights into the cultural phenomenon, as shown in Figure 1.

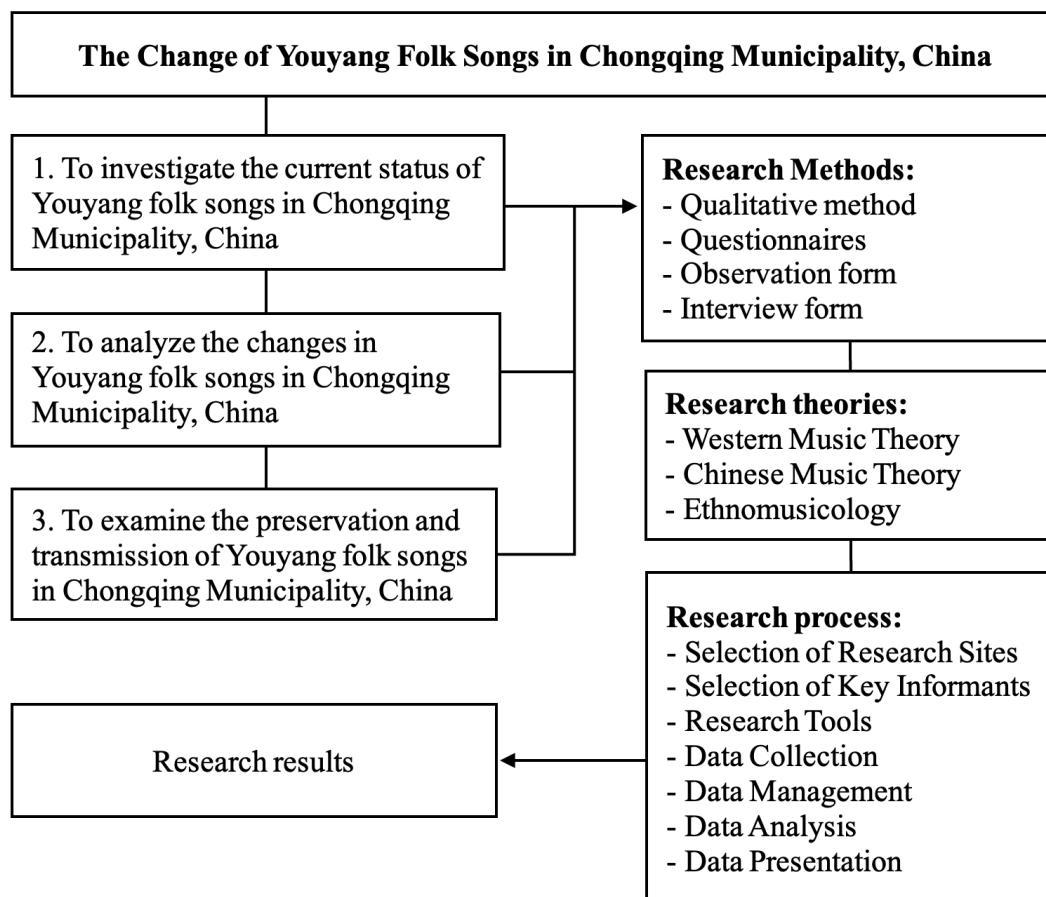
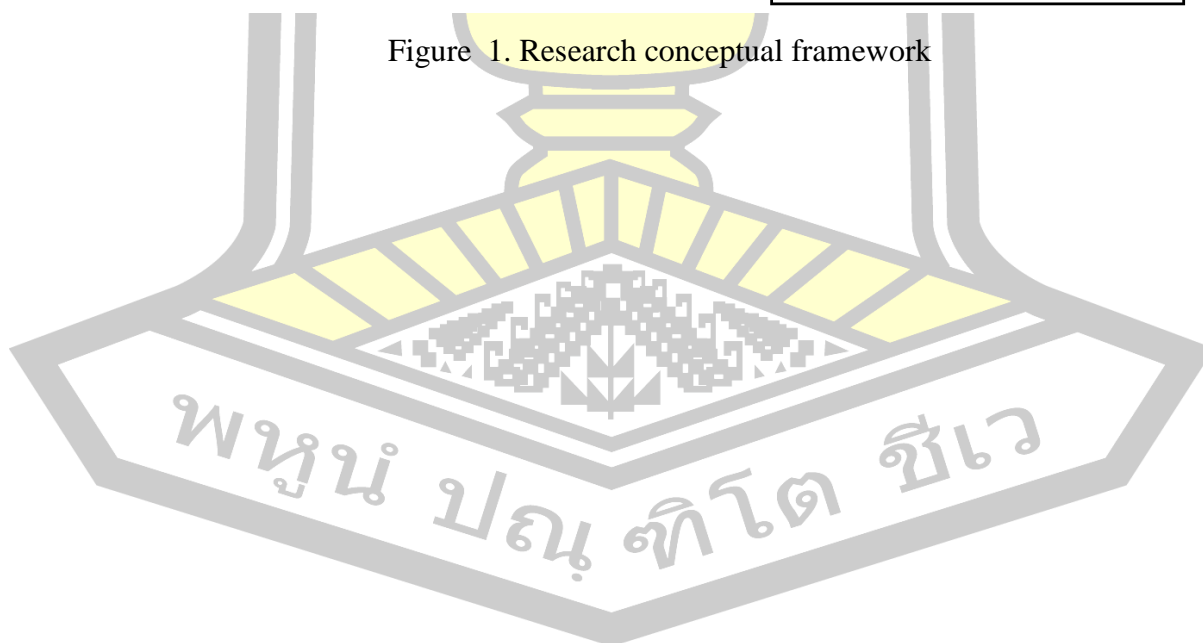


Figure 1. Research conceptual framework





## **CHAPTER II**

### **Literature reviews**

This chapter reviewed the documents to obtain the most comprehensive information. With the review of various documents according to the following topics :

1. General knowledge of Youyang City, Chongqing, China
2. General knowledge of Youyang folk song
3. General knowledge of the preservation and transmission
4. General knowledge of cultural change
5. Theories used
6. Research related

#### **1. General Knowledge of Youyang City, Chongqing, China**

##### **1.1 Geographical Location**

When discussing general knowledge about Youyang City, Chongqing, China, understanding its geographical location is crucial. Youyang County is situated in the southeastern part of Chongqing Municipality, within the western region of the Wuling Mountains. Bordered by the Wujiang River to the west and the Youshui River to the east, this county connects Chongqing to the neighboring provinces of Hubei, Hunan, and Guizhou. Referred to as "the gateway to the southeast of Chongqing and the gateway to Hunan and Guizhou," Youyang County is strategically positioned at the junction of multiple provinces, making it a melting pot of cultures and ethnicities (Zhou et al., 2014).

The Wuling Mountain area, where Youyang County is located, holds significant importance in central China, serving as a crossroads for various ethnic groups traveling from south to north. The Tujia people have historically inhabited this region, and their culture is deeply rooted in the traditions of the Tujia ethnicity. Additionally, Youyang has been influenced by neighboring cultures, including Shu culture to the west, Chu culture to the east, Hanzhong culture to the north, and Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau culture to the south, resulting in a rich tapestry of cultural heritage (Du et al., 2022).



## 1.2 Environment

The environment of Youyang County plays a significant role in shaping its culture and way of life. Nestled in the heart of the Wuling Mountain Region, the county features undulating and rugged terrain, with higher elevations in the central area and lower altitudes on both sides. The county benefits from a well-developed river system, including the east's Yuanjiang and Wujiang rivers. Youyang County experiences a subtropical, humid monsoon climate with ample yearly rainfall, mild winters, and cool summers. The region's unique topographical climate contributes to its fresh air and pleasant weather conditions year (Lanmei et al., 2024).

The geographic and natural environment has deeply influenced the lives of the Tujia people in Youyang. Elements such as clothing, food, housing, transportation, and folk arts and culture, including the Tujia Pendulum Dance, Youyang Folk Songs, and Youyang Ancient Songs, are all intertwined with the region's environment.

## 1.3 Population and Ethnic Origin

Understanding the population demographics and ethnic origin of Youyang County provides insights into its cultural diversity. With a resident population of 607,300, the county is home to a significant ethnic minority in Chongqing. The Tujia ethnic group constitutes the majority, with 83.54% of the population, followed by the Miao ethnic group at 8.93%. In addition to the Tujia and Miao populations, Youyang is home to 29 other ethnic minorities, including the Zhuang, Dong, and Yao. The Tujia people are indigenous to the region and have resided there for generations, identifying themselves as "Bizka" in the Tujia language (Lijuan, 2015).

Historical records suggest that the Tujia ancestors were originally part of the Ba people, who resided in present-day southwestern Hubei during the Shang and Zhou periods. Over time, some Ba people migrated northwestward to settle in the Wuxi Valley, forming the foundation of the Tujia community in Youyang. Today, the county boasts a rich cultural heritage, with various forms of folk music, dance, opera, handicrafts, folklore, art, and literature. Notable examples include the Youyang Tujia Pendulum Dance, Youyang Ancient Songs, Youyang Folk Songs, and Youyang Masked Yang Opera, all of which have received national recognition as intangible cultural heritage protection items (Chai Z. & Sirisuk M, 2023)

In summary, the literature review on Youyang City, Chongqing, China, provides essential insights into the region's geography, environment, population demographics, and ethnic origin. Understanding these factors is crucial for comprehending the cultural context that has shaped the development of Youyang's rich cultural heritage, including its folk songs. By examining the interplay between culture, geography, and music, the review contributes to a deeper understanding of the preservation and transmission of Youyang folk songs for future generations.

## **2. General knowledge of Youyang folk song**

The realm of Youyang folk songs is expansive and diverse, akin to an endless sea of expressions. Various classification criteria have been applied to categorize these folk songs, including distinctions based on the temporal aspects of their content and thematic differences. The status of the inheritance of Youyang folk songs is intimately connected to the broader concept of intangible heritage preservation. Their preservation is deeply intertwined with the fate of non-heritage elements (Lanmei et al., 2024).

### **2.1 Classification of Youyang Folk Songs**

Youyang Tujia folk songs represent a fusion of lyrics and music, characterized by open-ended compositions with relatively fixed musical tunes. While ceremonial songs possess a degree of structure, the lyrics of most other folk songs are primarily improvised. These songs lack accompanying musical instruments and are passed down orally across generations, leaving no written records. Consequently, they exist in vast numbers and exhibit considerable diversity. They have been companions to the Youyang Tujia people throughout history, persisting across various epochs and reflecting evolving cultural trends. As a collective form of consciousness, these songs have actively participated in the lives and production of people in different eras, serving as cultural mirrors of their times. The categorization of Youyang folk songs is based on the lyrics collected and organized in the present day, considering the emergence of various folk song types and the broad historical contexts they represent. These classifications operate at the temporal level, content level, and musical dimension (Liu & Karin, 2022).

#### **2.1.1 Temporal Level**

Folk songs, as oral expressions of folk culture, have been transmitted for millennia, silently recording and preserving their singers' societal patterns and emotional needs (Tian Can, 2002). In the Survey and Research on Chinese Tujia Folk Songs, Tujia folk songs are classified by time into several categories, including folk songs from the distant past, ancient folk songs, modern folk songs, new folk songs, and contemporary folk songs. Another classification scheme, presented by Tian Can in *The Development of Tujia Folk Songs and Their Artistic Characteristics*, divides the development trajectory of Tujia folk songs into five periods: ancient folk songs (ancient times - 1735), modern folk songs (1735 - 1911), modern folk songs during the early days of the People's Republic of China (1911 to 1949), contemporary folk songs after the founding of the People's Republic of China (1949 to 1978), and folk songs in the new era (1978 to the present).

#### 2.1.2 Content Level

In the 1980s, a nationwide effort to collect and compile folk songs took place, culminating in the publication of the *Collection of Youyang Folk Songs and Proverbs* in 1987. This was the first systematic compilation of folk songs in Youyang County's history. These Tujia folk songs were meticulously collected and categorized into six categories: labor songs, contemporary political songs, ritual songs, life songs, narrative songs, and children's songs (Yu & Karin, 2021). However, at the beginning of the 21st century, the *Songs of Peach Blossoms* project identified additional folk song repertoires that were not collected in the 1980s, leading to an expanded understanding of folk song types. These songs were further classified into four main categories: folk songs, new folk songs, songs of the Iron Army, and others. Subsequently, in 2011, further reorganization of folk songs yielded new content-based categorizations, including children's songs, love songs, bitter love songs, labor songs, narrative songs, ritual songs (wedding, crying, house building, funeral, and other rituals), and educational songs.

#### 2.1.3 Musical Dimension

Youyang folk songs are divided into early and late ones based on lyrics and musical rhythm. Early folk songs encompass early ritual songs, labor songs, and children's songs, while influences from Han culture characterize later folk songs.

These later folk songs include late ritual, narrative, life, and political songs (Jianxin & Ke, 2023).

## 2.2 Current Status of the Inheritance of Youyang Folk Songs

Youyang Miao and Tujia Autonomous County boast four national intangible heritage programs, with Youyang Folk Songs being recognized as one of the country's intangible cultural heritage items. This recognition is a testament to the rich cultural heritage that thrives in the region, primarily influenced by the Tujia population. Despite other ethnic groups like the Miao, Tujia culture has been the dominant and enduring cultural force in Youyang (Lulei & Chonpairot, 2023).

The current state of Youyang folk songs' inheritance reveals the influences of both Tujia and Han cultures, with Han culture playing a more pronounced role over time. Youyang folk songs have adapted, absorbed, and enriched their content and forms through interactions with Han culture while retaining their Tujia essence. Tujia folk songs represent the core and essence of Youyang folk songs, containing the entirety of the region's folk songs and maintaining a symbiotic relationship with them.

Regarding intangible cultural heritage inheritors, Xiong Zhenglu is the national-level inheritor of Youyang folk songs. At the same time, there are seven representative inheritors at the municipal level, with six hailing from the Tujia ethnic group. Additionally, 35 representative inheritors at the county level, featuring a mix of Tujia, Miao, and Han ethnicities. The presence of multiple inheritors underscores the diverse tapestry of the transmission of Youyang folk songs.

Youyang folk songs enjoy considerable popularity, with numerous individuals across the county capable of singing these songs. They are found in 39 townships, where both formal and informal singers contribute to preserving this cultural heritage. However, there is no formalized inheritance team or genealogy. The current landscape of Youyang folk songs features non-genetic inheritors, apprentice inheritors, and folk song enthusiasts. Despite this, their numbers are relatively limited, and the tradition is at risk due to factors such as the aging of singers and changing social environments.

In summary, this literature review explores the cultural significance of Youyang folk songs, focusing on their classification criteria, temporal aspects, content themes, and musical dimensions. It highlights the relationship between the preservation of these songs and intangible heritage protection, emphasizing the

importance of safeguarding these cultural treasures. The review also explores the current state of Youyang folk song inheritance, highlighting the influence of Tujia and Han cultures and the critical role of inheritors. Researchers in ethnomusicology, cultural preservation, and folklore can use this literature to understand the challenges of preserving and transmitting Youyang folk songs. It also serves as a valuable resource for exploring the cultural heritage of Youyang County in Chongqing, China.

### **3. General knowledge of the preservation and transmission**

Preservation and transmission represent two fundamental pillars in the conservation and perpetuation of cultural heritage. These concepts are particularly significant in the context of traditional art forms like Youyang Folk Songs in Chongqing Municipality, China. Preservation involves safeguarding cultural artifacts, practices, and knowledge to maintain authenticity and accessibility across time. Transmission, conversely, encompasses the intentional transfer of cultural traditions, values, and skills from one generation to the next, ensuring the continuity of cultural identity and heritage. In the case of Youyang Folk Songs, preservation efforts focus on documenting and conserving musical compositions, lyrics, and associated cultural meanings. At the same time, transmission strategies aim to pass down the songs' knowledge and performance techniques to future generations (Zhang, 2020).

Preserving Youyang Folk Songs involves a multifaceted approach to safeguarding various cultural heritage elements. One aspect of preservation is the documentation of oral traditions, which consists of recording and transcribing the songs as they are passed down orally from generation to generation. By capturing the melodies, lyrics, and performance styles of Youyang Folk Songs, researchers, and cultural preservationists ensure that these aspects are preserved for future study and appreciation. Additionally, efforts to conserve physical artifacts such as musical instruments, costumes, and props in Youyang folk performances contribute to keeping this cultural heritage (Xiaomei & Chonpairot, 2023).

Transmission of Youyang Folk Songs relies on a combination of traditional and contemporary methods to ensure the continued dissemination of this cultural tradition. Conventional modes of transmission, such as apprenticeship and communal gatherings, play a crucial role in passing down the knowledge and skills necessary for



singing and performing Youyang Folk Songs. Through apprenticeship arrangements, experienced singers pass on their expertise to younger generations, ensuring the continuity of performance techniques and stylistic nuances. Similarly, communal gatherings, such as festivals and community events, provide intergenerational exchange and learning opportunities, fostering a sense of cultural identity and belonging among participants (Zeng & Onlamul, 2023).

In addition to traditional methods, digital technologies have emerged as valuable tools for transmitting Youyang Folk Songs. Digital archives and online repositories provide accessible platforms for storing and disseminating recordings, videos, and written materials related to Youyang Folk Songs. These digital resources enable researchers, educators, and enthusiasts worldwide to access and study Youyang Folk Songs, thereby expanding the reach and impact of this cultural tradition. Furthermore, interactive multimedia resources, such as virtual workshops and online tutorials, facilitate the learning and appreciation of Youyang Folk Songs among diverse audiences, including those outside the geographical boundaries of Chongqing Municipality (LUMSDEN, 2008).

In summary, preservation and transmission are essential components of efforts to safeguard the cultural heritage embodied in Youyang Folk Songs. By combining traditional methods with innovative digital approaches, communities can ensure these songs' continued vitality and relevance for future generations. Through documentation, conservation, and dissemination efforts, Youyang Folk Songs can continue to serve as a source of cultural pride and identity for the people of Chongqing Municipality and beyond.

#### **4. General Knowledge of Cultural Change**

In exploring the phenomenon of cultural change, scholars have delved into various aspects to understand the dynamics and implications of this process. Cultural change encompasses shifts in values, beliefs, norms, practices, and artifacts within societies, reflecting interactions with internal and external factors. Researchers have employed multidisciplinary approaches to examine the complexities of cultural change, drawing from fields such as anthropology, sociology, history, and cultural studies (Larry, 1996).

#### 4.1 Historical Perspectives

Historical analyses provide insights into the trajectories and drivers of cultural change over different epochs. Works such as Huntington's (1996) "The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order" offer frameworks for understanding how historical events, conflicts, and exchanges shape cultural identities and dynamics on a global scale. By examining the rise and fall of civilizations, historians illuminate the role of cultural interactions, migrations, and conquests in shaping societies' values, institutions, and worldviews (Rosecrance, 1998).

#### 4.2 Sociological Approaches

Sociologists have explored cultural change within the context of social structures, institutions, and collective behaviors. In "Culture and Social Change: Social Movements and Cultural Change," Barker (2004) examines how social movements challenge existing norms and institutions, leading to cultural transformations. Through empirical studies and theoretical analyses, sociologists uncover the mechanisms of cultural diffusion, adaptation, and resistance within diverse social contexts, shedding light on the complexities of cultural change processes (Snow, 2024).

#### 4.3 Anthropological Insights

Anthropologists offer ethnographic perspectives on cultural change by studying societies' lived experiences, practices, and symbolic systems. Geertz's (1973) seminal work, "The Interpretation of Cultures," emphasizes the role of symbols, rituals, and cultural meanings in shaping social life and mediating change. Through participant observation and qualitative research methods, anthropologists document cultural dynamics, contestations, and negotiations, highlighting the agency of individuals and groups in redefining cultural boundaries and identities (Clifford, 1973).

#### 4.4 Cultural Studies Approaches

Cultural studies scholars interrogate the intersections of power, discourse, and representation in shaping cultural change processes. Hall's (1997) essay, "Encoding/Decoding," elucidates how media, popular culture, and ideological discourses influence perceptions, identities, and social practices. By analyzing cultural texts, practices, and media artifacts, cultural studies scholars unveil the hegemonic

struggles, subaltern resistance, and hybridization processes that characterize contemporary cultural landscapes (Yousman, 2013).

#### 4.5 Contemporary Perspectives

Contemporary studies on cultural change address emerging challenges and opportunities in an increasingly interconnected world. Appadurai's (1996) concept of "global cultural flows" underscores the fluidity and complexity of cultural exchanges as facilitated by globalization, migration, and digital technologies. Researchers investigate how transnational networks, diasporic communities, and digital media platforms mediate cultural interactions, leading to hybrid cultural forms, cosmopolitan sensibilities, and new modes of belonging and identity formation (Jason L & Steel, 2011).

In summary, the literature on cultural change offers diverse perspectives and methodologies for understanding the complexities and dynamics of cultural transformation. Historical, sociological, anthropological, and cultural studies approach illuminate the historical contexts, social structures, symbolic systems, power dynamics, and global processes that shape cultural change phenomena. By engaging with multidisciplinary insights and empirical research, scholars enrich our understanding of how cultures evolve, adapt, and contest meanings and practices over time.

### 5. Theories used

The study of Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China, draws upon various theoretical frameworks to analyze their technical, cultural, and historical dimensions. This section explores the theories utilized, including Western music theory, Chinese music theory, and ethnomusicology, each providing unique perspectives on understanding Youyang folk songs.

#### 5.1 Western Music Theory

Western music theory is a foundational framework for analyzing the technical aspects, musical structures, and stylistic characteristics of Youyang folk songs. This theory provides a basis for understanding the compositional techniques, harmonic progressions, and melodic patterns that have evolved in these folk songs. By applying Western Music Theory, researchers can examine how harmony, rhythm, and



instrumentation have changed within Youyang folk songs, shedding light on their transformation. Western music theory offers analytical tools to dissect the intricacies of Youyang folk songs' musical elements. For instance, researchers can utilize concepts such as chord progressions, tonalities, and form analysis to understand the structural organization of these songs. Additionally, principles of melody and rhythm can be explored to unravel the stylistic nuances and expressive qualities embedded within Youyang folk songs (Jay, 1998).

### 5.2 Chinese Music Theory

Chinese music theory investigates the essence, historical evolution, and aesthetic dimensions of Youyang folk songs. This theory encompasses traditional and modern Chinese music styles and emphasizes structural analysis, exploring the core principles underlying these folk songs' composition and development. Chinese Music Theory allows researchers to delve into the cultural and artistic aspects of Youyang folk songs, providing insights into the changes in their melodies, scales, and thematic elements over time. In studying Youyang folk songs, Chinese music theory offers a lens through which researchers can examine the indigenous musical traditions and cultural influences shaping these songs. Concepts such as pentatonic scales, modalities, and traditional Chinese musical instruments provide a framework for understanding the unique tonal and timbral characteristics of Youyang folk songs. Furthermore, Chinese music theory delves into the philosophical underpinnings of music, exploring its role in shaping social values and cultural identities within the Youyang community (Perlovsky, 2010).

### 5.3 Ethnomusicology

Ethnomusicology, a branch of musicology intertwined with ethnology and folklore, offers a comprehensive approach to understanding Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China. It focuses on the preservation, transmission, and cultural context of these songs within the local community. Ethnomusicology enables researchers to explore the relationships between Youyang folk songs and factors such as geography, history, ethnic identity, and cultural traditions. Using ethnographic methods, researchers can understand how Youyang folk songs are performed, practiced, and valued within the community. Fieldwork techniques such as participant observation, interviews, and audiovisual documentation allow researchers to capture

the lived experiences and perspectives of singers, musicians, and audiences. Additionally, ethnomusicological analysis provides a platform for examining the social functions and symbolic meanings of Youyang folk songs, illuminating their role in shaping collective identities and cultural practices (Rice, 2013).

In summary, utilizing Western music theory, Chinese music theory, and ethnomusicology provides a multifaceted approach to studying Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China. Each theoretical framework offers unique insights into these songs' technical, cultural, and historical dimensions, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of their significance within the local context.

## 6. Research Related

In exploring Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China, various scholars and studies have contributed valuable to understanding these songs' multifaceted aspects.

Zhang and Wang (2023) explored the evolving role of technology, particularly digital platforms and multimedia tools, in documenting and disseminating Youyang folk songs. Their study delved into how these technological advancements contribute to preserving and transmitting cultural heritage, offering insights into integrating digital technologies within traditional cultural contexts.

Zhang and Li (2022) examined the impact of globalization on Youyang folk songs, highlighting both the challenges and opportunities presented by modernization and cultural exchange. Their research provided a nuanced understanding of how globalization influences the practice, transmission, and preservation of intangible cultural heritage within Tujia communities.

Wang and Liu (2021) conducted a comparative analysis of Tujia and Miao folk songs, exploring the musical similarities and differences between these two ethnic groups. Their study offered valuable insights into the diverse musical traditions of southwestern China, shedding light on the cultural richness and complexity of Tujia and Miao musical heritage.

Xu et al. (2020) investigated the use of digital technologies in documenting and preserving intangible cultural heritage, with a focus on Youyang folk songs. Their research examined the implications of digital preservation methods for the

sustainability and accessibility of cultural heritage, contributing to the ongoing discourse on heritage conservation in the digital age.

Zhou and Wang (2019) explored the socio-economic factors influencing the practice and transmission of Youyang folk songs. Their study emphasized the importance of community support and government policies in cultural preservation efforts, highlighting the need for sustainable development strategies to safeguard intangible cultural heritage in rapidly changing social contexts.

Liu and Yang (2018) analyzed the linguistic characteristics of Youyang folk songs, investigating the relationship between language and musical expression in Tujia culture. Their research provided insights into the lyrical themes, poetic devices, and linguistic features of Tujia folk songs, contributing to our understanding of the cultural significance of language in musical traditions.

Hu and Chen (2017) investigated the impact of urbanization on the practice and transmission of Youyang folk songs, particularly in rural communities undergoing rapid social and economic transformation. Their study revealed the challenges faced by rural populations in preserving traditional cultural heritage amidst urban development pressures, highlighting the importance of community-based initiatives in heritage conservation.

Liu et al. (2016) explored the significance of intangible cultural heritage, including Youyang folk songs, in fostering social cohesion and identity among Tujia communities. Their research examined how cultural practices serve as a source of collective memory and cultural pride, contributing to social integration and community resilience in the face of social change.

Yang and Li (2015) conducted fieldwork to document and analyze variations in Youyang folk songs across different regions, providing insights into the diversity and richness of Tujia musical traditions. Their study offered a comprehensive overview of the musical repertoire, performance styles, and cultural significance of Youyang folk songs, enriching our understanding of Tujia's cultural heritage.

Zhang et al. (2014) investigated the relationship between Youyang folk songs and Tujia religious practices, exploring how music expresses spiritual beliefs and rituals within the community. Their research shed light on the role of music in

religious ceremonies, offering insights into the cultural significance of Youyang folk songs in Tujia's spiritual life.

Chen et al. (2013) analyzed the influence of environmental factors on the lyrical themes and motifs of Youyang folk songs, highlighting the interconnectedness between nature and cultural expression in Tujia music. Their study contextualized how natural landscapes shape cultural identity and artistic creativity within Tujia communities.

Wang and Zhang (2012) examined the role of gender in the performance and transmission of Youyang folk songs, uncovering how gender dynamics shape musical practices within Tujia communities. Their research explored gendered participation patterns, authority, and representation in musical traditions, contributing to the broader discourse on gender and culture in ethnomusicology.

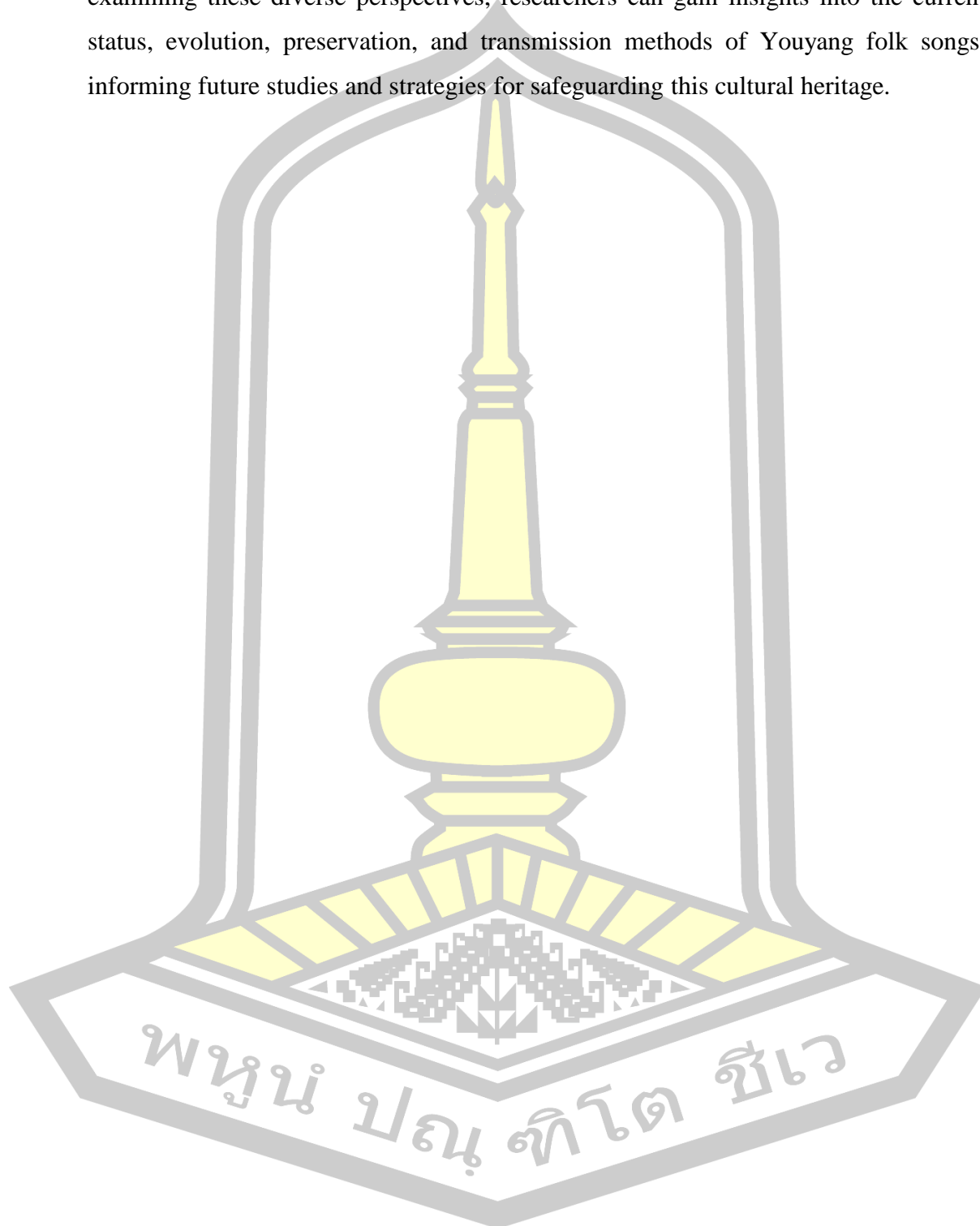
Liu et al. (2011) investigated the impact of migration on the transmission of Youyang folk songs, particularly among diaspora communities. Their study examined how migrant populations maintain cultural connections through music, contributing to preserving and adapting Youyang folk songs in diverse social contexts.

Yang and Wang (2010) explored the therapeutic benefits of Youyang folk songs in promoting mental health and well-being within Tujia communities. Their research examined how music is used as a form of emotional expression, stress relief, and social support, highlighting the healing power of music in traditional societies.

Chen and Liu (2009) investigated the educational value of Youyang folk songs in transmitting cultural knowledge and values to younger generations. Their study examined how music serves as a vehicle for cultural preservation and intergenerational transmission, emphasizing the role of folk songs in shaping cultural identity and heritage awareness among Tujia youth.

In Summary, the research related to Youyang folk songs offers a comprehensive understanding of various aspects surrounding these cultural expressions. Scholars have explored technological advancements in documenting and disseminating folk songs, the impact of globalization, socio-economic factors, linguistic characteristics, and the influence of urbanization on these songs. Additionally, studies have investigated variations in folk songs across regions, gender dynamics, migration's effect on transmission, therapeutic benefits, environmental

influences, lyrical themes, and the educational value of Youyang folk songs. By examining these diverse perspectives, researchers can gain insights into the current status, evolution, preservation, and transmission methods of Youyang folk songs, informing future studies and strategies for safeguarding this cultural heritage.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **Research Methodology**

This study is a qualitative research project, with Youyang City in Chongqing Municipality selected as the research site, focusing on the theme of Youyang folk songs. Since this region serves as the cradle of Youyang folk songs, key informants were chosen as the primary sources of research information. Therefore, the following process was employed:

1. Research scope
  - 1.1 Scope of content
  - 1.2 Scope of time
2. Research Process
  - 2.1 Selection of the research site
  - 2.2 Selection of the key informants
  - 2.3 Research tools
  - 2.4 Data collection
  - 2.5 Data management
  - 2.6 Data analysis
  - 2.7 Data presentation

#### **1. Research scope**

##### **1.1 Scope of content**

1.1.1 Investigation of the current status condition involves a comprehensive review and evaluation of the current state of performance and an exploration of the attitudes of Youyang residents towards folk songs, offering insights into the current reality of their presentation.

1.1.2 Analysis of the changes entails a systematic analysis and critical examination of the alterations, modifications, and adaptations that Youyang folk songs have undergone over time within the geographic boundaries of Chongqing Municipality, China, shedding light on their evolutionary journey.



1.1.3 Exploration of preservation and transmission involves an in-depth investigation and evaluation of various strategies, methods, and practices to ensure the safeguarding and continued transmission of Youyang folk songs, providing a comprehensive understanding of these efforts.

#### 1.2 Scope of time

From May 2022 to December 2023, including field research, data analysis and paper writing.

## 2. Research process

### 2.1 Selection of the research site

Chosen specific locations within Youyang County, namely the Youyang County Cultural Center, Heishui Township, Jinggang Township, Longtan Township, and Nanmu Township, as my primary research sites for the following reasons:

2.1.1 The Youyang County Cultural Center houses extensive documentation related to Youyang folk songs and maintains organized management of the inheritors. Collaborating with the Youyang Cultural Center staff is essential to acquiring comprehensive insights into Youyang folk songs.

2.1.2 The key informants, national-level non-genetic bearers of Youyang folk songs, reside in Heishui Township. In contrast, municipal-level non-genetic bearers are located in Nanmu Township, Longtan Township, and Jinggang Township. These individuals are crucial sources of information and expertise for my research.

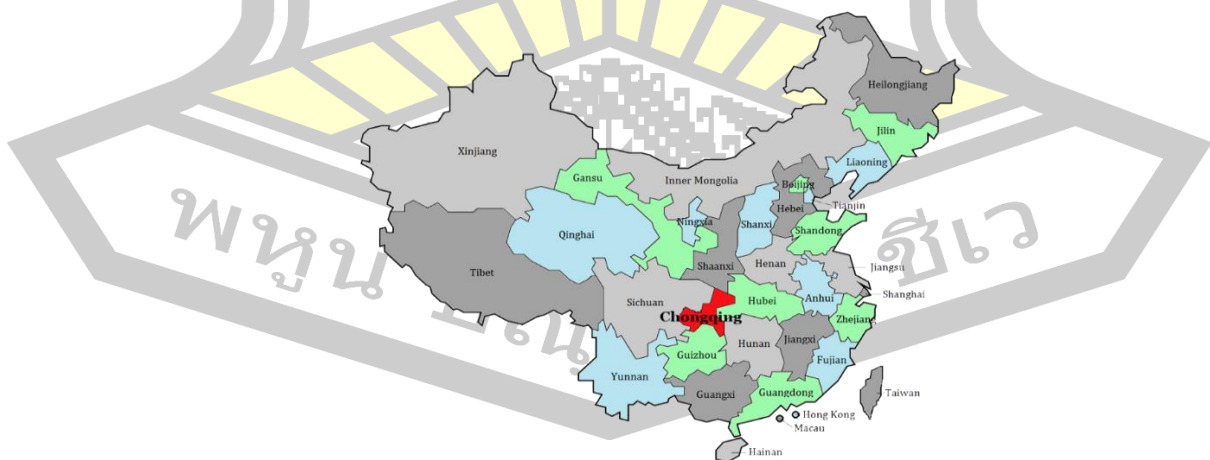


Figure 2. Map of the research site

Source: Chinafolio (n.d.)

## 2.2 Selection of the key informants

The key informants were selected based on specific criteria outlined below:

2.2.1 He/she was born and raised in Youyang and is a native of Youyang.

2.2.2 He/She knows the culture and development of Youyang folk song.

2.2.3 He/She can sing Mudong folk songs and has good singing skills.

2.2.4 He/She is the transmitter.

2.2.5 Substantial performance experience and familiarity with local researchers.

After a rigorous selection process, three key informants were Mr. Lu Xiaobai, Mr. Xiong Zhenglu, and Mr. Tang Tenhua.

1) Lu Xiaobai, male, is from Youyang, Chongqing. He has a long history of working as an actor, musician, and editor in theater troupes. He is a member of the Chinese Folk Music Association, the Chongqing branch of the Chinese Musicians Association, and the Chinese Dramatists Association. He is proficient in studying mountain and folk songs in the Youyang area.



Figure 3. Lu Xiaobai

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

2) Xiong Zhenglu, male, Tujia, born in May 1954, is a native of Youyang Tujia and Miao Autonomous County in Chongqing. On May 8, 2018, he was selected for the list of representative bearers of the fifth batch of national intangible cultural heritage representative projects.





Figure 4. Xiong zhenglu

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

3) Tang TENGhua, male, Tujia, from Youyang, Chongqing. Engaged in the collection, adaptation, and research of Youyang folk songs for over ten years, published and sorted out the Collection of Youyang Folk Songs, and served as a local cultural researcher.



Figure 5. Tang TENGhua

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

### 2.3 Research tools

This study utilized three primary research tools: the interview form, observation form, and questionnaire. Each tool was carefully designed and implemented to gather comprehensive data and insights into the research subject.

2.3.1 Interview Form: Gather qualitative data through structured interviews with individuals knowledgeable about Youyang folk songs. This form

facilitates in-depth discussions to explore participants' perceptions, experiences, and insights regarding the current status, changes, preservation, and transmission of Youyang folk songs.

2.3.2 Observation Form: Collect observational data during events, performances, or community gatherings where Youyang folk songs are practiced or performed. This form allows researchers to document the setting, activities, interactions, and critical observations about the prevalence, variations, demographics, and preservation methods of Youyang folk songs.

2.3.3 Questionnaire: Obtaining quantitative and qualitative data from a larger sample of participants regarding their familiarity, engagement, perceptions, and suggestions regarding Youyang folk songs. This questionnaire assists in gathering structured responses to research questions, providing insights into the current status, changes, and preservation efforts of Youyang folk songs.

#### 2.4 Data collection

In this study, data was collected using a combination of literature analysis and field investigation methods.

2.4.1 Literature Collection: The researchers gather relevant literature from physical libraries and online databases, including platforms like the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI). This literature serves as the foundation for understanding the historical background, cultural significance, and existing research on Youyang folk songs.

2.4.2 Field Investigation: The researchers conduct field investigations in Youyang, Chongqing, to gather firsthand information about Youyang folk songs. This involves immersing themselves in the local community, engaging with residents, and actively participating in cultural activities related to folk songs. Researchers aim to comprehensively understand the musical nuances, lyrical themes, and cultural context surrounding Youyang folk songs through listening, learning, and recording.

2.4.3 Interviews: Additionally, interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including staff from the Youyang Cultural Center and Youyang Folk Song Fellows. These interviews focus on gathering insights into the local initiatives and measures implemented to protect Youyang folk songs. Moreover, researchers inquire about the distinctive characteristics of Youyang folk songs compared to those

from other regions, aiming to discern unique cultural elements and preservation practices.

Through literature analysis, field investigation, and interviews, researchers aim to gather diverse and comprehensive data to facilitate a nuanced understanding of Youyang folk songs and their cultural significance.

#### 2.5 Data management

After completing fieldwork, observations, and interviews, the researcher meticulously organized the notes and transcripts derived from the fieldwork. These documents were systematically analyzed objectively to derive meaningful insights. The researcher employed textual analysis to examine the contents of the interviews thoroughly. This approach facilitated the systematic presentation and quantitative analysis of the vast documents and information gathered during the research process.

#### 2.6 Data analysis

2.6.1 For the first research objective, the data analysis involves examining the demographic information collected during field investigations and interviews. This includes the number of individuals familiar with Youyang folk songs, their age groups, ethnic backgrounds, and geographical distribution within Chongqing Municipality. Statistical methods such as frequency distributions and percentages can summarize the data and provide insights into the current status of Youyang folk songs.

2.6.2 For the second research objective, the data analysis compares historical records of Youyang folk songs with contemporary observations. This involves examining changes in lyrical themes, musical compositions, and performance styles. Textual analysis techniques can be employed to identify patterns and trends in the evolution of Youyang folk songs. Additionally, interviews with key informants provide qualitative insights into the factors driving these changes, such as cultural influences, technological advancements, and socio-economic developments.

2.6.3 For the third research objective, the data analysis centers on evaluating efforts to preserve and transmit Youyang folk songs. This involves assessing the effectiveness of existing preservation initiatives, such as cultural heritage programs and educational campaigns. A qualitative analysis of interview transcripts and observation notes was conducted to identify challenges and

opportunities related to preserving and transmitting Youyang folk songs. Themes such as community engagement, intergenerational transmission, and government support will be explored to understand the preservation landscape comprehensively.

## 2.7 Data presentation

2.7.1 Chapter 1: Introduction

2.7.2 Chapter II: Literature Review

2.7.3 Chapter III: Methodology

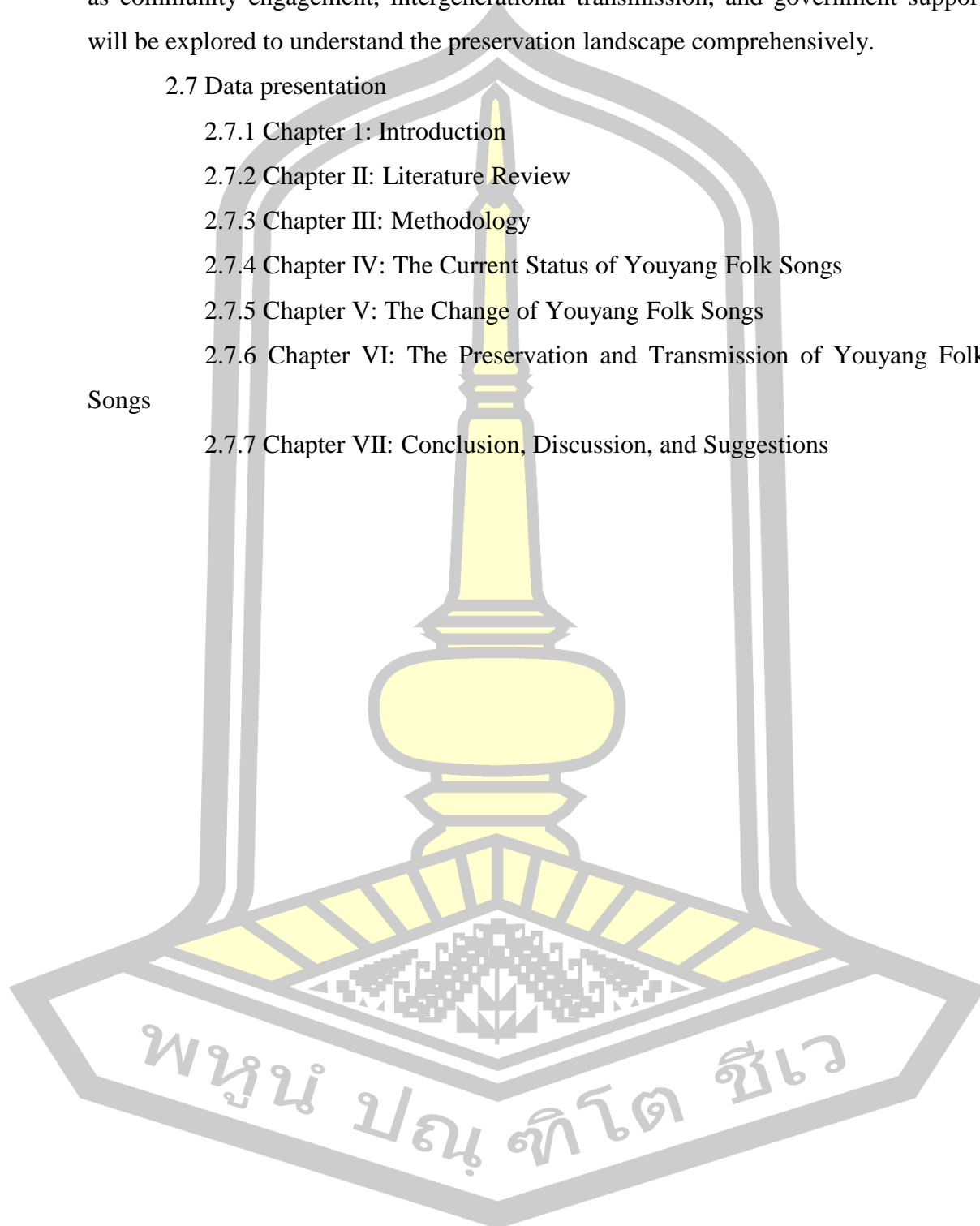
2.7.4 Chapter IV: The Current Status of Youyang Folk Songs

2.7.5 Chapter V: The Change of Youyang Folk Songs

2.7.6 Chapter VI: The Preservation and Transmission of Youyang Folk

Songs

2.7.7 Chapter VII: Conclusion, Discussion, and Suggestions



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **The Current Status of Youyang Folk Songs**

This chapter delves into the current status of Youyang folk songs, analyzing their evolution with a focus on modern adaptations and the increasing prevalence of digital and staged performances. It explores the differences in engagement with these traditions across generations and underscores the necessity of a collective approach to preserving and revitalizing Youyang's folk heritage. The emphasis lies on seamlessly integrating traditional elements with contemporary practices to ensure the ongoing relevance of Youyang folk songs in the cultural landscape. This analysis draws upon field research, interviews, and questionnaire surveys to examine the following aspects:

1. The current innovations and achievements in Youyang Folk Songs.
2. The current state of Youyang folk song performances.
3. The present attitudes of Youyang residents towards folk songs.
4. The contemporary reflections on the realities surrounding Youyang Folk Songs.

#### **1. The Current Innovations and Achievements in Youyang Folk Songs**

When cultural expressions respond to the needs of researchers, the current state of culture inherently acquires a performative aspect. Integrating ethnic culture into organized performance activities in an orderly manner fosters the integrated development of cultural tourism. The venues for such performances undergo fundamental changes as their functions evolve. For instance, the stage play "Tiema Ancient Songs," performed at the Xiqin Guild Hall in Gongtan Town, Youyang County, incorporates many folk cultural art forms, such as Youyang folk songs and Youyang ancient songs. It is a critical performance at the Gongtan Old Town scenic area, showcasing the charm of Youyang's intangible cultural heritage to visitors. The upgraded version of the stage play "The Dream of Peach Blossom Land" is a feature performance at the national 5A-rated Peach Blossom Land scenic area, including segments depicting Tiema divine songs' content. Consequently, the singing occasions

for Tiema sacred songs today are mainly concentrated in tourist-oriented performance venues, crucial in showcasing the local ethnic cultural allure.

In ethnomusicology, exploring recent innovations and accomplishments in Youyang Folk Songs offers a fascinating glimpse into the dynamic interplay between traditional music forms and contemporary artistic expressions. A notable highlight in this context is the integration of Youyang folk music within the stage production "The Dream of Peach Blossom Land." This theatrical masterpiece, set against the backdrop of the national 5A-rated scenic area, Peach Blossom Land, stands as a testament to the innovative ways traditional folk music is being revitalized and presented to modern audiences.

Central to the discussion of this innovative fusion is how "The Dream of Peach Blossom Land" utilizes the intrinsic melodies and thematic elements of Youyang folk songs to enhance the narrative and emotional depth of the performance. This artistic endeavor preserves the essence of Youyang's musical heritage and extends its reach by embedding it within a broader cultural and touristic context, thereby amplifying its impact and accessibility.

In 2015, the Youyang Urban Investment Group focused on creating the large-scale landscape drama "The Dream of Peach Blossom Land," a prime example of their efforts. This production, drawing from the rich Tujia culture, ethnic culture, agricultural culture, and historical culture of Youyang, is hailed as a masterpiece that showcases the ethnic culture of Youyang and the southeastern Chongqing region. It advances the "Tourism Promotes County Development" strategy, accelerating the integration of culture and tourism and enhancing the tourism development system.

The work is deeply rooted in Youyang's Tujia music, dance, costumes, customs, and folk tales, delving into the essence of the local ethnic culture. It highlights Tujia culture's exquisite, profound, and unique aspects, such as Maogusi, Leafy Love Ballads, Tiema Divine Songs, and Wedding Weeping Song, constructing a distinct ethnic identity. Furthermore, it integrates music, dance, audience interaction, and modern stage art elements, showcasing advanced audio-visual technology comprehensively. The production has achieved remarkable performance results and elicited enthusiastic responses. The innovations in Youyang folk songs,



particularly in music, dance, and storytelling, have marked breakthroughs, standing out prominently.



Figure 6. Photos of the 'Dream Peach Blossom Land' Stage Production

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 7. Photos of the 'Dream Peach Blossom Land' Stage Production

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 8. Photos of the 'Dream Peach Blossom Land' Stage Production

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

The final round of the first-ever 2022 Wuling Mountain Original Folk Song Competition took place at the Tourist Center Plaza in the Peach Blossom Land scenic area, Youyang, Chongqing. This event embraced an innovative format, combining offline performances without a live audience with multi-platform online streaming to showcase original folk songs from the Wuling region and make cultural expressions accessible to a broader audience. Qi Meiwen, the Youyang Autonomous County Committee Secretary, extended a heartfelt welcome to the judges, participants, and online viewers on behalf of the county's committee, government, and 860,000 residents from various ethnic backgrounds. He highlighted that the folk song competition offered an unparalleled cultural feast, using music as a conduit to project a strong sense of cultural confidence, harmonize the melody of ethnic unity, and orchestrate the integration of culture and tourism. The event significantly encouraged original folk song compositions, discovered and cultivated new folk music talents, and preserved intangible musical cultural heritage, thereby creating a positive societal impact.



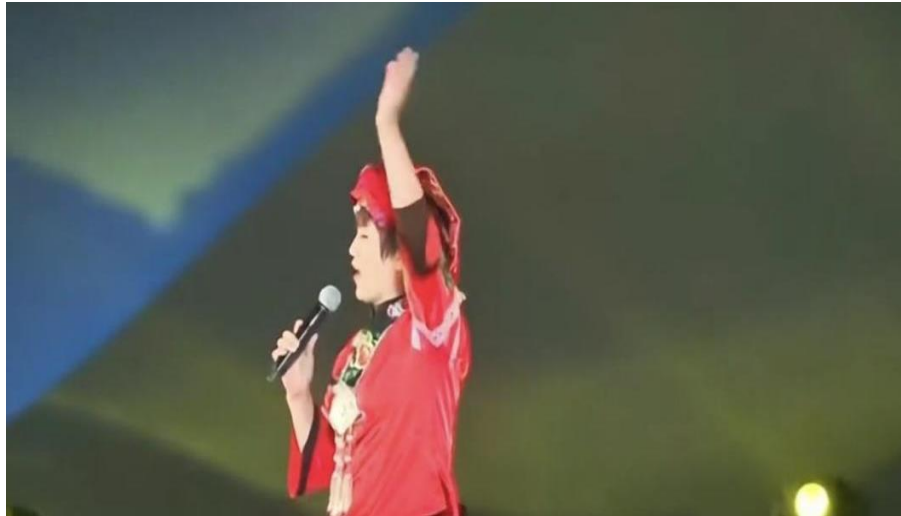


Figure 9. Online Competition scene

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in November 2022

From the performance, researchers observed that both initiatives reflect a dynamic fusion of tradition and modernity, illustrating the potential of cultural events in enhancing the visibility and appreciation of local heritage while contributing to the socio-economic and cultural vitality of the region. These efforts serve as a testament to the enduring allure of Youyang's folk traditions and as a model for the sustainable development of cultural tourism and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage.

## 2. The Current State of Youyang Folk Song Performances

Since China's reform and opening up in 1978, Youyang folk songs have undergone significant changes in response to the societal transformations of the new era. In the context of globalization and modernization, this cultural heritage has experienced active and passive innovations, leading to a reduction in genres and changes in content. Additionally, evolving preferences and interests have gradually caused this folk song to fade into the contemporary landscape. Key observations include:

- 1) Rituals, once integral to daily life songs, have gradually disappeared from collective ceremonial performances.
- 2) Labor, such as field and bugle songs, have diminished usage due to changes in production methods and labor practices.

3) Children containing Tujia children's games have become scarce and have largely disappeared from children's lives.

4) Marriage lamentation, while still existing, has undergone a reduction in its performance content.

5) Long narrative songs have become less prevalent and replaced by modernized renditions of traditional folk songs.

6) Life and current affairs songs remain among the most frequently sung folk songs, with classic folk songs dominating the repertoire. However, creating entirely new folk songs has become rare, typically arising in response to specific themes or events, such as large-scale gatherings or cultural performances.

### 2.1 Content of Folk Songs

Folk songs in Youyang today can be broadly categorized into two groups: modern creative folk songs and original folk songs spontaneously performed by folk song enthusiasts. Modern clever folk songs are reprocessed and interpreted by professional singers, often incorporating elements of popular music, and sung in Mandarin. These songs have a more contemporary structure and lyrical expression, with catchy melodies and a focus on emotional expression.

木叶情歌  
Mu ye qing ge

大 山 的 木 叶 烂 成 堆 只 因 小 郎  
da shan de mu ye lan cheng dui zhi yin xiao lang

不 会 吹 几 时 吹 得 木 叶 叫 哎  
bu hui chui ji shi chui de mu ye jiao ai

只 用 木 叶 不 用 媒  
zhi yong mu ye bu yong mei

Figure 10. Music Score “Leafy Love Songs”

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 11. Leafy Love Songs

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 12. Pendulum dance performance "Leafy Love Songs"

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

Original folk songs are typically sung in the local Tujia dialect and performed by community members. These songs offer a glimpse into traditional life, encompassing daily activities, cultural rituals, and historical narratives.

In recent years, modern creative folk songs have gained popularity and revitalized traditional folk songs that were on the verge of disappearing. These modernized renditions of classic songs have become a source of cultural pride and are widely embraced by the local community. For example, the "Love Song of Wooden Leaves" has become a well-known and beloved Tujia folk song, preserving the essence of traditional culture while adapting to the preferences of contemporary audiences.

Overall, the current landscape of Youyang folk songs reflects both continuity and adaptation in response to changing societal dynamics.

## 2.2 Original Folk Songs

In contrast to modern folk songs, the original folk songs spontaneously performed by the people of Youyang represent a more traditional and unprocessed form of folk expression. These contemporary folk songs typically adhere to the structure and content of classic folk songs and are sung in the original Youyang dialect. They are performed without professional accompaniment, relying solely on the inherited and authentic style.

The primary venue for performing original folk songs is the Riverside Park area in Youyang Taohuayuan Township, where both performing groups and audiences consist mainly of elderly individuals. These folk songs allow the older generation to enrich their cultural lives, drawing from historical customs. For instance, singing love songs, a remnant of the life songs within Youyang Tujia folk songs, includes captivating love song duets that offer entertainment and educational value. Such performances cater to the aesthetic interests of the elderly, whom the information culture's diversification may have left behind in our time. Folk songs serve as a means of expression for the elderly, with most of these songs preserving traditional melodies and forms while featuring improvised lyrics by the singers.

大田栽秧行对行  
da tian zai yang hang dui hang

作曲 / 编排

那大田栽秧行对行 一行稗子嘛一行秧 呵  
na da tian zai yang hang dui hang yi hang bai zi ma yi hang yang he

那秧子没得那稗子 好啥家花没得野花 香哦哦  
na yang zi mei de na bai zi hao sha jia hua mei de ye hua xiang o o

Figure 13. Row by Row in the Vast Fields

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

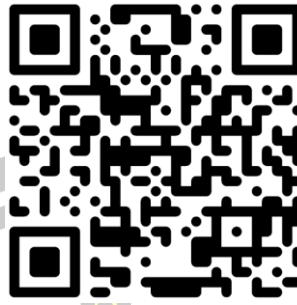


Figure 14. Row by Row in the Vast Fields  
Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

Another category of original folk songs includes contemporary red songs, which find an audience among individuals less interested in love songs. According to Shi Dunhe, the leader of the Red Song group, "Those who sing mountain songs are elderly, in their seventies or eighties; it is not appropriate to sing those flirtatious songs. We sing something more civilized." Some older individuals, like Qiu Guanxian, prefer singing Beijing Opera's "Shajiabang" but not many traditional folk songs. These red songs are typically created and passed down rather than being spontaneously composed.

### 2.3 Performance Venues

Influenced by modern technology and changing cultural trends, the performance of contemporary folk songs in the present day has evolved, encompassing both offline and online formats.

1) Live Performance: Two main types of Live Performance exist for contemporary folk songs within Youyang Tujia culture. The first consists of original folk songs spontaneously sung by gatherings of community members. The second involves folk song exhibitions and competitions organized by government or commercial entities, such as the stage productions of "Dream Peach Blossom Land" and "Tima Divine Song."





Figure 15. Dream Peach Blossom Land  
Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 16. Tima Divine Song  
Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

The Declaration of Non-Heritage of Youyang Folk Songs acknowledges that "the Youyang region has a tradition of organizing folk song competitions. However, these events are sometimes suspended due to limited funding. During such suspensions, occasional performances occur, primarily involving temporary group rehearsals for special cultural events in the city or district."

After the triumphant declaration of the Youyang folk song non-heritage project, the county's cultural department initiated various training courses to cultivate local folk song talent and expand the reach of these cultural treasures. For instance,

the non-heritage bearers of Youyang folk songs are now authorized to train apprentices, further ensuring the continuity of this unique cultural heritage.



Figure 17. Ran Pingying, the inheritor of Youyang folk songs

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

After Youyang Folk Songs attained recognition as a national non-heritage program, folk song competitions in Youyang County have regained vitality. Mr. Fu, a Youyang County Nonheritage Office staff member, explained, "Before the pandemic, we held annual folk song competitions. However, these competitions have no fixed schedule. Preliminary selections are conducted in different areas, each lasting one day, followed by a two-day county-level competition. Unfortunately, the pandemic disrupted our plans, and we faced challenges in securing funding. Participants in these competitions come from various age groups, including those passionate about singing mountain songs. Prizes, awards, or certificates are typically presented at the end of the competition." (Interview with Mr. Fu, 2022)

## 2) Online Shows

With the advent of the digital age and the increasing prevalence of information technology, traditional folk songs have also found a presence in the online world. Folk song enthusiasts proficient in new media have shifted the performance stage of folk songs to the internet.

Contemporary folk song performances in Youyang Folk Songs have primarily migrated to online platforms. Online performances typically focus on



textualizing lyrics and incorporating audio-visual elements. Enthusiasts who are well-versed in folk songs create QQ or WeChat groups to facilitate communication among members. These groups often serve as platforms for sharing original folk song lyrics, distributed on various social media platforms, such as WeChat Moments and QQ Space.

Many audio and video folk songs are shared on short-video platforms like "Tiktok" and "Kwai." These platforms offer interactive features where songwriters receive viewers' likes and comments, fostering engagement and communication.

The digital era has breathed new life into traditional folk songs, allowing performers to reach wider audiences without leaving their homes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online interactions and exchanges with fellow singers became a convenient and effective means to maintain cultural engagement and community.

As a result, the online performance mode has gradually become the dominant trend in contemporary folk songs.



Figure 18. Online Folk Music Performance

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in November 2022

### 3) Audience Groups

Present-day audiences of Youyang folk songs mainly comprise folk song enthusiasts, audiences interested in modernized folk song interpretations, researchers, and enthusiasts of national culture. The primary demographic among folk song enthusiasts is the elderly, who perform folk songs and constitute a significant portion

of the audience. They enjoy watching and listening to others' performances while learning from different interpretations to enhance their own.

Modernized and culturally tourism-focused renditions of folk songs have attracted a broad range of spectators, receiving acclaim in developing tourism in Youyang. However, youth and middle-aged groups need more enthusiasm for this cultural form and often pay less attention to or participate in folk song performances.

Meanwhile, researchers and enthusiasts of ethnic culture and music college students show a more profound interest in modern and original folk songs. They delve into the history and current status of folk song content and form and contemplate the future direction of folk songs. Their dedication contributes to preserving and protecting folk song culture, ensuring its continued legacy.

### 3. The Present Attitudes of Youyang Residents Towards Folk Songs

The Current Attitudes of Youyang Residents Towards Folk Songs: To comprehensively study the current status of Youyang Tujia folk songs, it is crucial to gauge the level of attention and interest that the people of Youyang devote to this cultural heritage. Additionally, understanding their knowledge of Youyang folk songs is vital to assess their current perception.

Table 1. Youyang Folk Songs Survey Questionnaire

| Question    | Answer |        | Total |
|-------------|--------|--------|-------|
|             | Male   | Female |       |
| Your gender | 66     | 57     | 123   |

| Question   | Answer |    | Total |
|--|--------|----|-------|
|  | Yes    | No |       |
| Understanding of Youyang folk songs                            | 50     | 73 | 123   |
| Listen to or sing the folk songs                               | 25     | 98 | 123   |
| Seen the performance of "Crying Marriage Song" in recent years | 47     | 76 | 123   |
| Participate in Youyang folk songs                              | 33     | 90 | 123   |
| Heard or sung local children's songs                           | 123    | 0  | 123   |

| Question   | Answer |    | Total |
|--|--------|----|-------|
|  | Yes    | No |       |
| Folk songs are not popular                             | 95     | 28 | 123   |
| Youyang folk songs are valuable                        | 118    | 5  | 123   |
| School organizes arts activities related to folk songs | 100    | 23 | 123   |

This study included specific inquiries regarding the current performance of Youyang folk songs, aiming to analyze the varying levels of awareness and the underlying reasons for the evolving trends in folk song participation across different age groups. Surveys were conducted to delve into the perceptions, psychological attitudes, and involvement of Youyang residents with folk songs. Out of 180 questionnaires distributed, 123 valid responses were received, with 66 male and 57 female respondents. Among them, 15 were under 18 years old, 77 were aged between 18 and 45, 20 were aged 45 to 60, and 11 were over 60 years old.

The survey unveiled a noticeable reluctance among the youth in Youyang, Chongqing, China, to engage in questionnaire submissions. Generally, the audience for folk songs in Youyang comprises mainly middle-aged and elderly individuals, with limited interest shown by younger generations. This trend indicates a gradual decline in the youth's appeal to Youyang folk songs.

Regarding the frequency of listening to or singing folk songs, the survey revealed that nine respondents listen to folk songs daily, 34 listen weekly, 40 monthlies, 24 annually, and 13 have not engaged with folk songs in recent years. Notably, none of the respondents under 18 listen daily, and three over 45 have not been involved with folk songs in recent years. This data suggests that folk songs are no longer a prevalent cultural element in the lives of today's younger generation. At the same time, they remain part of the daily routines of middle-aged and elderly individuals.

The survey also identified various channels through which contemporary Youyang residents learn about or participate in folk songs, including family members singing, online platforms, schools, government-organized events, cultural tourism programs, fellow villagers, and television broadcasts. This underscores the influential role of the family in transmitting folk songs.

Regarding preferences for different forms of folk song performances, respondents ranked their favorites as original folk song singing, modernized folk songs, program-style performances, square folk song singing, and online media presentations. This ranking suggests that Youyang residents hold original folk songs in high regard, closely followed by modernized adaptations. This indicates that sustaining folk songs in the modern era involves creating songs that resonate with contemporary sensibilities, without compromising the essence of traditional elements.

Additionally, survey data gathered respondents' opinions regarding promoting Youyang Tujia folk songs. The majority expressed that government and academia should pay attention to and support this cultural heritage. However, some respondents indicated that folk songs are "not relevant to them," reflecting a lack of interest among specific segments of the population, particularly the youth. This may be attributed to changing lifestyles, the waning popularity of folk song culture, and limitations in individual cultural awareness and understanding.

#### **4. The Contemporary Reflections on the Realities Surrounding Youyang Folk Songs**

The investigation into the current status of Youyang folk songs reveals that this traditional cultural form, once profoundly integrated into daily life, has now receded mainly to the margins of society and culture. This situation calls for a comprehensive recognition of the cultural value of this unique heritage, emphasizing that the responsibility for preserving traditional national culture extends beyond the government and scholars—a collective responsibility shared by society at large.

Throughout history, folk songs that have accompanied the Youyang Tujia people serve multifaceted roles. They educate, entertain, fulfill essential life needs, drive economic development, and, importantly, represent a valuable asset for transmitting national culture, bolstering cultural confidence, and upholding cultural diversity.

In literary creation, it is crucial to anchor artistic endeavors in people's real lives. The collective wisdom of the masses stands as the fundamental driving force for modernization and the long-term development of Youyang folk songs. Hence, the masses remain the primary force for the songs' development and continuity. Once

people understand folk songs properly, it becomes imperative for the government, experts, and scholars to guide the public in shaping folk song art forms that align with modern aesthetics. This can help individuals understand their own culture's development and history, gradually ignite cultural self-awareness among the general public regarding the inheritance and innovation of folk songs, and subsequently nurture a sense of ownership and an inclination to protect this rich cultural heritage.

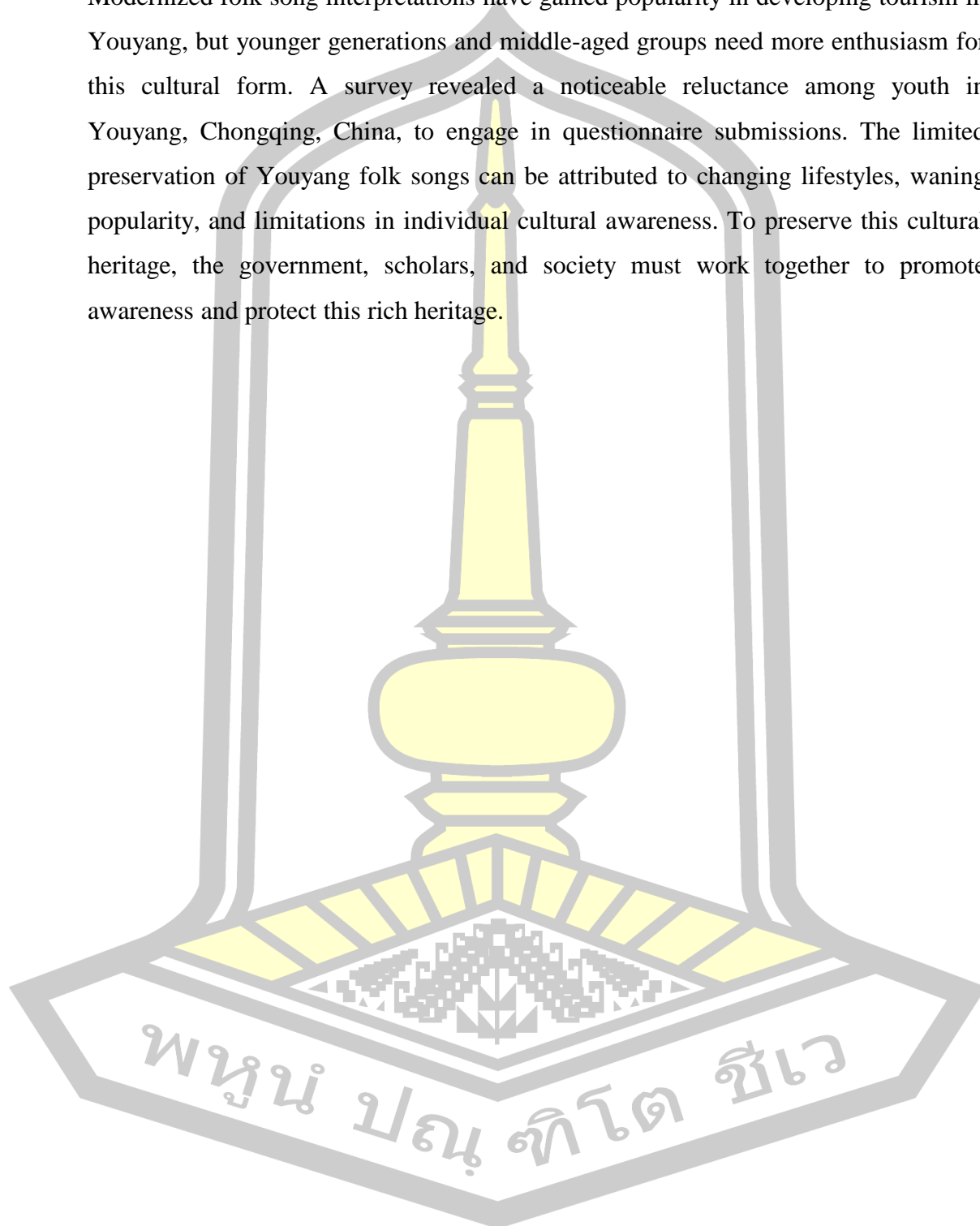
Simultaneously, various segments of society need to adopt a balanced perspective on the evolving nature of folk songs. While it is crucial to protect the essence of national culture from arbitrary alterations, integrating information technology and digital advancements can facilitate modernizing traditional culture in contemporary society. This approach can give rise to a cultural brand effect, thus making folk songs more accessible and appealing to the broader population. Consequently, by introducing professional expertise in ethnology and minority arts and implementing the popularization of folk song culture in schools, communities, and administrative villages, contemporary folk songs can be created for the people's enjoyment. This guides the entire population in learning and singing folk songs within their local society, fostering a conducive cultural atmosphere.

In essence, the reflections on the contemporary realities of Youyang folk songs emphasize the importance of preserving this unique cultural heritage, acknowledging its multifaceted significance in society, and steering it toward modernization while maintaining its essence. This collective effort, involving the government, scholars, and society, aims to safeguard and revitalize Youyang folk songs as an integral part of China's cultural tapestry.

#### Summary

Youyang folk songs have evolved since China's 1978 reform, integrating ethnic culture into performance activities. Stage plays like "Tiema Ancient Songs" and "The Dream of Peach Blossom Land" showcase the charm of Youyang's intangible cultural heritage. The Youyang Urban Investment Group's landscape drama "The Dream of Peach Blossom Land" promotes tourism and enhances the tourism development system. The 2022 Wuling Mountain Original Folk Song Competition showcased original folk songs from the Wuling region, making cultural expressions accessible to a broader audience. Youyang folk songs can be categorized into modern

creative folk songs and original folk songs spontaneously performed by enthusiasts. Modernized folk song interpretations have gained popularity in developing tourism in Youyang, but younger generations and middle-aged groups need more enthusiasm for this cultural form. A survey revealed a noticeable reluctance among youth in Youyang, Chongqing, China, to engage in questionnaire submissions. The limited preservation of Youyang folk songs can be attributed to changing lifestyles, waning popularity, and limitations in individual cultural awareness. To preserve this cultural heritage, the government, scholars, and society must work together to promote awareness and protect this rich heritage.





## **CHAPTER V**

### **The Change of Youyang Folk Songs**

This chapter, dedicated to the second research objective, utilizes a descriptive methodology to examine the change in Youyang folk songs. The researcher gathered a diverse collection of audiovisual materials through three extensive field visits to the Youyang area and in-depth interviews with local singers. This assortment selected five distinct songs that exemplify the evolution of Youyang folk songs. These chosen pieces, accessible via QR code scan, serve as illustrative examples to highlight the shifts in lyrical content and dissemination methods. This method not only fosters a tangible connection to the ongoing tradition of Youyang's musical culture but also facilitates bridging academic research with public accessibility. The outcome is a detailed narrative that delineates the transformation of Youyang folk music within the context of cultural and technological changes, covering three key aspects:

1. The evolution of lyrical content and themes in Youyang folk songs
2. The evolution of dissemination methods for Youyang folk songs
3. The expansion of functional types in Youyang folk songs

#### **1. The Evolution of Lyrical Content and Themes in Youyang Folk Songs**

##### **1.1 Lyric content changes**

During the thirteenth year of Emperor Yongzheng's reign in the Qing Dynasty (1735), Youyang implemented a policy that restored lands to the indigenous people and abolished the previous policy that prohibited Han Chinese from entering and non-Han groups from leaving. This lifting of the 'Tong' prohibition resulted in a significant influx of Han people and officials. Before the Tujia people adopted the 'Tuguiliu' system, songs served as a medium for freely expressing romantic love. However, with the introduction of 'Tuguiliu,' restrictions were imposed on the traditional freedom of marriage and love, leading to the emergence of a new ceremonial song — the Wedding Weeping Song. During wedding ceremonies, women used this song to express their sorrow over leaving loved ones and resigning to feudal arranged marriages, often incorporating accusations and criticisms of matchmakers.



Young Tujia women sing the Wedding Weeping Song as they 'cry' during the ceremony. Before marriage, a girl's ability to cry and sing is considered a measure of her intelligence and sensitivity rather than being viewed as foolish and awkward. Hence, among the Tujia people, girls begin to learn to cry for marriage and sing 'Wedding Crying Songs' when they are eleven or twelve years old. The 'crying' usually starts a few months before the wedding, typically after dark. During this time, the girl, along with her sisters, female relatives, or friends, gathers in the room of a woman who is about to be married, and they cry and wail bitterly.

The folk songs that emerged from the 'land reform' policies have significantly changed the frequency of performances and venues. However, some ethnic elements have been preserved. The most noticeable legacy of these ethnic elements is the retention of the folk songs' singing form in contemporary times, although the content of the songs has undergone significant changes.

Initially, the content of Wedding Weeping Song primarily focused on reluctance to part with ancestors, remembrance of family teachings, gratitude for parental upbringing, affection for various relatives, and entrustments to siblings. These themes are reflected in folk songs such as:

哭辞祖宗 (一)

*Ku ci zu zong*

*"Bidding Farewell to Ancestors Through Tears"*

香炉脚下起青烟，辞别祖宗是今天。神龛花板共十台，不知去了来不来

*Xiang lu jiao xia qi qing yan, ci bie zu zong shijin tian. shen kan hua ban gong shi  
tai, bu zhi qu liao lai bu lai*

*"Blue smoke rises from the base of the incense burner, parting from the ancestors happens today. With ten platforms shared by the shrine and the flower board, it's unknown if those who leave will return."*

今日前来辞别后，燕儿展翅独自飞。辞别六亲不能会，三更梦里会一回

*Jin ri qian lai ci bie hou, yan er zhan ci du zi fei. Ci bie liu qin bu neng hui, san gen  
meng li hui yi hui*

*"After bidding farewell today, the swallow spreads its wings to fly alone. Unable to  
meet with close kin upon departure, in the depths of the night, we meet again in  
dreams."*

In the feudal patriarchal society, women often struggled to have a voice and sometimes faced difficulties imposed by their mothers-in-law. Thus, during this era, the Crying Marriage ritual allowed young women not only to lament leaving their birth families and parting from their ancestors and relatives but also to express their fear of the unknown life ahead. Additionally, it provided an opportunity to denounce arranged marriages and criticize the meddling of matchmakers. Therefore, women finally had the chance to voice their feelings and freely express their inner pain at this significant life juncture. For example:

哭姊妹

*Ku zi mei*

*Crying for Sisters*

桔子好吃要分瓣，姊妹好耍要分散。白日挑花又同心，夜晚绣花又同灯

*Ju zi hao chi yao fen ban, zi mei hao shua yao fen san. bai ri tiao hua you tong  
xin, ye wan xiu hua you tong deng*

*"Tasty oranges must be peeled into segments, just as sisters having fun must  
eventually part. By day, we pick flowers with one heart; by night, we embroider under  
the same lamp."*

阳的阳来阴的阴，我别父母到他村。他村就是阎王殿，活人抬在死人坑

*Yang de yang lai ying de ying, wo bie fu mu dao ta cun. ta cun jiu shi yan wang  
dian, huo ren tai zai si ren keng.*

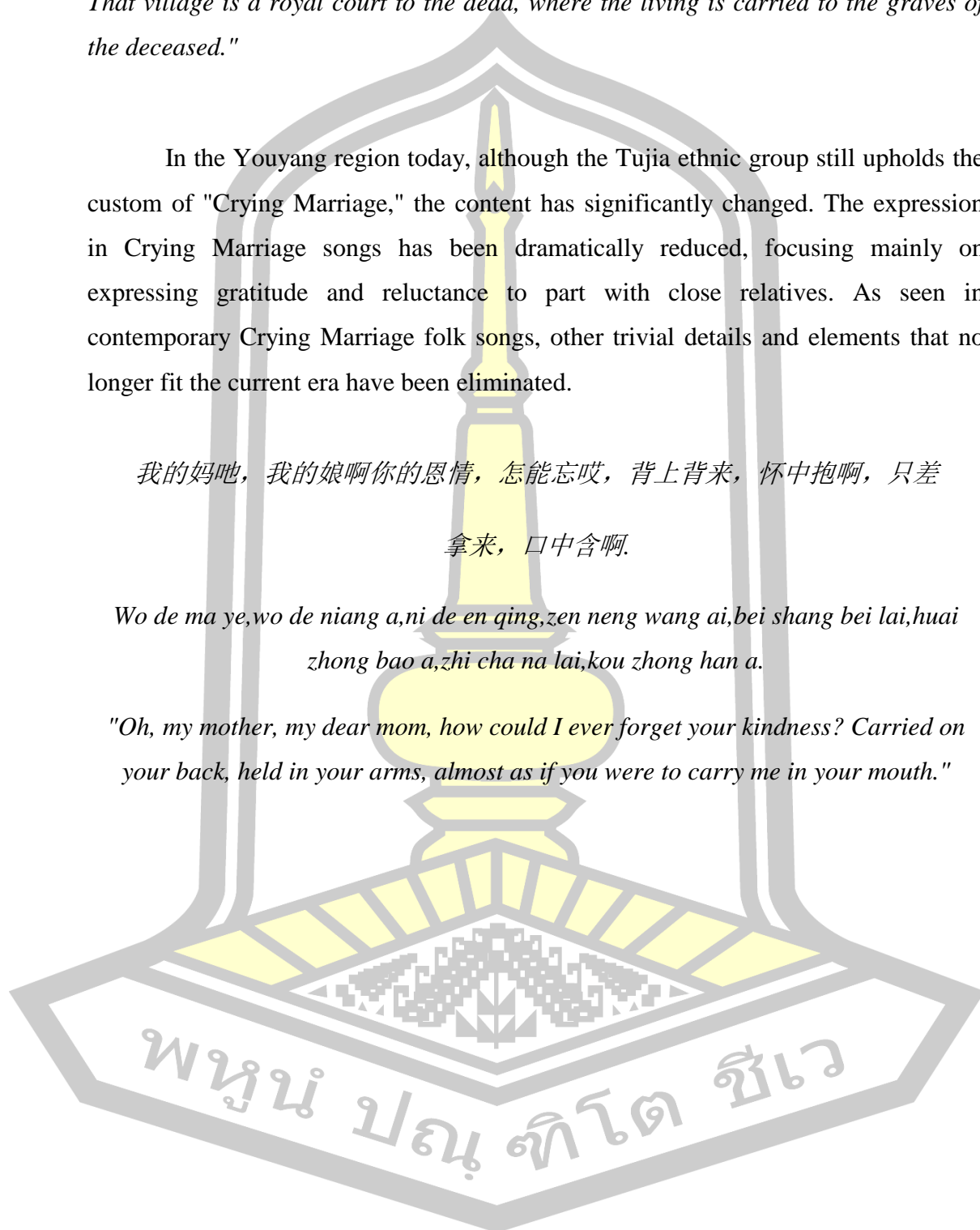
*"Yang belongs to yang and yin to yin; I leave my parents for another village. That village is a royal court to the dead, where the living is carried to the graves of the deceased."*

In the Youyang region today, although the Tujia ethnic group still upholds the custom of "Crying Marriage," the content has significantly changed. The expression in Crying Marriage songs has been dramatically reduced, focusing mainly on expressing gratitude and reluctance to part with close relatives. As seen in contemporary Crying Marriage folk songs, other trivial details and elements that no longer fit the current era have been eliminated.

我的妈吔，我的娘啊你的恩情，怎能忘哎，背上背来，怀中抱啊，只差  
拿来，口中含啊。

*Wo de ma ye, wo de niang a, ni de en qing, zen neng wang ai, bei shang bei lai, huai  
zhong bao a, zhi cha na lai, kou zhong han a.*

*"Oh, my mother, my dear mom, how could I ever forget your kindness? Carried on your back, held in your arms, almost as if you were to carry me in your mouth."*



## 哭嫁 Ku Jia



我的妈呀 我的娘 咗 啊清早 起来 开大  
wo de ma ya wo de niang ye a qing zao qi lai kai da

门呀 啊 开开 大门 要离 娘啊 要离 爹娘 由之  
men ya a kai kai da men yao li niang a yao li die niang you zhi

可呀 要离 爹娘 摆布 我呀 我 左脚 出门  
ke ya yao li die niang bai bu wo ya wo zuo jiao chu men

离花 房啊  
li hua fang a

Figure 19. Music Score: Wedding Weeping Song

Source: Can Fan, transcription from fieldwork in May 2022

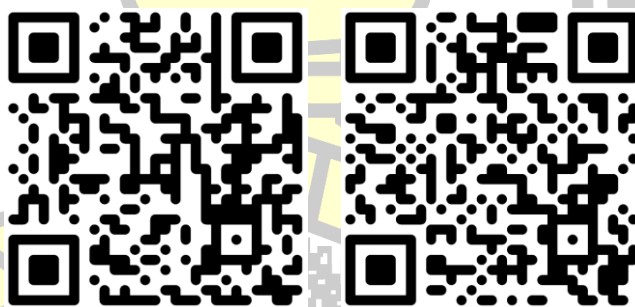


Figure 20. Wedding Weeping Song

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

### 1.2 The evolution of folk song themes

Narrative songs in Youyang folk music serve as a reflection of both the local culture and an openness to external influences. They often depict love stories from the Tujia ethnicity, like the renowned tale of "Wu Yaogu," alongside a profound attachment to their homeland. Moreover, there's an evident integration of other

cultures, as the Tujia people incorporate famous Han Chinese narratives of love and heroism into their cultural fabric, which then become embraced within the Youyang Tujia community. This shift in narrative perspective showcases cultural exchange and signifies the process of cultural transformation.

Many of the narrative songs in Youyang Tujia folk music retell stories well-known in the local area, offering their unique interpretation of external cultures. Examples include "Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai," "Singing Zhu Yingtai in December," "Xue Rengui's Eastern Campaign," and "Bao Wencheng's Lantern Festival." These narratives undergo alterations in the retelling of Han Chinese legends and hero tales. For instance, "Singing Zhu Yingtai in December" briefly mentions Zhu Yingtai without fully detailing the plot, demonstrating some distortion and blending of storylines.

十二月唱祝英台

*Shi er yue chang zu ying tai*

*Singing Zhu Yingtai in December*

正月好唱祝英台，鸟为食亡人为财，蜜蜂是为蜂花死，赵巧只为送灯台。

*Zheng yue hao chang zhu ying tai, niao wei si wang ren wei cai, mi feng shi wei feng  
hua si, zhao qiao zhi wei song deng tai.*

*"Singing Zhu Yingtai is best in the first lunar month; birds die for food as humans do for wealth. Bees perish for flowers, just as Zhao Qiao did for delivering the lantern."*

五月好唱祝英台，五只龙船下江来，船头坐的梁山伯，后头坐的祝英台。

*Wu yue hao chang zhu ying tai, wu zhi long chuang xia jiang lai, chuan tou zuo de  
liang san bo, hou tou zuo de zhu ying tai.*

*"Singing Zhu Yingtai is best in May when five dragon boats sail down the river. Liang Shanbo sits at the bow, while Zhu Yingtai is seated at the stern."*

As interactions with the Han Chinese intensified, the people of Youyang developed a deeper understanding of Han culture. Consequently, later folk songs began to narrate stories about Han figures in ways that closely aligned with Han narratives. For instance, "Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai" is divided into segments such as "Shanbo Visits a Friend," "Meeting at the Pavilion," "Farewell," "Shanbo Falls Ill," "Yingtai Offers a Remedy," "The Elders Bury," "Yingtai Pays Homage at the Grave," and "Malang Digs the Grave and Pleads in the Netherworld," mirroring the Han version of the Liang Zhu story without distinction.

### 梁山伯 祝英台 Liang shan bo zhu ying tai

The musical score is written in staff notation with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 2/4 time signature. The lyrics are written in Chinese characters and Pinyin below the notes.

梁 山 伯 来 祝 英 台 哟 同 在 尼 山 攻 书 来  
Liang shan bo lai zhu ying tai yo tong zai ni shan gong shu lai

攻 呀 嘛 攻 书 来 哟 男 读 诗 书 求 官 哩 位 呀 女 读 诗  
gong ya ma gong shu lai yo nan du si shu qiu guan li wei ya nv du si

书 女 秀 才 女 呀 嘛 女 秀 才 哟  
shu nv xiu cai nv ya ma nv xiu cai yo

Figure 21. Music Score: Liang shan bo zhu ying tai

Source: Can Fan, transcription from fieldwork in May 2022

In modern times, titles such as "The Beauty of Youyang," "Peach Blossom Land Style," "Peach Blossom Folk Tune," "Longtan Ancient Town," "Gongtan Ancient Town," "I Love the You Shui River," "Youyang Awaits the Wanderer's Return," "Mountain Village Love Song," "My Hometown Has Changed," and "Singing of New Mawang" are listed as new folk songs in the book "Songs of Peach



Blossom Land." This reflects the awakening of cultural agency among the Tujia people of Youyang. In narrative songs, there's a shift from borrowing external cultures to refocusing on self-awareness, narrating local culture with local knowledge from the "owner's perspective."

酉阳有个望郎回

*Youyang you ge wang lang hui*

*Youyang Awaits the Wanderer's Return*

晴天劈脑一炸雷哎，郎去沿河不想回哎

*Qing tian pi nao yi zha lei ai, lang qu yan he bu xiang hui ai*

*"A sudden thunderclap splits the clear sky, ah, as the young man by the river has no wish to return."*

*Qing tian pi nao yi zha lei ai, lang qu yan he bu xiang hui ai*

沿河有个留郎妹舍，酉阳有个望郎回

*Yan he you ge liu lang mei she, you yang you ge wang lang hui*

*"Along the river lies a maiden's home waiting for a suitor; Youyang has 'Youyang Awaits the Wanderer's Return.'"*

*Yan he you ge liu lang mei she, you yang you ge wang lang hui*

## **2. The Evolution of Dissemination Methods for Youyang Folk Songs**

### **2.1 Historical Context of Oral Tradition**

Oral tradition, characterized by face-to-face communication and intergenerational transmission, has been the cornerstone of Youyang folk song dissemination. This method ensured the survival of songs and the perpetuation of cultural values, historical narratives, and communal identities. Folk songs functioned as a medium for storytelling, education, and social cohesion, with performances embedded in daily life and collective rituals.

### **2.2 Transition to Written Documentation**

The late 19th and early 20th centuries marked the initial efforts to document folk traditions, including Youyang folk songs, in written form. Ethnographers and, later, Chinese scholars began transcribing these songs, albeit through the lens of their cultural understandings and objectives. This period saw the folk songs being extracted from their living context, raising questions about the fidelity of these transcriptions to the original performances.

### 2.3 Introduction of Recording Technologies

The advent of recording technologies in the early 20th century introduced a new dimension to the dissemination of Youyang folk songs. Phonographs and, later, radio broadcasts allowed for the wider dissemination of these songs beyond their geographical origins. However, this also meant that songs were now fixed in specific versions, potentially limiting the variability and adaptability inherent in oral tradition.

### 2.4 Digital Age and Global Connectivity

The digital revolution has significantly transformed the dissemination of Youyang folk songs. Platforms like YouTube, social media, and music streaming services have democratized access to these songs, enabling global audiences to engage with Youyang's musical heritage. Digital archiving projects have also played a crucial role in preserving these songs, albeit raising debates about digital mediation's impact on the songs' authenticity and cultural significance.

**Comparative Analysis: Song of Sending Off My Lover.** A compelling illustration of the evolution in dissemination methods can be seen in the trajectory of "Song of Sending Off My Lover," a renowned Youyang folk song.

"Song of Sending Off My Lover" was transmitted orally within the community, with variations in lyrics and melodies reflecting individual performers' personal experiences and artistic interpretations. This version was rich in local dialects and idiomatic expressions, embodying the song's deep-rooted connection to the Youyang landscape and its people's lives.

The first recorded version of "Song of Sending Off My Lover," produced in the mid-20th century, captured a specific rendition, standardizing it to an extent. While this recording served as a valuable tool for preservation, it also crystallized the song into a singular form, potentially overshadowing the diversity of its oral tradition renditions. The picture below shows the version collected by Tang Tenghua in 1982.

## 送郎调

Song lang diao

哎  
ai

送 郎 送 到 豇 豆 林 手 摸 哩  
song lang song dao jiang dou lin shou mo li

8

豇 豆 诉 苦 哩 情 要 像 豇 豆 哩 成 双 哩 对 哟 呵  
jiang dou su ku li qing yao xiang jiang dou li cheng shuang li dui yo he

15

莫 像 茄 子 打 单 身 啰 呵  
mo xiang qie zi da dan sheng luo he

Figure 22. Music Score: Song of Sending Off My Lover  
Source: Can Fan, transcription from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 23. Song of Singing Off My Lover  
Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

"Song of Sending off My Lover" is accessible online, with numerous versions on platforms like YouTube and TikTok. These versions range from archival recordings to contemporary reinterpretations by global artists. Digital dissemination has introduced the song to a worldwide audience, incorporating new musical

influences and production techniques, thereby expanding its interpretive scope and further distancing it from its traditional oral roots.

送郎调  
Song lang diao

那哩 送 郎 那哩 送 到 那 五 里 牌 地      那哩 天 上 那哩  
na li song lang na li song dao na wu li pai ye      na li tianshang na li

8  
雷 公 那哩 打 下 来 哟      那哩 天 上 那哩 雷 公 那哩 莫 打 我  
lei gong na li da xia lai yo      na li tianshang na li lei gong na li mo da wo

15  
舍      我 在 送 他 五 里 哟      就 回 来 哟  
she      wo zai song ta wu li yo      jiu hui lai yo

Figure 24. Music Score: Song of Sending off My Lover

Source: Can Fan, transcription from fieldwork in May 2022

The evolution of dissemination methods for Youyang folk songs, exemplified by "Song of Sending off My Lover," underscores the dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity. Through detailed analysis, technological assessment, and comparative song examination, this sub-objective highlights the complex implications of these evolving dissemination methods on the preservation, interpretation, and global appreciation of Youyang's rich musical heritage. The challenge lies in balancing the invaluable opportunities for global connectivity and preservation offered by digital technologies with the imperative to maintain the authenticity, cultural specificity, and living tradition of Youyang folk songs.

### 3. The expansion of functional types in Youyang folk songs

#### 3.1 Expansion of cultural functions of life songs

Life songs in Youyang folk music reflect the lifestyle of the Tujia people following the "land reform" policy. These songs serve not only as a means of expression among the Youyang populace but also play a significant role in their daily entertainment and leisure activities. Within the realm of life songs, there are deeply meaningful folk songs with educational undertones, such as Pregnancy Songs and Gambling Songs. Throughout generations, folk songs have served not only for entertainment but also as a tool for moral education.

As a result, the function of life songs has evolved from mere emotional expression and entertainment to educating the community. The diversity in the themes of folk songs also indicates changes within life songs. During an investigation in Taohuayuan Town of Youyang County, it was observed that after 10 a.m., a group of folk song enthusiasts would gather at the riverside park, using Bluetooth microphones and speakers to perform folk songs. These performances included solo acts, duets, and group singing, primarily focusing on life-related folk songs. Field visits revealed that folk songs were used to narrate events and express emotions, turning them into a means of communication. Additionally, there were instances of individuals volunteering to engage in duets with solo singers, where the interaction often involved playful banter for entertainment purposes.



Figure 25. The two talked in folk songs

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 26. life song solo

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

However, the performers were mainly elderly, indicating that this art form has largely vanished from the daily lives of the younger and middle-aged populations. As a result, even the most common Tujia folk songs are gradually losing their younger audience. With the expansion of cultural functions, life songs have developed subgenres such as Love Songs, Hardship Songs, Banter Songs, Tall Tale Songs, and Gambling Songs. Despite the application of singing forms rich in Tujia cultural elements, the content of the performances is predominantly influenced by Han culture.

### 3.2 Political songs that change with the times

#### 3.2.1 The birth of political songs

The political lyrics in Youyang folk songs originated during the Land Reform Movement, not only accurately reflecting the miserable lives of the oppressed people but also documenting the history of the Red Revolution and the people's lives during the early stages of socialism. Compared to traditional folk songs, the emergence of political songs signifies a cultural shift in Youyang folk music, namely, an expansion in genres. According to existing materials, "Soldier Counting Song" and "Conscription Song" are among the earliest Youyang Tujia folk songs to reflect timely political messages.

壮丁歌

*Zhuang ding ge*



*The Song of Able-Bodied Men*

爹娘养儿孙( 罗) , 生我兄弟们( 啊) , 养我弟兄两三人( 罗) , 要抽国民兵( 啊)

*Die niang yang er sun(luo),sheng wo xiong di men(a),yang wo di xiong liang san  
ren(luo),yao chou guo ming bing(a)*

*"Parents raise sons and grandsons, giving birth to me and my brothers, nurturing two  
or three of us siblings together, now called to serve as national militia."*

我们兄弟多( 哟) , 总共两三个( 啊) ; 不是兄弟就是我( 哟) , 壮丁躲不脱( 啊) 。

*Wo men xiong di duo(yo), zong gong liang san ge(a),bu shi xing di jiu shi  
wo(yo),zhuang ding duo bu tuo(a)*

*"We brothers are many, yo, in total two or three, ah; if not a brother, then it's me, yo,  
the able-bodied cannot escape, ah."*

狗儿叫得凶( 哟) , 定是捉壮丁( 啊) ; 开门看见乡保丁, 逃脱不能行( 啊) 。

*Gou er jiao de xiong(yo), ding shi Zhuo zhuang ding(a), kai men kan jian xiang bao  
ding, tao tuo bu neng xing(a)*

*"The dogs bark fiercely, yo, surely they're seizing able-bodied men, ah; opening the  
door to see the village guards, escape is not an option."*

In 1934, He Long led the Red Second Army into Youyang, where the armed forces of workers and peasants grew stronger. The Red Army received support and endorsement from the people, uniting and rallying the diverse ethnic communities of Youyang to repel warlords, landlords, and tyrants. After arriving in Youyang, the Red Army established a revolutionary base in Nanyaojie Township, and with Nanyaojie as the headquarters, the remarkable revolutionary base in eastern Guizhou was gradually established. The Red Third Army undertook land distribution, effectively safeguarding the people's fundamental interests. The Chinese Communist Party, with its wholehearted dedication to the people, won the trust and support of the Youyang people and established a profound bond between the military and civilians. Against this backdrop, the Youyang people recorded this historical reality most familiarly, expressing their support and allegiance to the Chinese Communist Party's leadership in the armed revolution through folk songs, which also served a propagandistic purpose. This period saw the emergence of red folk songs like Shi

Chang Hong Jun Zai Youyang (Ten Songs of the Red Army in Youyang), Juan Qi da Dao Gen He Long (Follow He Long with a Big Knife), Hei Ye Ren Ming Pan tian ming (People in the Dark Await the Dawn), Hong jun guo (Red Army Fruit), and Gen hong jun (Following the Red Army).

## 送郎参军

Song lang can jun

作曲 / 编排



红 梅 红 梅 你 听 真 我 在 前 方 打 敌 人 你 在 那 后 方 就  
 hong mei hong mei ni ting zhen wo zai qian fang da di ren ni zai na hou fang jiu  
 十 八 哥 哥 你 听 真 你 在 前 方 打 敌 人 我 在 那 后 方 就  
 shi ba ge ge ni ting zhen ni zai qian fang da di ren wo zai na hou fang jiu

6  
 把 产 生 等 我 回 来 才 结 婚  
 ba chan sheng deng wo hui lai cai jie hun  
 把 产 生 十 年 八 年 不 变 心  
 ba chan sheng shi nian ba nian bu bian xin

Figure 27. Music Score: "Send him to join the army"

Source: Can Fan, transcription from fieldwork in May 2022

### 3.2.2 Political songs during the liberation period

After liberation, political songs closely followed the times, reflecting the political situation of different phases, such as "Only with the Party and the Country Can There Be Me," "The Responsibility System Spreads Like a Net," "Singing of Liberation," and "Singing Songs of Prosperity All Year Round." These songs celebrate how, under the leadership of the Party, the working people have been able to turn over a new leaf and become the masters of their fate, actively responding to the Party's calls and policies and striving to build the grand blueprint of a contemporary socialist China.

唱解放

*Chang jie fang*

*Sing for liberation*

正月是新年，革命火正红，南昌来起义，井冈山扎营。

*Zheng yue shi xin nian, ge ming huo zheng hong, nan chang lai qi yi, jing gang shan  
zha ying.*

*"The first month marks the New Year, the flame of revolution burns bright, rising up  
in Nanchang, encamping on Jinggang Mountains."*

二月是春风，红军真英勇，追赶蒋介石，跟着毛泽东。

*Er, yue shi Chun feng, hong jun zhen ying yong, zhu gan jiang jie shi, gen zhe mao ze  
dong.*

*"February brings the spring breeze, the Red Army's valor shines, pursuing Chiang  
Kai-shek, following Mao Zedong."*

.....

腊月完一年，高兴去过年，民主坐天下，人民作主人！

*La yue wan yi nian, gao xing qu guo nian, ming zhu zuo tian xia, ren ming zuo zhu ren.  
"The twelfth lunar month ends the year, joyfully celebrating the New Year, democracy  
reigns supreme, and the people become the masters!"*

### 3.2.3 Characteristic political songs of the 21st century

The political songs mentioned above are the results of folk song collections from the last century. Collections of folk songs since the 21st century have ceased to include this type of folk music. However, field investigations reveal that many middle-aged and elderly people still sing political songs with distinctive era features on the streets. According to Shi Dunhe, the leader of the Red Song Troupe (male, Miao ethnicity, 72 years old), 'We all live around here, coming at 11 in the morning and leaving at half past two. There are 7 or 8 of us, each singing one song, regardless of length or form. We only sing red songs, not mountain songs. Talking about the era of Mao Zedong, singing songs about Zhu De and such popular songs, we named ourselves the Red Song Troupe.' In parks and on the streets, there are also

scenes of individuals spontaneously performing red songs, like Aunt Qiu (female, Tujia ethnicity, 70 years old), whose folk songs are primarily red.

For example:

1) 'I am a five-good member: a treasure in the heart of a five-good member, everyone learns the five goods. Five goods in political thought cannot be blown down by corrupt practices, not taking the wrong path but the right one.

2) Singing the praises of the revolutionary committee is great; the revolutionary leaders act as the backbone, training successors for the revolution, and the revolutionary land stretches for thousands of miles. La la do la so mi to mi so la do mi so mi to do, do to mi do to come come mi do to so do xi la.

3) Struggle requires sacrifice, and death is a common occurrence.



Figure 28. Singing of current political songs

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



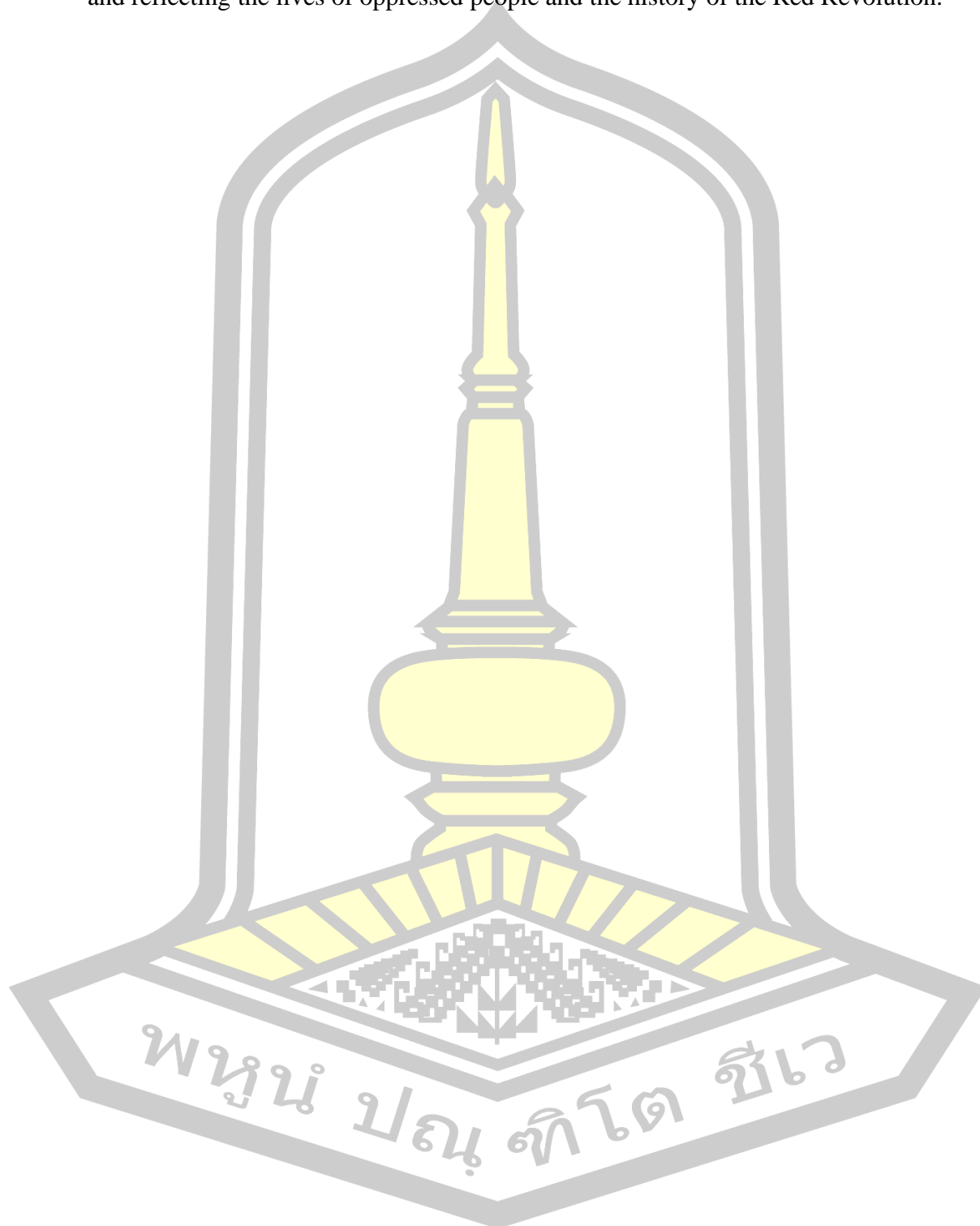
Figure 29. Singing of current red songs  
Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

In addition, political songs also appeared and were performed at evening events and folk song competitions with the theme of red culture.

#### Summary

Youyang folk songs have evolved significantly since the 13th year of Emperor Yongzheng's reign in the Qing Dynasty (1735). The Wedding Weeping Song, a ritualistic song by young Tujia women, initially focused on reluctance to part with ancestors and family teachings. Narrative songs reflect local culture and openness to external influences, often depicting love stories from the Tujia ethnicity and a profound attachment to their homeland. As interactions with the Han Chinese intensified, the people of Youyang developed a deeper understanding of Han culture, leading to later folk songs narrating stories about Han figures in ways that closely aligned with Han narratives. The life songs in Youyang folk music reflect the lifestyle of the Tujia people following the "land reform" policy, serving as a means of expression and education. Life songs have evolved from mere emotional expression and entertainment to educating the community, with subgenres such as Love Songs, Hardship Songs, Banter Songs, Tall Tale Songs, and Gambling Songs. Political songs

also play a significant role in the Youyang folk song tradition, evolving with the times and reflecting the lives of oppressed people and the history of the Red Revolution.





## **CHAPTER VI**

### **The Preservation and Transmission of Youyang Folk Songs**

This chapter delves into the preservation and transmission of Youyang folk songs, showcasing their integration into educational curricula and the positive impact of artistic involvement in rural communities. It addresses the challenges in custodian age distribution and outlines government initiatives for practical preservation. The role of publications in safeguarding this intangible cultural heritage is also highlighted, underscoring the collective efforts of organizations and scholars in maintaining the vibrancy of Youyang's musical traditions. The research in this chapter is structured around five key areas:

1. Integration of Youyang Folk Songs in Educational Curricula
2. Artistic Engagement in Rural Communities
3. Evaluation and Assessment of Custodians
4. Government Initiatives for Practical Protection
5. Preservation through Publication and Book Distribution

#### **1. Integration of Youyang Folk Songs into Educational Curricula**

In recent years, the preservation of Youyang folk songs has seen a significant boost through the establishment of various training programs and initiatives. These efforts, orchestrated by entities such as the National Art Fund, governmental bodies at different levels, private cultural institutions, and the custodians themselves, highlight a concerted effort to safeguard this cultural heritage. For instance, since 2009, Youyang County has pioneered the "Pendulum Dance Training Class," aiming to cultivate skills and knowledge related to folk songs. Simultaneously, the Youyang Cultural Center annually organizes lectures on folk songs, offering training in singing techniques. Additionally, municipal and county-level non-genetic inheritance education bases and intangible cultural heritage schools have been established, focusing specifically on Youyang folk songs. Moreover, grassroots-level cultural and artistic groups have been formed and supported to promote rural arts.

Education, particularly within schools, is pivotal in disseminating Youyang folk songs to the broader public. Specialized folk art courses have been introduced, with Youyang folk song classics compiled into bilingual vernacular teaching materials catering to Tujia and Chinese languages. These materials are integrated into the curriculum of primary and secondary schools across the county, ensuring that students are exposed to the rich musical heritage of Youyang. Furthermore, some schools have gone further by incorporating the Tujia language, folk songs, and pendulum dance into their educational programs. Recognizing the vital role of folk artists as custodians of local ethnic culture and the burgeoning demands of local ethnic tourism, educational institutions, and authorities frequently invite folk artists to conduct in-classroom sessions. This interactive approach is a primary method for safeguarding and transmitting local folk art. For example, in 2016, Youyang Heishui Town Center Primary School enlisted Xiong Zhenglu, the inheritor of Youyang Folk Songs, to teach its students the "Ala Tune". Such immersive demonstrations by folk artists provide students with a vivid education in local ethnic culture, fostering a deeper connection to their cultural heritage and instilling a sense of identity and pride in the rich history and culture of the Chinese nation.



Figure 30. Students' chorus of Youyang folk songs

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

Integrating Youyang folk songs into educational curricula, training institutions, and scholarly discourse underscores a profound commitment to preserving national heritage and facilitating sustainable development. Various folk workshops, inheritance

bases, and training centers have been established with the backing of relevant governmental departments. Noteworthy examples include the "Ridu Culture Communication Limited Liability Company," the "Youyang Ziyue Miao Culture Communication Limited Liability Company," and the "Youyang Folk Song Inheritance Training Center." These initiatives ensure the continuity of Youyang's musical traditions and foster a deeper appreciation and understanding of its cultural significance among the younger generation. Through collaborative efforts between educational institutions, governmental bodies, private organizations, and individual custodians, Youyang folk songs continue to thrive as an integral part of China's rich cultural tapestry, inspiring pride and identity among its people.

## 2. Artistic Engagement in Rural Communities

In the past decade, the "Art in the Countryside" movement has emerged as a grassroots artistic endeavor to rejuvenate vernacular culture in rural areas. The outcomes of these creative initiatives have been remarkably positive. For example, the "Return to the Countryside" Earth Art Season in June 2019 in Youyang, themed "Seclusion," brought together artists worldwide alongside local folk artists and craftsmen. Together, they reconstructed local rural culture and traditions through art, grounding their creations in the geographical and cultural context of Youyang. This approach has resulted in art that resonates with and is relatable to the local farming communities.



Figure 31. The Opening Ceremony of the Youyang Rural Art Season

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in November 2023

The success of artistic engagement in rural areas can be attributed to the skillful connections forged between individuals, local culture, art, and contemporary society. Equally significant is the deep respect and preservation of local natural aesthetics, rural history, cultural heritage, consumer preferences, beliefs, rituals, folk art, and aesthetic psychology. Most importantly, this approach regards residents as active participants in the artistic process.

In particular, young people have been drawn back to the countryside from urban centers after experiencing artistic interventions in rural areas. Integrating art and rural development is a crucial component of rural revitalization, making significant contributions to cultural revitalization. Non-material heritage, serving as a repository of rich historical and cultural traditions, is pivotal in this cultural revitalization.

Ethnic culture has been systematically integrated into performance activities, promoting the integrated development of cultural tourism. For instance, Gongtan Town in Youyang County hosts the "Tima Ancient Song" stage performance, which showcases various forms of local folk culture and art, including Youyang folk songs and ancient songs. This performance is a key attraction in the local Gongtan Ancient Town scenic area, captivating tourists and offering them a glimpse of Youyang's intangible heritage.



Figure 32. Tima Ancient Song Performed in Gongtan Ancient Town

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Similarly, the upgraded version of the stage show "Fantasy Peach Blossom Garden" in the national 5A scenic area Peach Blossom Garden incorporates elements of non-material heritage such as wood leaf love songs, grass-gathering gongs and drums, and weeping marriages. These performances primarily occur in tourist-oriented settings, playing a pivotal role in showcasing the allure of local ethnic culture.



Figure 33. Dream Peach Blossom Land

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

In conclusion, Youyang folk songs are evolving into a vibrant and living art form. This approach has bolstered residents' confidence in their cultural heritage and ignited their passion for creating folk art. This method of enhancing the artistic quality of the people is yielding positive results. The cases mentioned above illustrate how, when applied, external influences can activate people's self-confidence, preserve folk art, and invigorate indigenous folk culture. Through continued engagement and innovative approaches, Youyang's rich cultural heritage will continue to thrive and evolve, enriching the lives of its residents and captivating visitors from around the world.

### 3. Evaluation and Assessment of Custodians

The age distribution of current custodians of Youyang folk songs reveals a concerning trend, with a significant portion of them being elderly artists. This demographic imbalance poses challenges for preserving and transmitting Youyang's

traditional musical heritage. The shortage of young individuals willing to embrace these songs reflects a broader societal shift influenced by contemporary pop culture, making it increasingly difficult to cultivate new talent and ensure the continuity of these traditional art forms. Consequently, there is a noticeable scarcity of young talents in the lineage of inheritance, raising questions about the sustainability of Youyang folk songs in future generations.

The author has meticulously selected eight notable national and municipal custodians of Youyang folk songs to gain deeper insights into the custodianship landscape. Through a comprehensive comparative analysis, various aspects of their profiles have been examined, including their ages, ethnic backgrounds, master-apprentice relationships, apprenticeships, and their involvement in establishing enterprises, studios, or workshops. This detailed examination sheds light on the diverse pathways through which custodians have emerged and highlights the multifaceted nature of custodianship within the Youyang folk song tradition.

By scrutinizing the age distribution of custodians, the study aims to identify potential gaps in intergenerational transmission and explore strategies for engaging younger individuals in preserving and promoting Youyang folk songs. Furthermore, the analysis of ethnic backgrounds provides insights into the diversity and inclusivity of custodianship, offering valuable perspectives on the cultural richness inherent in Youyang's musical heritage.

Examining master-apprentice relationships and apprenticeships offers crucial insights into the traditional modes of knowledge transfer within the Youyang folk song community. By understanding the dynamics of mentorship and learning, the study seeks to uncover patterns of continuity and innovation within the custodial lineage, thereby informing strategies for effective transmission to future generations.

Additionally, the investigation into custodians' involvement in establishing enterprises, studios, or workshops sheds light on their entrepreneurial endeavors and their role in fostering a supportive ecosystem for Youyang folk songs. By exploring the initiatives undertaken by custodians to promote cultural heritage, the study assesses the broader impact of their contributions to the preservation and dissemination of Youyang's traditional musical traditions.



In summary, the evaluation and assessment of custodians serve as a vital component of efforts to safeguard Youyang folk songs for posterity. Through a comprehensive analysis of custodial profiles and their roles within the community, the study aims to identify challenges, opportunities, and best practices for ensuring the continued vitality and relevance of Youyang's rich musical heritage in the face of evolving cultural dynamics.

Table 2. List of Representative Custodians

| <b>Custodian</b> | <b>Year of Birth</b> | <b>Ethnic Group</b> | <b>Mode of Transmission</b> | <b>Occupational Status</b> |
|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Xiong Zhenglu    | 1954                 | Tujia               | Family Inheritance          | Farming and performing     |
| Ning Qingxiao    | 1956                 | Tujia               | Family Inheritance          | Farming and performing     |
| Ning Qingchen    | 1955                 | Tujia               | Family Inheritance          | Farming and performing     |
| Cheng Maochang   | 1946                 | Tujia               | Family Inheritance          | Farming and performing     |
| Bai Xiangui      | 1969                 | Tujia               | Family Inheritance          | Farming and performing     |
| Ran Pinying      | 1953                 | Tujia               | Family Inheritance          | Farming and performing     |
| Jian Zuming      | 1947                 | Tujia               | Family Inheritance          | Farming and performing     |

The landscape of Youyang folk song succession is shaped by a series of policies introduced by both the national government and the Youyang Culture Center, aimed at safeguarding this intangible cultural heritage. These initiatives are crucial in preserving and transmitting Youyang's rich musical traditions to future generations.

1) Annual Funding Allocation: The state annually allocates funds to the Youyang Tujia and Miao Autonomous County Cultural Center, recognized as a custodial institution for Youyang folk songs. These funds serve various purposes, including cultural displays, acquiring performance-related equipment and costumes,

and constructing dedicated spaces like the Inheritance House. Here, custodians impart their skills to apprentices, ensuring the continuity of traditional knowledge and practices.

2) Non-material Heritage Exhibition: An annual large-scale non-material heritage exhibition takes place on June 10, providing a platform for custodians and their apprentices to showcase their talents on stage. This event celebrates the richness of Youyang's cultural heritage and fosters community engagement in preserving folk songs.

3) Regular Evaluations: The teaching outcomes of custodians and the progress of their apprentices are regularly evaluated to ensure the effectiveness of the transmission process. These evaluations help identify areas for improvement and support custodians and apprentices as they continue their cultural preservation efforts.

4) Folk Song Competition: An annual folk song competition is a platform for dedicated folk song enthusiasts and custodians to present their musical compositions. This competition encourages creativity and innovation and promotes the appreciation of Youyang folk songs among the wider community.

5) Community Outreach Programs: During summer and winter vacations and holidays, custodians and their apprentices engage in community outreach programs to teach residents about folk songs. These programs focus on imparting singing techniques and conveying the cultural significance of these traditions, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of Youyang's musical heritage.

These initiatives collectively play a pivotal role in ensuring the preservation and continued transmission of Youyang folk songs to future generations. By providing financial support, creating platforms for showcasing talents, conducting evaluations, organizing competitions, and engaging in community outreach, the government and cultural institutions actively contribute to the vitality and sustainability of Youyang's intangible cultural heritage.

#### **4. Government Initiatives for Practical Protection**

Nestled in the heart of the Wuling Mountains in Chongqing, Youyang spans an area of 5,173 square kilometers and serves as a vibrant hub for the Tujia and Miao ethnic groups in southeast Chongqing. The region is rich in ethnic cultural resources,

housing four national-level intangible cultural heritages and over 200 municipal and county-level intangible cultural heritages. Youyang has earned titles such as the "Hometown of Chinese Pendulum Dance" and the "Birthplace of Chinese Tujia Culture," highlighting its strategic significance due to its cultural value, geographical location, and resource protection.

In 2020, the Youyang County Culture and Tourism Commission issued the "Youyang Tujia and Miao Autonomous County Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative Inheritance Recognition and Management Approach" to fortify intangible cultural heritage's preservation, transmission, and utilization. This document outlines criteria for identifying and managing representative inheritors of intangible cultural heritage. Youzhuang Town currently boasts one municipal-level representative inheritor and eight county-level representative inheritors, with the town government leading efforts to organize training for intangible cultural heritage projects like Dongdong Qin and Youyang folk songs.

Members of the Youyang People's Congress delegation conducted extensive visits and research to enhance intangible heritage protection and inheritance, putting forward recommendations such as the need for legislation on supernatural heritage protection, the establishment of a dedicated department, comprehensive documentation of rich folk intangible cultural heritage, and classification and grading of protection efforts. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of equipping the protection process with recording instruments and photographic equipment to create enduring records for successful inheritance and promotion. Furthermore, they advocated for increased personnel and funding to protect intangible heritage to serve as the soul of rural revitalization.

Recognizing the vitality of local folk song culture, Ran Yihua submitted a proposal to strengthen the protection and inheritance of Youyang folk songs. The County Culture and Tourism Commission actively adopted these recommendations, initiating efforts to conduct resource censuses and compile, research, create, and edit Youyang folk songs. They sought to nurture and develop a team dedicated to inheriting Youyang folk songs and actively build a display platform for these cultural treasures. The government-sponsored collection and creation of Youyang folk songs have garnered recognition and awards in cultural events organized by Chongqing

Municipality, the Poverty Reduction Original Songs Collection Competition, and the 17th Western China Folk Songs Song Festival.

These comprehensive measures undertaken by the government have substantially contributed to protecting and promoting Youyang folk songs. As these efforts continue to gain momentum, Youyang folk songs are poised to flourish and play an instrumental role in fostering the national consciousness of the local population.

### **5. Preservation through Publication and Book Distribution**

The preservation and safeguarding of Youyang folk songs owe much to the concerted efforts of various organizations and publishers, including Chongqing University Press, China Theater Publishing House, Chongqing Publishing House, Chongqing Youyang Tourism Bureau, Sichuan Folk Song Publishing House, and Guizhou People's Publishing House. These entities have played a central role in producing and disseminating many books, audio-visual materials, and CD-ROMs dedicated to Youyang folk songs. Their collaborative efforts have been pivotal in safeguarding and preserving this intangible cultural heritage.

The compilation of publications encompasses titles that delve into various facets of Youyang folk songs. Notable examples include Tang Tenghua's "Folk Songs of Southeast Chongqing," published in 1999; Ran Guangda's "Collection of Youyang Tujia and Miao Folk Songs - Peach Garden Songs," released in 2001; Su Yuanda's "Selected Folk Songs of Youyang," which graced the shelves in 2011; and the "Collection of Folk Songs of Youyang," co-published by the Culture, Radio, Television, Press, and Publishing Bureau of Youyang Miao and Tujia Autonomous County and Youyang Miao and Autonomous County Cultural Center in 2012. Additionally, the "Collection of Folk Songs of Youyang Famous Ethnic Culture Series - Folk Songs Volume" from 2011 is a noteworthy contribution to the corpus of work. Each of these publications plays a pivotal role in protecting and promoting Youyang folk songs.



Figure 34. Selected Youyang Folk Songs  
Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

This figure showcases the richness and diversity of Youyang folk songs, representing a small selection from a vast repertoire. These songs serve as cultural treasures, encapsulating the essence of Youyang's heritage and traditions.



Figure 35. Youyang Humanities  
Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022

This figure illustrates the multifaceted nature of Youyang's cultural landscape, encompassing folk songs and other aspects of intangible cultural heritage. It symbolizes the holistic approach to preserving and promoting Youyang's cultural heritage.



These published resources serve as invaluable reservoirs for the inheritance, protection, innovation, and development of Youyang folk songs. Throughout the process of unearthing, recording, exploring, and researching this culturally rich heritage, a generation of scholars, including Tang Tenghua, Lu Xiaobai, Su Yuanguang, Xiaomei, Zhang Zhentao, Cao Mingshen, Deng Jun, and Xue Jin, emerged as key contributors. Building upon the legacy of these eminent experts, subsequent generations of scholars have joined the ranks, forming an ever-expanding research community committed to preserving and advancing Youyang folk songs. Their collective dedication ensures that this cherished intangible cultural heritage thrives and continues to inspire future generations.

#### Summary

Youyang folk songs have been preserved through various programs and initiatives, including the "Pendulum Dance Training Class" and lectures organized by Youyang Cultural Center. Municipal and county-level non-genetic inheritance education bases and intangible cultural heritage schools have been established, integrating Youyang folk songs into their curriculum. Cultural and artistic groups have been formed to promote rural arts, and the "Art in the Countryside" movement has revitalized vernacular culture in rural areas. Ethnic culture has been systematically integrated into performance activities, promoting cultural tourism and enhancing artistic quality. However, the age distribution of Youyang folk songs' custodians is concerning, with many elderly artists. Policies introduced by the national government and the Youyang Culture Center shaped the succession of Youyang folk songs. The Youyang County Culture and Tourism Commission issued a document in 2020 to protect and manage these heritages. The preservation of Youyang folk songs is largely due to the efforts of various organizations and publishers.

พหุ ม ประ โท ชี เว



## CHAPTER VII

### Conclusion, Discussion, and Suggestions

#### 1. Conclusion

A comprehensive examination of Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China. With the research objectives of investigating the current status, analyzing changes, and examining preservation and transmission efforts, this study delves deep into the rich cultural heritage of Youyang's musical traditions. This comprehensive analysis explores various aspects of Youyang folk songs, including their historical significance, contemporary relevance, challenges faced, and initiatives undertaken for their preservation and promotion.

1.1 The investigation into the current status of Youyang folk songs unveils a musical tradition deeply ingrained in the cultural landscape of Chongqing Municipality. Characterized by its unique blend of Tujia ethnic culture and regional influences, Youyang folk songs serve as a repository of cultural identity and heritage for the local community. Despite facing challenges such as demographic imbalances among custodians and the encroachment of contemporary pop culture, Youyang folk songs continue to thrive as a cherished aspect of the region's intangible cultural heritage.

The chapter begins with exploring the historical roots of Youyang folk songs, tracing their origins to ancient Tujia rituals and traditions. Over the centuries, Youyang folk songs have evolved and diversified, incorporating elements of regional music styles and cultural practices. Through various forms of oral transmission and communal gatherings, Youyang folk songs have been passed down from generation to generation, serving as a vital link to the past and a source of cultural continuity for the local community.

An in-depth analysis of the contemporary landscape of Youyang folk songs reveals a dynamic and multifaceted musical tradition. While traditional forms of singing and performance remain prevalent, there is also a growing trend towards innovation and adaptation, with artists incorporating modern influences and techniques into their repertoire. This fusion of old and new elements reflects the

evolving nature of Youyang folk songs and their ability to adapt to changing cultural contexts.

Despite their enduring popularity, Youyang folk songs face several challenges in the modern era. One significant issue is the demographic imbalance among custodians, with many elderly artists struggling to pass on their knowledge and skills to younger generations. Additionally, the encroachment of contemporary pop culture threatens the preservation of traditional musical forms as younger audiences gravitate toward more mainstream genres.

However, amidst these challenges, there are also opportunities for revitalization and renewal. Efforts to digitize and document Youyang folk songs have facilitated wider dissemination and appreciation of this cultural heritage. Furthermore, collaborations between local artists, cultural organizations, and government agencies have led to the development of innovative preservation initiatives, such as educational programs and community outreach projects.

1.2 The changes observed in Youyang folk songs over time. A comparative examination of historical records, fieldwork data, and contemporary trends seeks to identify critical transformations and trends shaping the evolution of Youyang's musical heritage. The historical development of Youyang folk songs highlights significant milestones and influences that have shaped their trajectory. From their humble origins as communal rituals and celebrations to their modern-day manifestations as performance art forms, Youyang folk songs have undergone transformations reflecting broader social, cultural, and technological changes.

Analyzing the musical elements and lyrical themes of Youyang folk songs reveals a rich tapestry of influences and expressions. Traditional melodies and rhythms are interwoven with contemporary sensibilities, resulting in a diverse and eclectic repertoire that resonates with audiences of all ages. Themes of love, nature, and community feature prominently in Youyang folk songs, reflecting the region's rural heritage and close connection to the land.

One notable trend observed in the analysis is the increasing influence of globalization on Youyang folk songs. As the world becomes more interconnected, Youyang's musical traditions have become increasingly exposed to external influences, leading to a fusion of traditional and modern elements. While some purists

may lament this trend as a dilution of authenticity, others see it as a natural evolution reflecting the changing cultural landscape.

Despite these changes, there remains a strong sense of continuity and tradition in Youyang folk songs. Through ongoing efforts by custodians, scholars, and cultural enthusiasts, traditional forms of singing and performance are being preserved and celebrated. Furthermore, digital technologies have opened up new avenues for disseminating and appreciating Youyang folk songs, ensuring their continued relevance and vitality in the modern era.

1.3 The preservation and transmission of Youyang folk songs emerge as central themes, underscoring the importance of safeguarding this cultural heritage for future generations. It explores various initiatives and programs and examines the strategies and challenges of preserving and promoting Youyang's musical traditions.

One of the critical strategies highlighted is the integration of Youyang folk songs into educational curricula. Efforts by schools, cultural centers, and government agencies to incorporate folk art courses and workshops have helped foster a deeper appreciation and understanding of Youyang's musical heritage among younger generations. By engaging students in hands-on learning experiences and immersive cultural activities, these initiatives ensure the continuity of Youyang folk songs in the years to come.

Artistic engagement in rural communities also plays a vital role in preserving Youyang folk songs. Through initiatives such as the "Art in the Countryside" movement and cultural festivals, local artists and craftsmen collaborate to rejuvenate vernacular culture and traditions. Celebrating Youyang's musical heritage through art, these initiatives help strengthen community ties and promote cultural revitalization in rural areas.

Another critical preservation aspect highlighted is the evaluation and assessment of custodians. With many elderly artists serving as custodians of Youyang folk songs, there is a pressing need to identify and nurture young talent to ensure the continuity of this musical tradition. Through comprehensive analyses of custodial profiles and their roles within the community, efforts are underway to address gaps in intergenerational transmission and engage younger individuals in preserving and promoting Youyang folk songs.

Government initiatives also play a pivotal role in preserving and transmitting Youyang folk songs. From annual funding allocations to non-material heritage exhibitions and community outreach programs, governmental bodies provide crucial support for cultural preservation efforts. By creating platforms for showcasing talents, conducting evaluations, organizing competitions, and engaging in community outreach, the government actively contributes to the vitality and sustainability of Youyang's intangible cultural heritage.

## **2. Discussion**

The discussion section critically analyzes the research findings on Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China, in light of the introduction, literature review, research methodology, research results, and research conclusion. It evaluates the consistency or inconsistency of the research with theoretical principles and existing literature, highlighting areas of significance and suggesting avenues for further exploration.

The research findings are consistent with theoretical principles regarding preserving and transmitting intangible cultural heritage. Clifford (1973) argues that cultural traditions are dynamic and subject to change over time due to various social, economic, and environmental factors. The research results corroborate this view by demonstrating the evolving nature of Youyang folk songs, which have adapted to modern influences while retaining their cultural significance.

Furthermore, the preservation efforts outlined in the research align with Perlovsky's (2010) concept of cultural heritage as a means of fostering social cohesion and identity. By integrating Youyang folk songs into educational curricula, organizing community outreach programs, and supporting custodianship initiatives, the government and cultural institutions preserve and promote Youyang's musical heritage, strengthen community bonds, and reinforce cultural identity.

Moreover, the research methodology employed, including fieldwork, interviews, and documentary analysis, aligns with best practices in qualitative research (Ho & Law, 2012). By engaging directly with custodians, scholars, and cultural practitioners, the researchers gathered rich data and provided a comprehensive understanding of Youyang folk songs and their preservation.

Despite the overall consistency with theoretical principles, there are some inconsistencies in the research findings. For example, while the research highlights the importance of government initiatives in preserving Youyang folk songs, it may overlook the potential challenges associated with state-led cultural preservation efforts. Lumsden (2008) argues that government interventions in cultural heritage management can sometimes lead to issues of authenticity, commodification, and marginalization of local voices. Therefore, a critical examination of the role of government in cultural preservation is warranted to ensure the integrity and sustainability of Youyang's musical heritage.

Additionally, the research may not fully address the complexities of globalization's impact on Youyang folk songs. While it acknowledges the influence of external factors on the evolution of musical traditions, it may not sufficiently explore the broader implications of globalization for cultural identity and authenticity. Rosecrance (1998) suggests that globalization can enrich and erode local cultural practices, leading to debates about the balance between preservation and adaptation. A more nuanced analysis of globalization's effects on Youyang folk songs could provide valuable insights into cultural heritage preservation challenges and opportunities in a globalized world.

In conclusion, the research on Youyang folk songs in Chongqing Municipality, China, offers valuable insights into preserving and transmitting intangible cultural heritage. By examining the current status, analyzing changes, and evaluating preservation efforts, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of Youyang's musical traditions and their significance in contemporary society. While the findings are generally consistent with theoretical principles, there are areas where further exploration and critical reflection are needed to address potential inconsistencies and complexities. Moving forward, interdisciplinary approaches drawing on anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, and musicology can enrich our understanding of Youyang folk songs and inform more holistic approaches to cultural heritage preservation.

### **3. Suggestions**

#### **3.1 Suggestions for applying this research**

3.1.1 Integration into Educational Curricula: Given the significant role of schools in transmitting cultural traditions, it is advisable to integrate Youyang folk songs into educational curricula at both primary and secondary levels. This could involve developing teaching materials, organizing workshops for educators, and incorporating folk songs into music and cultural studies programs. By embedding Youyang folk songs into formal education, schools can play a crucial role in passing down these traditions to younger generations.

3.1.2 Digitization and Archiving: To facilitate broader access to Youyang folk songs and ensure their long-term preservation, digitizing and archiving audiovisual materials documenting these cultural practices is recommended. This could involve creating online repositories, digitizing archival recordings, and developing multimedia resources for public access. By leveraging digital technologies, researchers, educators, and the general public can access and engage with Youyang folk songs regardless of geographical constraints.

### 3.2 Suggestions for Further Research

3.2.1 Impact of Globalization: Future research could explore the effect of globalization on Youyang folk songs and their adaptation to changing cultural landscapes. This could involve investigating how globalization influences musical styles, themes, and performance contexts and the implications for cultural identity and heritage preservation.

3.2.2 Digital Preservation Strategies: With the increasing digitization of cultural heritage materials, there is a need for research on effective digital preservation strategies for Youyang folk songs. This could involve studying best practices for digitization, metadata standards, long-term storage solutions, and access protocols. By developing robust digital preservation strategies, researchers can ensure the accessibility and longevity of Youyang folk songs in the digital age.



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## Appendix

### Appendix I: Outline of the interview

一、 Date: May 25, 2022, at 3:00 PM

Interviewee: Fu Hao, a male Youyang Cultural Center's Intangible Cultural Heritage Office staff member.

Interview location: The Youyang Cultural Center Office

Obtained a video and the declaration form for the national intangible cultural heritage status of Youyang folk songs, with authorization. interview outline:

1. What measures have been implemented to protect Youyang folk songs?
2. Have there been any folk song competitions in recent years?
3. Is there a dedicated team responsible for preserving the legacy of the Youyang area?
4. What is the primary age group involved in these activities?
5. Are there annual events related to Youyang Folk Songs?

二、 Date: May 25, 2022, at 4:00 PM

Interviewee: Lu Xiaobai, Youyang folk song researcher, male

Interview location The Youyang Cultural Center Office interview outline:

1. What is the Blessing Song, and on what occasions is it used?
2. Many regions have Tujia folk songs; what distinguishes Youyang's Tujia folk songs from those in other regions?
3. Could you recommend a few of the most representative Youyang folk songs?
4. Do contemporary young people still sing Wedding Weeping Song at their weddings?

三、 Date: May 26, 2022, at 10:30 AM

Interviewee: Li, Director of the Youyang County Library

Interview location Youyang County Library

interview outline:

1. Have libraries been actively collecting and organizing folk songs in recent years?

2. Are there any videos or CDs in the library's multimedia resources section about folk songs from recent years?

3. Is there currently any local literature on "folk songs" available in the library?

四、Date: May 27, 2022, at 12:30 PM

Interviewee: Xiong Zhonglu, National Inheritor of Youyang Folk Song, male.

Interview Location: Small vegetable restaurant at the entrance of Youyang Heishui Township government interview outline:

1. Can you perform a Leaf's Love Song live for us?
2. How did you learn these folk songs?
3. Are you employed in a different job currently, or do you dedicate yourself full-time to singing folk songs?
4. Besides Labor Chant, do you perform any other varieties of folk songs?
5. Do you currently have any apprentices? If so, how do you train them?

五、Date: May 27th, 2022, at 2:30 PM

Interviewee: Tang Tengtang, author specializing in the Tujia ethnic group's folk songs from southeast Chongqing, male.

Interview Location: WeChat Video Call interview outline:

1. During your collection of folk songs, have you encountered songs that reflect contemporary life themes?
2. When did you conduct the research for your book?
3. Are the elderly in rural areas still familiar with these songs?
4. What themes do ordinary people currently prefer when singing folk songs?
5. Are the folk songs documented in your book still actively sung today?
6. I am also curious to know whether specific types of folk songs, such as Weeping Marriage Songs and funeral songs, are still performed.



## **Appendix II: Declaration materials of the Intangible cultural heritage of Youyang Folk Songs**

### **Declaration of Youyang Folk Songs (excerpt)**

Chongqing's Youyang Tujia and Miao Autonomous County boasts a wide variety of folk songs with rich lyrics and melodies. According to statistics collected in 1953 and 1983, there are about 1,700 songs, which can be categorized as follows:

**Minor Key Folk Songs:** These songs cover a wide range of topics, including weddings and funerals in folklore; life's joys, sorrows, and myriad emotions; crafts such as weaving and embroidery; and construction activities like house repairing and building. Their melodies are generally complete, though the range is not extensive. Specific types include:

**"Love Songs":** Often expressing emotions such as pursuit, first love, passionate love, parting, lovesickness, lost love, and martyrdom, these songs are characterized by their beautiful and soothing melodies.

**"Circular Singing":** A form of intellectual competition, Panga has rich content and covers various topics. The melodies are easy to understand, with smooth rhythms and dense notes.

**"Leisure Love Song":** These include lie songs, sarcastic songs, and love songs, often sung in leisure moments after labor. They are known for their self-indulgent, humorous, and satirical nature, full of life's interesting and fascinating aspects.

**"Song of Sorrow":** These songs typically focus on the exploitation by feudal forces and the misery of people's lives.

**"Wedding Weeping Song":** In Tujia culture, daughters sing these songs before and during their marriage, expressing their reluctance to leave their family and apprehension about their future lives.

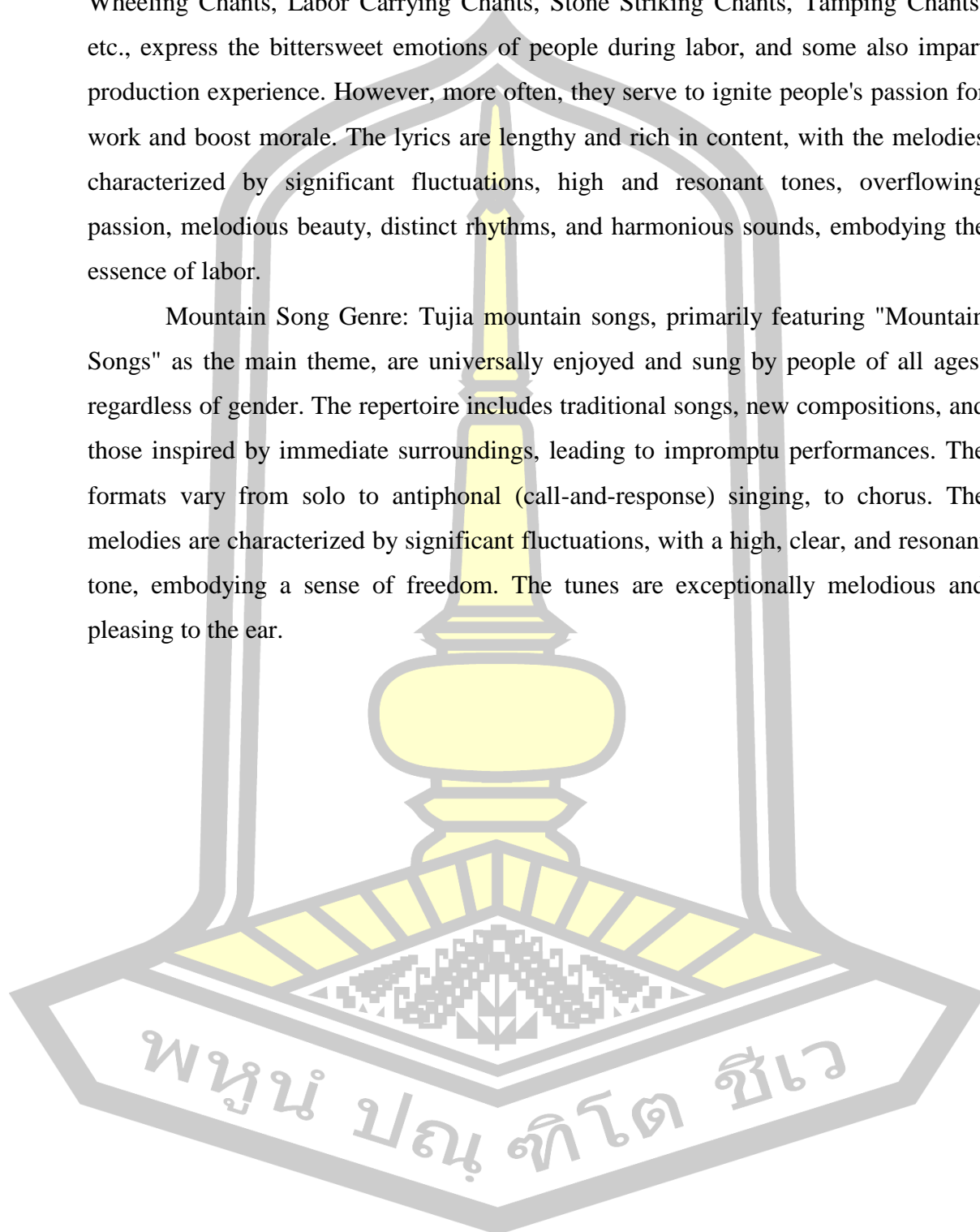
**"New Folk Songs":** These songs, mostly created during the process of socialist construction, eulogize the Party's policies.

**"Red Army Ballads":** These are political songs sung by the people of Youyang who actively participated in the revolution, following the establishment of a revolutionary base in Nanwaijie Township by the Red Army led by He Long.

**Labor Chants Category:**

Boatmen's Chants, Rock Hauling Chants, Grass Pulling Chants, Water Wheeling Chants, Labor Carrying Chants, Stone Striking Chants, Tamping Chants, etc., express the bittersweet emotions of people during labor, and some also impart production experience. However, more often, they serve to ignite people's passion for work and boost morale. The lyrics are lengthy and rich in content, with the melodies characterized by significant fluctuations, high and resonant tones, overflowing passion, melodious beauty, distinct rhythms, and harmonious sounds, embodying the essence of labor.

Mountain Song Genre: Tujia mountain songs, primarily featuring "Mountain Songs" as the main theme, are universally enjoyed and sung by people of all ages, regardless of gender. The repertoire includes traditional songs, new compositions, and those inspired by immediate surroundings, leading to impromptu performances. The formats vary from solo to antiphonal (call-and-response) singing, to chorus. The melodies are characterized by significant fluctuations, with a high, clear, and resonant tone, embodying a sense of freedom. The tunes are exceptionally melodious and pleasing to the ear.



### Appendix III: Questionnaire on Current Expressions of Youyang Folk Songs

Sir / Madam:

Shalom! Thank you very much for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in this questionnaire survey. The data collected from this questionnaire be used solely for academic research purposes and will not disclose any of your personal information. Please rest assured and fill it out truthfully. Thank you once again for your support and cooperation!

\* 1. Your gender:

☐ male ☐ female

\* 2. Your age:

☐ 12 years and below ☐ 18-45 years ☐ 45-60 years ☐ 45-60 years ☐ 60 years old and above

\* 3. Your nation:

☐ Tujia ☐ Miao ☐ Han ☐ Other

\* 4. Your native place:

☐ Youyang Tujia and Miao Autonomous County ☐ other districts and counties in Chongqing Municipality ☐ other provinces and cities

\* 5. The location of your current job:

☐ Youyang Tujia and Miao Autonomous County ☐ other districts and counties in Chongqing ☐ other provinces and cities

\* 6. Reasons why you live abroad for a long time:

☐ Studying ☐ Seeking employment ☐ Moving with the family

\* 7. Your occupation:

☐ Students ☐ farmers ☐ self-employed ☐ enterprise employees ☐ government agencies or education and cultural departments ☐ other

\* 8. Your Education Degree:

☐ High school or below ☐ junior college or undergraduate ☐ master's degree or above

\* 9. Your understanding of Youyang folk songs:

☐ Have heard ☐ can listen to can sing ☐ often can listen to ☐ never know

\* 10. How long do you listen to or sing the folk songs?

ⒶeverydayⒷevery monthⒸhave not been heard in recent yearsⒹdailyⒺevery year

\* 11. Where have you seen the performance of "Wedding Weeping Song" in recent years: [Multiple choice]

Ⓐ Women married occasions Ⓑ show performance Ⓒ network media Ⓓ book records Ⓔ never seen

\* 12. What form of folk song singing do you like: [Multiple choice]

Ⓐ Original ecological folk songs singing Ⓑ combined with modern characteristics of folk songs singing Ⓒ square folk songs singing Ⓓ program performance singing Ⓔ folk songs singing on the network\*

13.How do you understand or participate in Youyang folk songs: [Multiple choice]

Ⓐ Family singing Ⓑ fellow singing Ⓒ TV radio Ⓓ network new media Ⓔ school, government or square organization singing Ⓕ tourism culture program performance

\* 14. Where have you seen or applied a rendition of a labor horn in recent years: [Multiple Choice Question]

Ⓐ Field work Ⓑ water transportation Ⓒ other labor occasions Ⓓ program performance Ⓔ book records Ⓕ network media Ⓖ never seen

\* 15. Where have you seen the song in fortune (sung in the building ceremony) in recent years interpretation: [Multiple choice]

ⒶHouse building Ⓑ Programs and shows Ⓒ Books and records Ⓓ Online media Ⓔ Never seen before

\* 16. Where have you seen the performance of "crying marriage song" in recent years: [Multiple choice]

Ⓐ Women married occasions Ⓑ show performance Ⓒ network media Ⓓ book records Ⓔ never seen

\* 17. Have you ever heard or sung local children's songs when you were a child? (Non-modern pop song)

Ⓐ is Ⓑ no

\* 18. The folk songs you have seen or sung in your life are: [Multiple choice]

☐ Expressions of life's trivia   ☐ Love songs solo, duet, and rounds   ☐ Lying songs for entertainment (Pan ge)   ☐ Glorification of social policy   ☐ Never seen

\* 19. Your attitude towards youyang folk songs is as follows: [Multiple choice]

☐ Should be preserved and promoted, and applied to real life   ☐ only non-genetic inheritors or singers can be known   ☐ the government, academic circles should pay attention to and support   ☐ create an environment for singing folk songs   ☐ have nothing to do with me

\* 20. The reasons why you think folk songs are not popular or used by the public are as follows: [Multiple choice]

☐ The change of entertainment mode and the increase of the form of folk songs singing, not enough trend, modern   ☐ will not or have had contact with folk songs singing   ☐ folk songs singing opportunities, occasions platform less   ☐ government propaganda is not enough   ☐ less understanding of folk songs channels   ☐ it is not necessary to sing in modern times

\* 21. What do you think is the value of Youyang folk songs: [Multiple choice]?

☐ Inherit national culture   ☐ Embody national characteristics   ☐ Drive economic development   ☐ Edification and entertainment role   ☐ Closely related to life   ☐ Enhance cultural confidence   ☐ No real value

22. The communication methods you use in contemporary times are: [Multiple choice]

☐ Folk song duets   ☐ Face-to-face conversations   ☐ WeChat, QQ and other social software   ☐ Other

\* 23. The reasons why you think folk songs are not popular or used by the public are as follows: [Multiple choice]

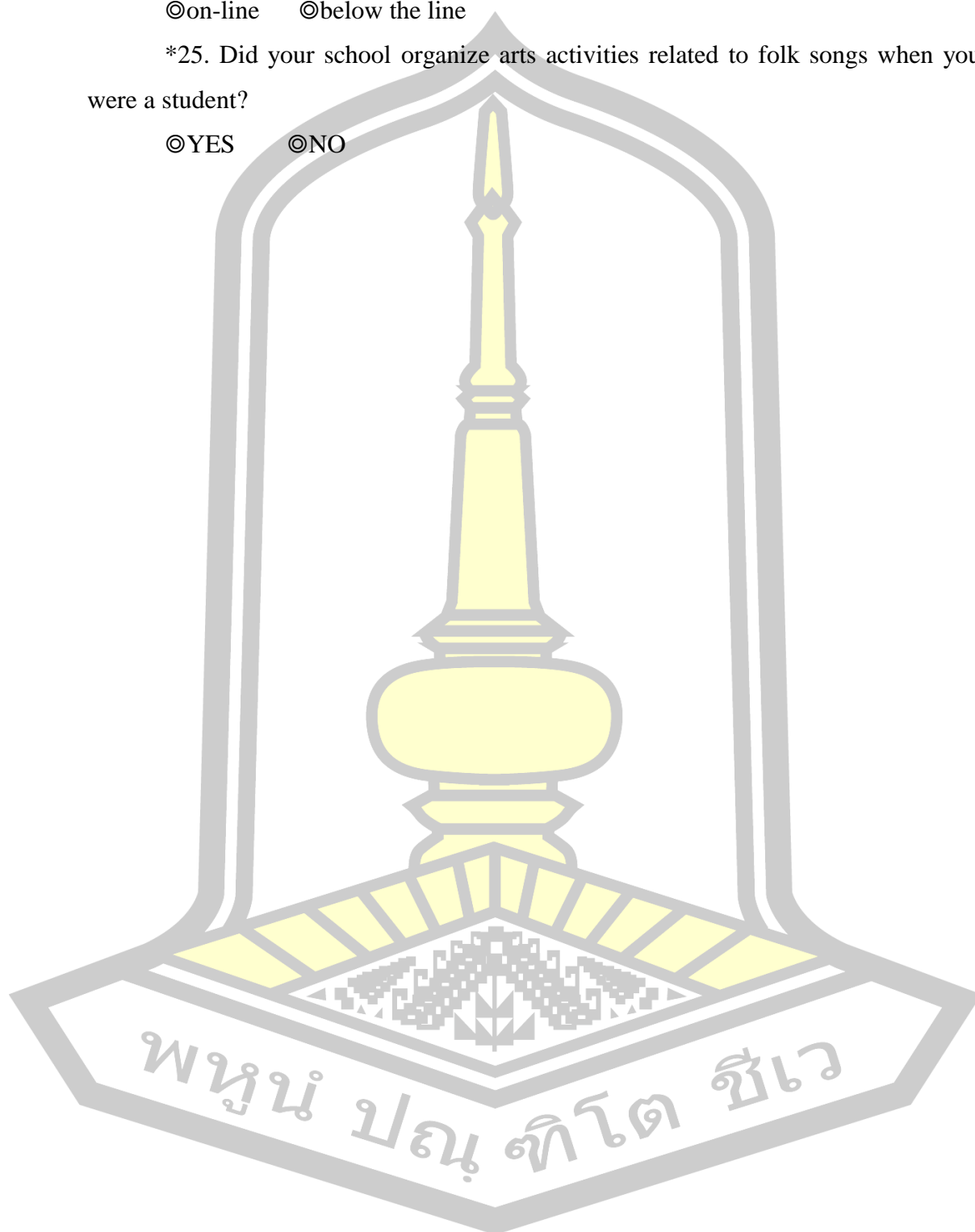
☐ The change of entertainment mode and the increase of the form of folk songs singing, not enough trend, modern   ☐ will not or have had contact with folk songs singing   ☐ folk songs singing opportunities, occasions platform less   ☐ government propaganda is not enough   ☐ less understanding of folk songs channels   ☐ it is not necessary to sing in modern times

What are the activities of Youyang folk songs have you participated in?

☐on-line    ☐below the line

\*25. Did your school organize arts activities related to folk songs when you were a student?

☐YES    ☐NO





**Appendix IV: On-site interviews and field pictures.**



Figure 36. Xiong Zhenglu, National Inheritor of Youyang Folk Songs

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 37. Xiong Zhenglu, National Inheritor of Youyang Folk Songs

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 38. Youyang Folk Song Researcher Lu Xiaobai

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 39. Youyang Folk Song Researcher Lu Xiaobai

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 40. National and Municipal Inheritors

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 41. Introduction to Youyang Folk Songs, a national level non-legacy program

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 42. Introduction to the Municipal Intangible Cultural Heritage Program

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 43. Youth Palace Activities at You Yang Junior High School

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 44. Schools rehearsing Youyang folk songs

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 45. Exclusive audio obtained by the YouYang Cultural Center

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022



Figure 46. Youyang Gongtan Ancient Town Music Performance Publicity Campaign

Source: Can Fan, from fieldwork in May 2022





## BIOGRAPHY

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| NAME           | Can Fan   |
| DATE OF BIRTH  | 09/03/1993  |
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| PLACE OF WORK  | Tongnan No.1 Middle School  |
| EDUCATION      | 2011-2015 Bachelor's degree, Southwest University, China<br>2016-2019 Master's degree, Southwest University, China<br>2020-2024 (Ph.D.) in Music, Mahasarakham University, Thailand |

