

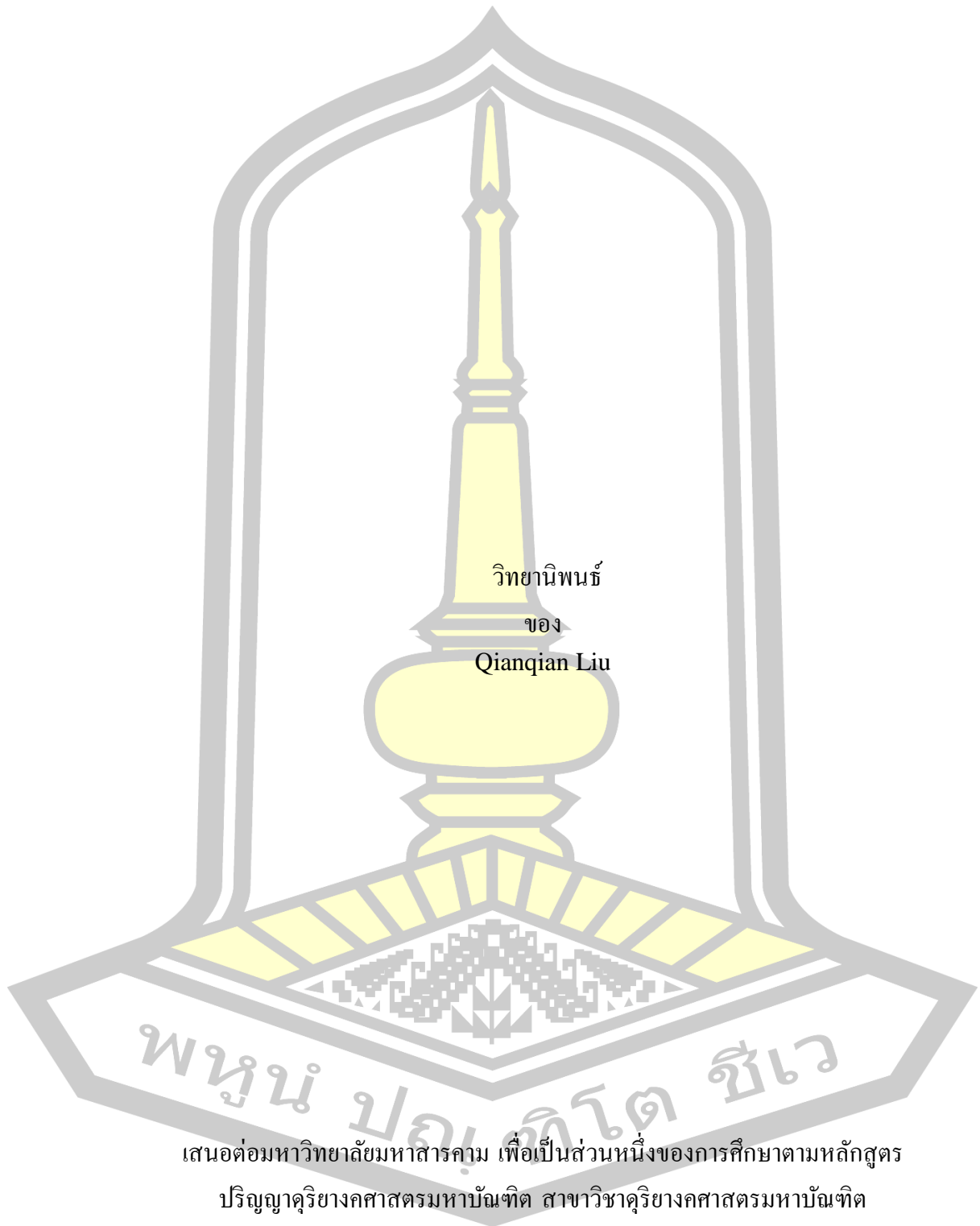
Transmission Process and Preservation of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, Jilin  
Province, China

Qianqian Liu

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for  
degree of Master of Music in Music  
December 2023

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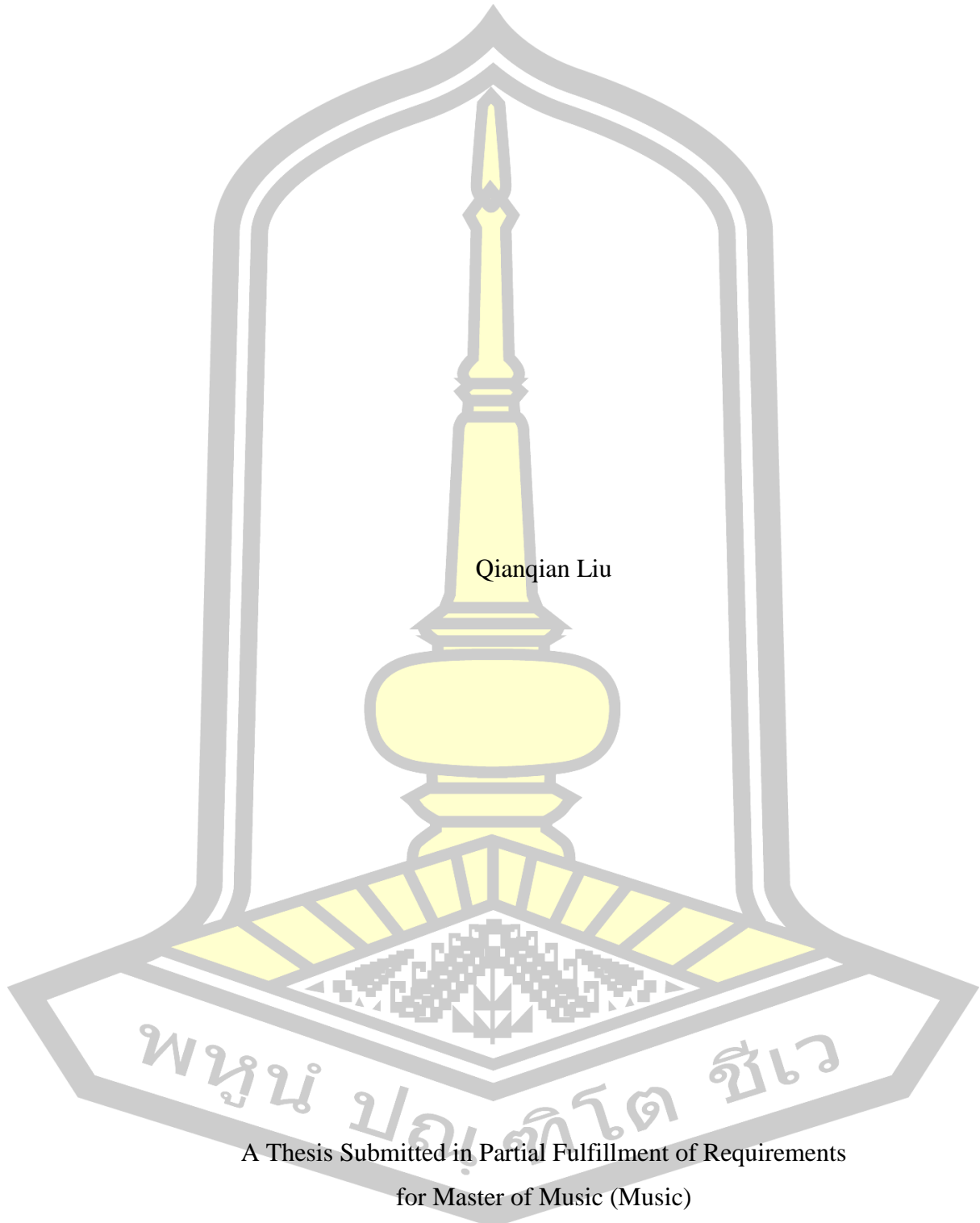
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ลิขสิทธิ์เป็นของมหาวิทยาลัยมหาสารคาม

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### ABSTRACT

Huanglong Opera, a treasured form of Chinese ethnic music, stands as a symbol of cultural identity in Nong'an County, Jilin Province. The research objectives were to 1) investigate the transmission process of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China, and 2) propose guidelines for the preservation of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China. Key informants for this study include inheritors, performers, composers, scriptwriters, directors, choreographers, and experts in the field of Huanglong Opera. The research employs qualitative methods for data analysis, encompassing interviews, literature reviews, and comparative analysis of related cultural heritage studies. The results of this research reveal the following:

1. Huanglong Opera's transmission is a complex process rooted in tradition and culture. Key informants preserve the opera's authenticity, nurture artistic talent, and serve as cultural ambassadors. Despite contemporary challenges, innovations in transmission techniques have allowed it to adapt to modern demands. The opera's multidimensional narrative construction and fusion of fact and value-based logic continue to inspire audiences.

2. Huanglong Opera's guidelines include five pillars: comprehensive documentation, cultural education, formalized apprenticeship programs, digital technology, and innovation. These pillars aim to preserve historical performances, introduce Huanglong Opera to younger generations, ensure continuity, and incorporate modern storytelling techniques and multimedia. By embracing these elements, Huanglong Opera can continue to captivate audiences.

**Keyword :** Huanglong Opera, Cultural heritage, Preservation, Transmission process

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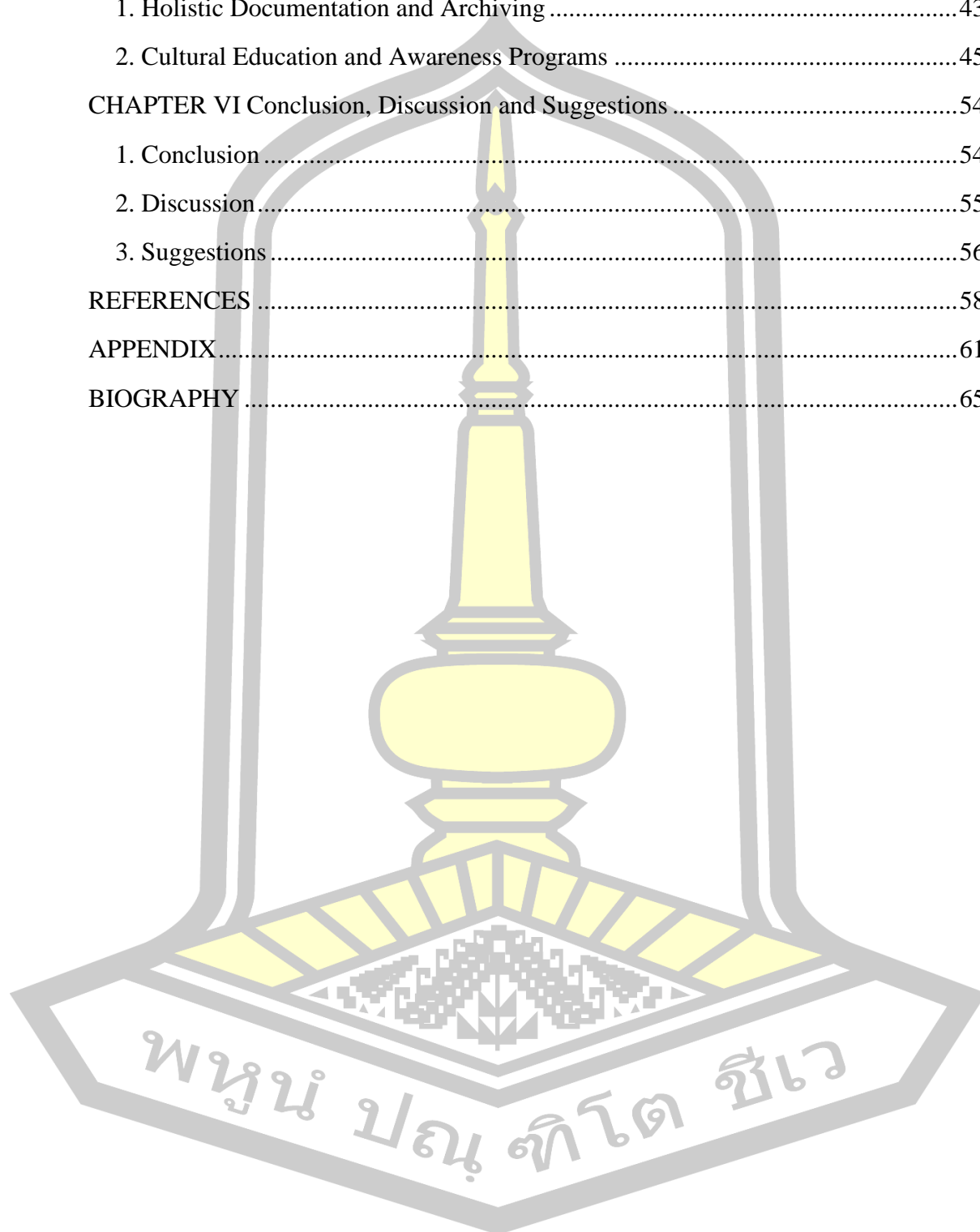
In conclusion, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the university for equipping me with invaluable knowledge and skills, the esteemed members of the thesis defense committee, my dedicated classmates, my unwaveringly supportive friends, and my loving family for their enduring support and encouragement. As I confront the challenges that lie ahead with unwavering determination, I pledge to redouble my efforts in my ongoing pursuit of self-improvement. Thank you.

Qianqian Liu

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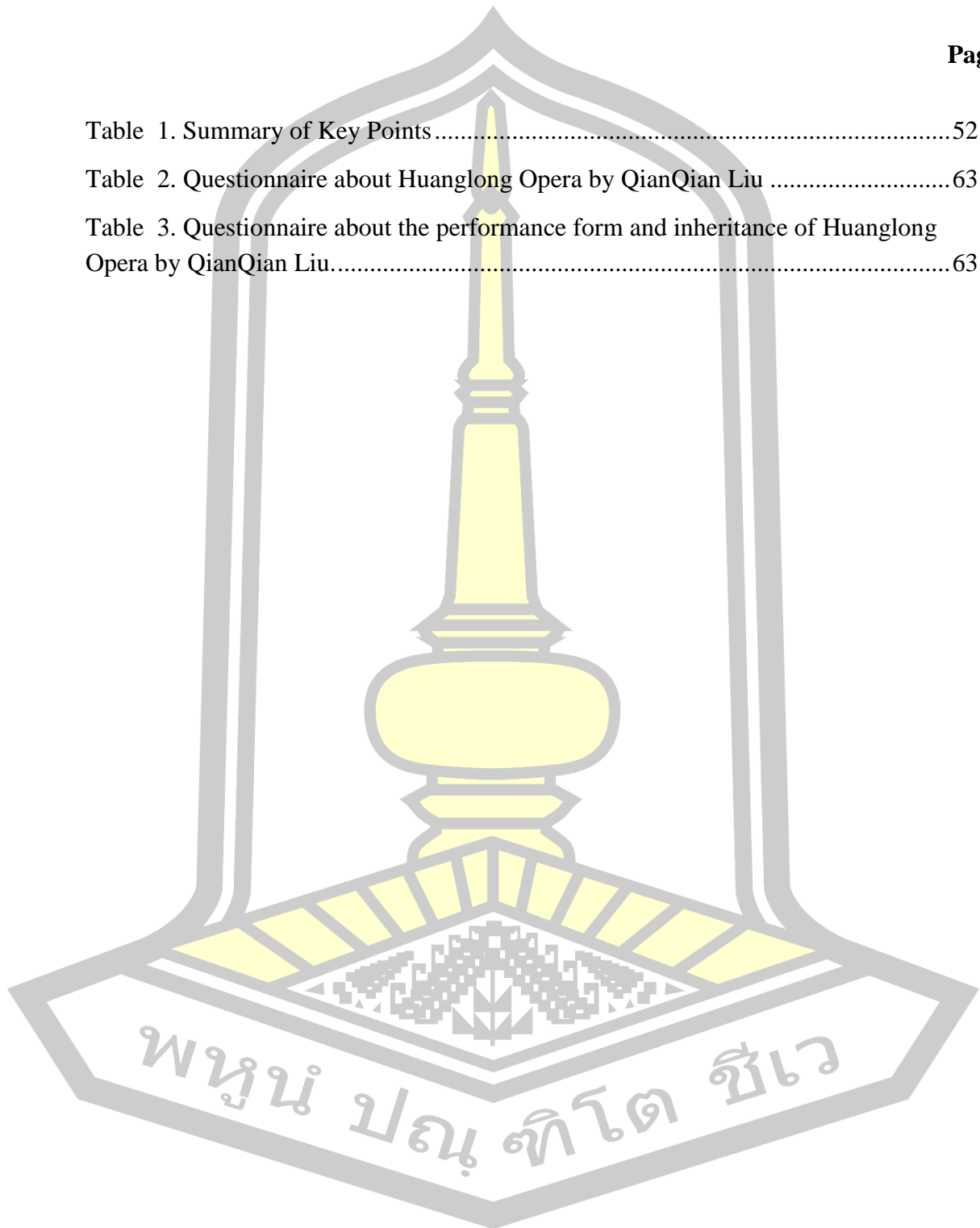
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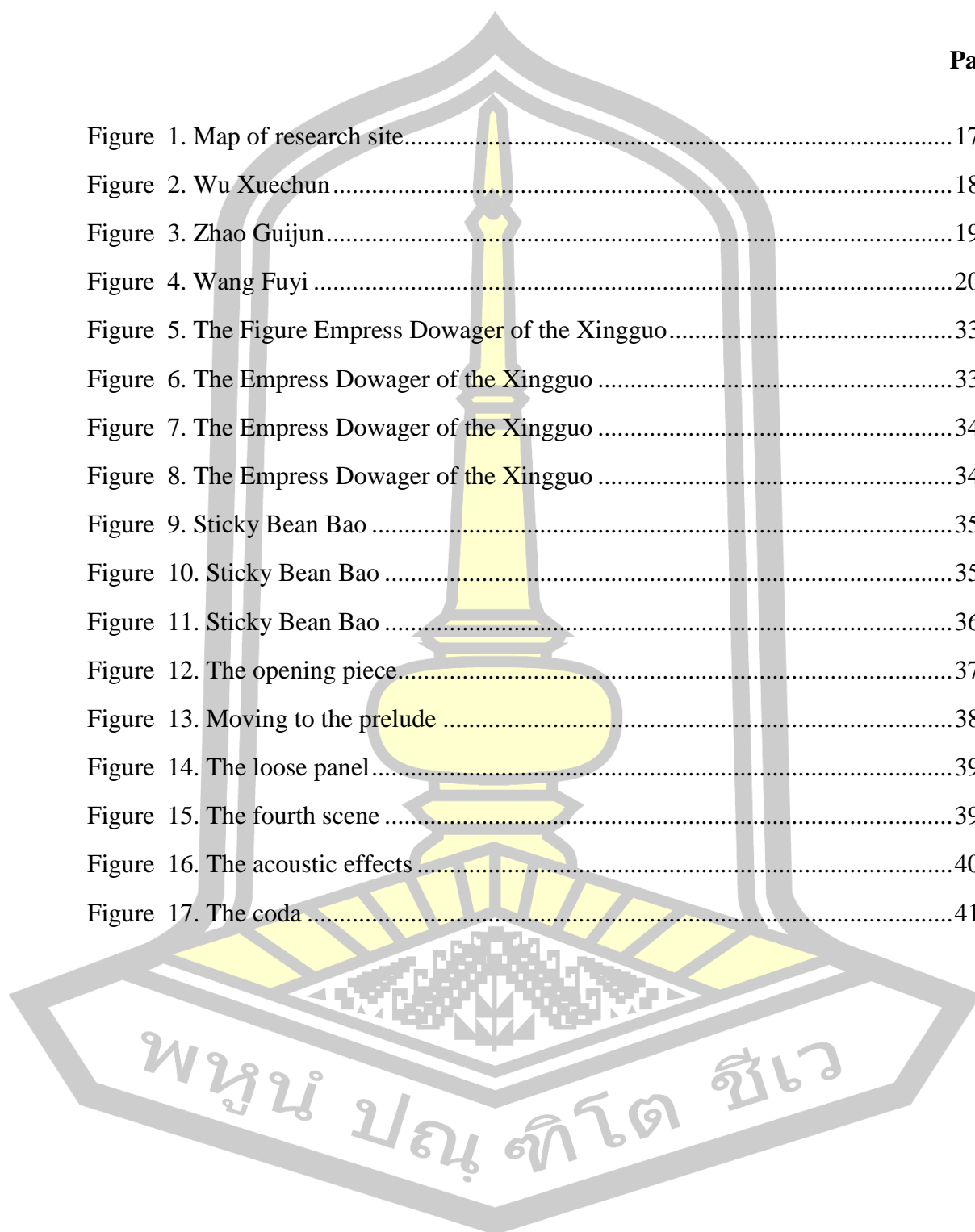
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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

### 1. Research background

The rich cultural tapestry of Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China, is woven with the threads of Huanglong Opera, an indigenous theatrical art form that boasts national, regional, and comprehensive characteristics. This unique musical expression finds its origins in the traditional northeastern shadow play, gradually evolving into a precious cultural legacy within the realm of national music. Since its inception in 1959, Huanglong Opera has journeyed through 64 years of history, establishing itself as a beloved form of dramatic and musical performance. It has not only captivated audiences within Nong'an County but has also garnered appreciation in neighboring regions (Dandan Zhou, 2020; Yiran Shang & Kovit Kantasiri, 2023). Huanglong Opera carries profound cultural, academic, educational, industrial, and artistic significance. Recognizing its cultural value, it received the prestigious designation of a national intangible cultural heritage in 2008, underscoring its importance for historical preservation and cultural legacy (Pal Nyíri, 2011).

A transformative moment in the opera's journey occurred in November 2015, when the mesmerizing performance of "Empress Dowager Xingguo" in Beijing shattered preconceptions, propelling Huanglong Opera to new heights. However, this progress has not been without its challenges, necessitating immediate measures for its safeguarding.

Huanglong Opera encapsulates the cultural essence of Huanglong County, transcending its status as a regional intangible cultural heritage to become a cherished representation of China's intangible cultural heritage. Possessing distinctive artistic characteristics and substantial research value, Huanglong Opera has firmly rooted itself in the fertile soil of traditional folk art. It bears a distinct imprint of Huanglong

County's regional culture, epitomizing the ongoing development and preservation of the county's operatic art. Furthermore, the evolution of Huanglong Opera mirrors the broader advancement of opera culture in northeastern China, playing a pivotal role in advancing the opera tradition and serving as a conduit for the dissemination of musical culture throughout the Northeast region (Levi Samuel Gibbs, 2013).

Originating in Huanglong County, Huanglong Opera absorbed the unique artistic attributes of local shadow play, folk music, traditional dance, and other elements. Building upon the foundation of Peking Opera, it incorporated shamanic elements and performance art characteristics from various northern ethnic minorities, culminating in its distinctive performance style. The principal instruments employed in Huanglong Opera, namely the Huanglongqin and Gaohu, have evolved from the local four-stringed instruments of Northeast China. The singing style of Huanglong Opera seamlessly integrates with local folk music, divided into the green tone and normal tone, with the latter further subdivided into male and female variations, totaling three vocal styles. In terms of performance, Huanglong Opera seamlessly blends with local folk performance forms, infusing them with regional dances and shamanic elements, thereby preserving the rich tapestry of local traditional culture (Yang Lulei & Jarernchai Chonpairot, 2023).

The recognition of Huanglong Opera as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2008 garnered significant attention from the cultural authorities of Jilin Province. Consequently, this research tries to delve into the transmission processes and preservation of Huanglong opera in Nong'an County. It tries to shed light on the intricacies of how this invaluable cultural heritage is passed down and proposes guidelines that will ensure its continued protection. This undertaking aspires to make a meaningful contribution to the preservation and innovation of Huanglong Opera, foster the prosperity of local small operas in Nong'an County, and uphold the safeguarding of traditional Chinese culture.

## **2. Research objectives**

2.1 To investigate the transmission process of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China.

2.2 To propose guidelines for the preservation of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China.

## **3. Research questions**

3.1 How has the transmission process of Huanglong Opera evolved over time within Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China?

3.2 What specific guidelines can be proposed to ensure the effective preservation and safeguarding of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China?

## **4. Research benefits**

4.1 The transmission process of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County holds significant importance in preserving and understanding the cultural heritage of the region. It provides valuable insights into how traditional art forms evolve and adapt over time, reflecting the historical, social, and cultural changes within the community.

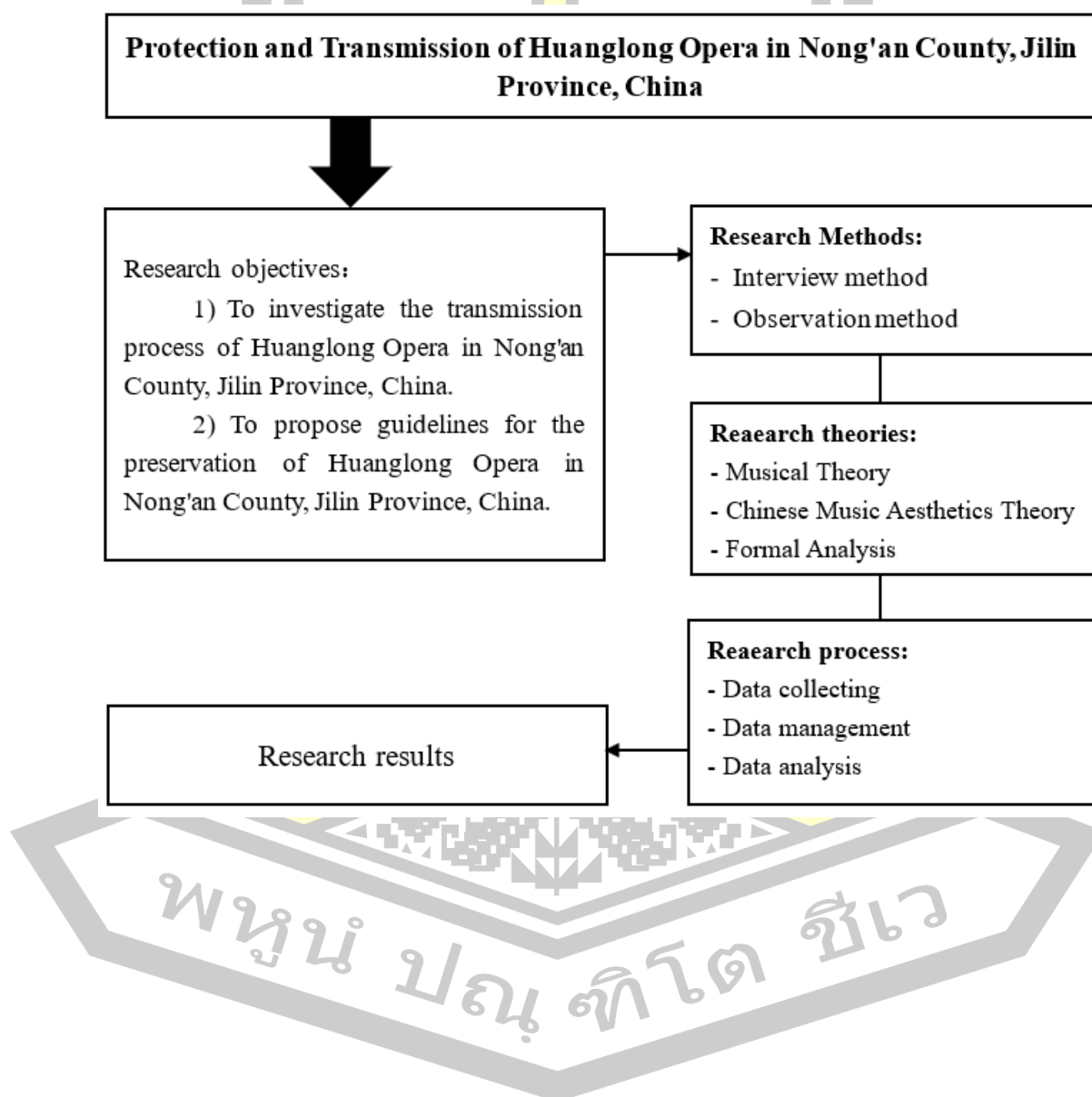
4.2 The proposed guidelines for the preservation of Huanglong Opera are crucial for ensuring the long-term sustainability of this unique art form. Preserving traditional opera requires a delicate balance between respecting tradition and adapting to contemporary challenges.

## **5. Research Definitions**

5.1 The transmission process of Huanglong Opera refers to the historical evolution of Huanglong Opera, oral tradition and apprenticeship, the role of key informants, challenges in transmission, innovations in transmission, and musical performance in the transmission of Huanglong Opera.

5.2 The guidelines for the preservation of Huanglong Opera refer to documentation and archiving, cultural education and awareness programs, formalized apprenticeship programs, leveraging digital technology, and innovation and cultural exchange.

## 6. Conceptual framework



## **CHAPTER II**

### **Literature Reviews**

The literature review is structured into three distinct sections: review scope, review process, and review findings. The focus of this review encompasses the keywords and phrases central to the research title and the primary terms featured in the two research objectives. Notably, these terms prominently feature "Huanglong Opera." This chapter embarks on an exhaustive exploration of the literature surrounding Huanglong Opera, with the intention of acquiring a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, guided by the subsequent thematic areas and research objectives:

1. General knowledge of Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China
2. General Overview of Huanglong Opera
3. Theory used in the study
4. Related research

#### **1. General Knowledge of Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China**

This section provides an overview of Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China, which is the birthplace of Huanglong Opera and the focal point of this study. The historical, geographical, and cultural context of Nong'an County is presented to offer a comprehensive foundation for understanding the significance of Huanglong Opera within its unique setting.

##### **1.1 County History**

Nong'an County, historically significant as the birthplace of Huanglong Opera, boasts a rich and diverse heritage. Archaeological findings dating back to the middle and late Paleolithic periods indicate human presence in Northeast China's Northeast region as early as 300,000 years ago. The Fuyu ethnic group used to live in the area. During the Eastern Jin Dynasty, what is now Nong'an County served as the later royal county of the Fuyu people, with a history spanning over 1,600 years. In subsequent eras, the county transformed, including becoming the Fuyu Prefecture during the Tang Dynasty and the military stronghold of the Huanglong Prefecture during the

Northern Song Dynasty. These periods saw a convergence of diverse ethnic groups, including Han, Khitan, and Jurchen, communicating primarily in Chinese. During the Yuan Dynasty, the county became a center of agricultural development. However, during the late Yuan Dynasty, it became a grazing land for the Mongolian people and remained barren for four centuries. In the Qing Dynasty, efforts to cultivate the region were revived, and settlers from Shandong and Fukebei areas played a pivotal role in its reclamation. This cultivation led to the establishment of small towns and marked the rise of Nong'an County as a vital trade center for agricultural and sideline products, fostering commercial exchanges with regions extending to Jinzhou, Yingkou, Liaoxi, Halbin, Jilin, Qiqihar, and Inner Mongolia. Nong'an County was officially established in 1889, with its county seat, Fulongquan Town, emerging as a thriving trading hub for Inner Mongolian caravans (County Annals of Nong'an County, 1927).

## **1.2 Geographical Environment**

Nong'an County is situated in the core of the Songliao Plain within Changchun City, Jilin Province, China. Its neighboring regions include Dehui County to the east, Changchun City to the south, Gongzhuling County and Changling County to the west, and Songyuan County to the north, covering an expansive area of 5,400 square kilometers. The county experiences an average annual temperature of 4.7 degrees Celsius, featuring flat terrain, distinct seasons, and a temperate continental climate. The county's landscape is characterized by alluvial lake plains, encompassing various landforms such as platforms, basins, river valley plains, and mounds. Nong'an County's soil primarily comprises black soil and chernozem (source: Baidu Baike).

## **1.3 Population and Culture**

Due to its diverse population and historical legacy, Nong'an County has a rich cultural tapestry. The county's history dates back over 7,000 years, with evidence of human presence and activities in ancient Huanglong Prefecture and present-day Nong'an County. As of the third cultural relic census in 1985, Nong'an County had unearthed 24 ancient county sites, including Nong'an Ancient County, Wanjinta Ancient County Site, Guangyuandian Ancient County Site, and Shunshan Ancient County Site, among others. Additionally, 246 ancient sites spanning various historical periods, from Neolithic and Bronze Age sites to Han Dynasty and Sui Tang Bohai

Age sites, have been discovered. These findings reflect the long-standing human habitation and rich historical civilization of the region. The Central Plains culture that settlers from the Shandong and Hebei regions introduced during the Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty contributed to the fusion of various ethnic influences in Nong'an County's culture. This cultural amalgamation, including Mongolian and Manchu influences, culminated in a distinct local culture characterized by Kanto characteristics. The historical and cultural context of "Huanglong Prefecture" during the Liao and Jin dynasties provided the fertile ground upon which Huanglong Opera gradually evolved (County Annals of Nong'an County, 1927).

In summary, the content presented in this literature review, encompassing a detailed overview of Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China, serves as a crucial foundational element for the research at hand. It provides essential historical, geographical, and cultural context, shedding light on the county's rich heritage spanning millennia. By delving into the county's history, the emergence of Nong'an County as a historical crossroads and trading center for various ethnic groups becomes apparent, further emphasizing its cultural diversity. Additionally, the geographical insights offer an understanding of the county's environmental characteristics, contributing to the context of Huanglong Opera's development. This comprehensive exploration of Nong'an County's history, geography, and culture establishes the backdrop against which the study's primary focus, the protection and transmission of Huanglong Opera in the region, is to be analyzed and understood.

## **2. General Overview of Huanglong Opera**

Drawing from collected data, researchers have gained insight into Huanglong Opera, encompassing its historical evolution, and its cultural and societal significance.

### **2.1 Origins of Huanglong Opera**

Huanglong Opera, tracing its roots to Nong'an County in 1959, owes its name to the historical designation of Huanglong County. This unique opera form represents a fusion of various local genres. As far back as the 4th century BC, it stood as the capital of the Gufuyu Kingdom. Throughout history, it underwent several transformations, from being the County of Fuyu in the Goryeo Kingdom during the Sui Dynasty to the Fuyu County of Bohai State in the Tang Dynasty. During the Liao

and Jin dynasties, it was rebranded as Huanglong County, even serving as a capital County. In 1889, during the Guangxu reign of the Qing Dynasty, it adopted its current name, Nong'an County, which remains in use today. Nong'an County, also recognized as Huanglong County, is celebrated as the "ancient capital of Fuyu" and a pivotal town of the Three Dynasties, situated within contemporary Nong'an County. Geographically, Nong'an County occupies a central position in Jilin Province and now falls under the jurisdiction of Changchun City, preserving rich cultural sites from the Liao and Jin dynasties.

## **2.2 The Historical Development of Huanglong Opera**

During the Liao and Jin dynasties, shadow puppetry made its way to "Huanglong County" from the eastern Hebei region, eventually merging with local folk melodies and fragrances. This fusion gave birth to the term "local shadow puppetry" among Qing Dynasty folk artists. Over time, it transcended the confines of shadow puppetry screens, evolving from backstage performances to front-stage productions. This transformation turned it into a folk opera characterized by dramatic character-driven plots performed directly on stage.

In 1947, following Nong'an's liberation, folk opera further flourished. In 1959, Nong'an County embarked on a mission to excavate, preserve, and develop its rich folk cultural heritage and artistic essence. This endeavor involved meticulous curation and enhancement of folk dramas, Taiping Drum performances, Shaman Dances, folk songs, rap art, and folk literature spanning the entire county. The pinnacle of these efforts was the creation and staging of the grand production "Fan Lihua," which received widespread acclaim during its public performance in September of the following year. This marked the official christening of the art form as "Huanglong Opera" in September 1960.

The 1960s marked the nascent stage of Huanglong Opera's development. The resounding success of "Fan Lihua" laid a robust foundation for its subsequent growth. Productions like "Pearl String" garnered attention from various quarters, leading Nong'an County to establish a dedicated school for teaching Huanglong Opera. The Nong'an County Huanglong Opera Experimental Troupe came into being in 1960 and, by 1962, had already produced an impressive repertoire of 13 plays, including the

nearly sold-out performance of "Chen Sanliang." Over time, Huanglong Opera evolved into a popular form of operatic music.

The 1970s witnessed constraints on the development of Huanglong Opera during the Cultural Revolution. However, following this tumultuous period, it resumed its growth trajectory, officially adopting the name Huanglong Drama Troupe in 1977. Beyond performing solely in Nong'an County, the Huanglong Drama Troupe commenced touring in cities such as Harbin, Changchun, Jilin, and others.(Bi Fengqi, 1994)

The 1980s through the 1990s marked a flourishing period for the development of Huanglong Opera. Successful productions like "Nothing to Make a Fuss" and "Wind and Rain Diamond Flower" propelled Huanglong Opera onto the international stage. In 1989, the primary instrument of Huanglong Opera, the Huanglong Qin, was introduced. The performance of the grand historical drama "Soul Series Huanglong Mansion" garnered unanimous praise and numerous accolades. In 1991, Guo Han, Chairman of the Chinese Drama Association, bestowed upon Huanglong Opera the title of "National Treasure," accompanied by high praise, solidifying its peak of development.

In the 21st century, Huanglong Opera continued its onward journey. In 2005, the performance of "Wushu and Yingge" allowed audiences to appreciate the unique artistic allure of Huanglong Opera. In 2008, Huanglong Opera attained the prestigious status of being listed as a national intangible cultural heritage. The November 2015 staging of "Empress Dowager Xingguo" in Beijing dramatically transformed the perception of Huanglong Opera among opera enthusiasts, propelling it to new heights. However, amidst evolving social dynamics, Huanglong Opera faced a series of developmental challenges. Its further growth and prosperity necessitated encouragement and support from all segments of society (Ding Lina, 2012). Huanglong Opera, as a highly distinctive type of local opera in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, stands as a testament to classic local opera culture within Jilin Province. Over half a century, it has evolved into an invaluable cultural treasure, reflecting the historical and societal experiences of Northeast China's ethnic groups and encapsulating the essence of traditional Chinese opera culture (Bi Fengqi, 2009).

In summary, Huanglong Opera, a traditional Chinese art form, has evolved from shadow puppetry during the Liao and Jin dynasties to "local shadow puppetry" during the Qing Dynasty and then into a front-stage folk opera with character-driven plots. Key milestones include its official christening in 1960 and the establishment of the Nong'an County Huanglong Opera Experimental Troupe. The Cultural Revolution and its resurgence as a "National Treasure" provide insights into its resilience and significance. The historical findings guide our research objectives, which include investigating the transmission process and proposing preservation guidelines in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China. Understanding the historical context and trajectory of Huanglong Opera is crucial for developing effective strategies for its continued preservation and promotion within the contemporary cultural landscape.

### **2.3 The Social and Cultural Significance of Huanglong Opera**

The social and cultural significance of Huanglong Opera, as elucidated through document study and related research, underscores its role as a cultural treasure and leader in the realm of Northeastern folk opera genres. This art form is not only revered as a "national treasure" but also celebrated for its profound cultural and artistic contributions to the region. Understanding this significance is pivotal for our research objectives.

Throughout the annals of human civilization, cultural experiences have played a central role in shaping societies and nations. Chinese culture, in particular, has thrived due to its inherent inclusivity, allowing it to assimilate and integrate diverse influences, much like a vibrant garden where many flowers bloom. This inclusiveness has been instrumental in the preservation and vitality of local dramas, including Huanglong Opera. Without such inclusive cultural soil, artistic expressions risk stagnation and may be overwhelmed by the tides of history.

The richness and vibrancy of Huanglong Mansion culture within Northeast China's local folk operas owe much to its broad inclusivity. It has drawn upon a diverse array of cultural elements, making it a unique and colorful facet of the region's cultural tapestry (Shi Lixue, 2019).

In summary, the social and cultural significance of Huanglong Opera, as illuminated by document study and related research, accentuates its importance as a cultural treasure deeply rooted in the Northeastern cultural landscape. Its ability to

embrace diverse influences has allowed it to flourish and remain relevant. This understanding informs our research objectives, guiding us in investigating the transmission process of Huanglong Opera and proposing effective preservation guidelines to ensure its continued significance within Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China.

#### **2.4 The Current State of Huanglong Opera**

The current state of Huanglong Opera is a reflection of the dedicated efforts made by various stakeholders, including the Nong'an County Party Committee, County Government, Nong'an County Agriculture Bureau, and the Huanglong Drama Group. These collective endeavors are aimed at safeguarding and nurturing Huanglong Drama as a national cultural heritage. Protection initiatives for Huanglong Opera revolve around the exploration of Huanglong Prefecture culture and the promotion of intangible cultural heritage inheritance. These preservation efforts have been integrated into the broader mission of establishing Nong'an County as a historical and cultural hub in the northeastern region, and they have been incorporated into the 11th Five-Year Plan of Nong'an County and Changchun City. Consequently, the preservation of Huanglong Opera has garnered significant attention at the provincial and city levels within Jilin Province and Changchun City.

The Huanglong Theatre Troupe, as the sole protected theatrical group in Changchun, holds a pivotal position and has been designated as a reform pilot by national institutions. While Huanglong Opera currently enjoys recognition as part of the intangible cultural heritage project, it stands at a crossroads of reform, influenced by the broader social context. This juncture necessitates urgent action in terms of rescue, protection, and excavation to ensure the continued vitality and relevance of Huanglong Opera within the evolving cultural landscape (Wan Li, 2015).

In summary, the content of this literature review provides a comprehensive understanding of Huanglong Opera, spanning its historical evolution, cultural significance, and contemporary status. It delves into the origins of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, elucidating the historical forces and local influences that shaped its emergence. The review outlines significant milestones, including its official naming in 1960 and its designation as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2008. Moreover, it underscores the profound social and cultural

importance of Huanglong Opera, portraying it as a symbol of inclusivity within Chinese culture. Lastly, it draws attention to the pressing challenges confronting Huanglong Opera in the present day, particularly the imperative of protection and preservation in light of shifting societal dynamics. This wealth of information forms the bedrock of our research, facilitating a deeper exploration of the transmission and preservation processes specific to Huanglong Opera within its unique cultural milieu.

### **3. Theory used in the study**

#### **3.1 Musicological Theory**

Kang Ming's 2005 publication, "The Systematic Composition of Musicology," offers an insightful perspective on musicology, portraying it as a dynamic amalgamation of multidisciplinary, multilevel, and extensive concepts. This perspective underscores the idea that humans have crafted music history through diverse approaches and can interpret and express this history in a multitude of ways. To delve into the systematic composition and categorization of musicology, one must adhere to the discipline's developmental principles, and discern and organize various fundamental and specialized sub-disciplines, ultimately forming a comprehensive structural framework. By applying Kang Ming's musicological theory, this research can adopt a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to explore the transmission process of Huanglong Opera and propose guidelines for its preservation. It provides a structured and dynamic framework for understanding the opera's historical journey and its contemporary relevance within the rich tapestry of Chinese cultural heritage.

#### **3.2 Theory of Chinese Music Aesthetics**

Chinese music aesthetics revolves around the comprehension and expression of Chinese music culture concerning music itself and its impact on human existence. Rooted in Han culture and influenced by various factors including traditional culture, religious values, social customs, and artistic creation, Chinese music aesthetics holds that music goes beyond mere artistic performance; it embodies an artistic concept. This concept integrates the idea of "harmony between heaven and man" from Chinese culture, emphasizing the pursuit of harmony and alignment with the universe. It advocates for living in harmony with nature. Consequently, Chinese music aesthetics calls for rhythm that harmoniously blends elements of nature, reason, and sensibility.

Such rhythm possesses the capacity to convey passion and serve as an emotional balm, providing spiritual contentment to the audience (Liu Chenghua, 2018). By incorporating the Theory of Chinese Music Aesthetics into the research, scholars can gain a deeper understanding of the holistic significance of Huanglong Opera. It allows for an exploration of not only the musical aspects but also the cultural, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of this traditional art form. This theory enriches the research by providing a broader perspective on the opera's role in Chinese culture and society.

### **3.3 Formal Analysis**

Formal analysis represents a distinctive form of visual description. Unlike poetry, its purpose isn't to conjure images in the reader's mind. Rather, it serves as an elucidation of the visual structure, explaining how specific visual elements are arranged and contribute to the composition. Formal analysis, strictly speaking, does not delve into themes or consider historical or cultural contexts. It primarily centers on what the viewer perceives. This type of analysis provides a sturdy foundation for other forms of analysis, as it explicates how the viewer's gaze is guided. Even if not intended as an ultimate goal, formal analysis remains a valuable practice (Marjorie Munsterberg, 2009). Incorporating the theory of Formal Analysis into the research allows for a focused examination of the visual aspects of Huanglong Opera, providing valuable insights into its artistic presentation and viewer perception. While it may not address themes or cultural contexts directly, formal analysis complements other forms of analysis to offer a comprehensive understanding of this traditional art form.

In summary, the content from this literature review serves as the theoretical framework for the research, providing valuable insights into musicological theory, Chinese music aesthetics theory, and formal analysis. Kang Ming's perspective on musicology as a dynamic and multidisciplinary field informs the approach to studying the systematic composition and categorization of Huanglong Opera within the broader context of musicology. Liu Chenghua's explanation of Chinese music aesthetics theory shapes our understanding of how Huanglong Opera embodies cultural and artistic concepts by emphasizing harmony with nature and the capacity to arouse emotions in the audience. Finally, Marjorie Munsterberg's exploration of formal analysis provides a methodological foundation for analyzing the visual and structural aspects of Huanglong Opera performances, contributing to a comprehensive research

framework that combines musical and visual elements in the study of this traditional art form.

#### **4. Related research**

Wan Li (2015) research on Chinese national music offers valuable insights into the rich tapestry of traditional Chinese culture. His categorization of Chinese national music into four core elements—palace music, literati music, religion, and folk music—underscores the diversity and historical depth of this musical heritage. Moreover, Wan Li's examination of the challenges facing Chinese ethnic music, including the influence of Western singing styles and waning local appreciation for traditional culture, resonates with the predicament Huanglong Opera confronts. Understanding the larger landscape of Chinese music traditions, as Wan Li presents it, is crucial for understanding Huanglong Opera, a distinctive form of Chinese ethnic music.

Wang Wenwen (2007) contributes to the discussion by presenting a macroscopic perspective on intangible cultural heritage preservation. His research fosters a deeper understanding of the theoretical aspects surrounding intangible cultural heritage and its practical implementation. The framework Wang Wenwen provides can be particularly beneficial when formulating strategies for the preservation of Huanglong Opera as an intangible cultural heritage. Wang Wenwen's work suggests that a comprehensive approach to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is essential, encompassing not only tangible artifacts but also intangible elements such as music and performing arts.

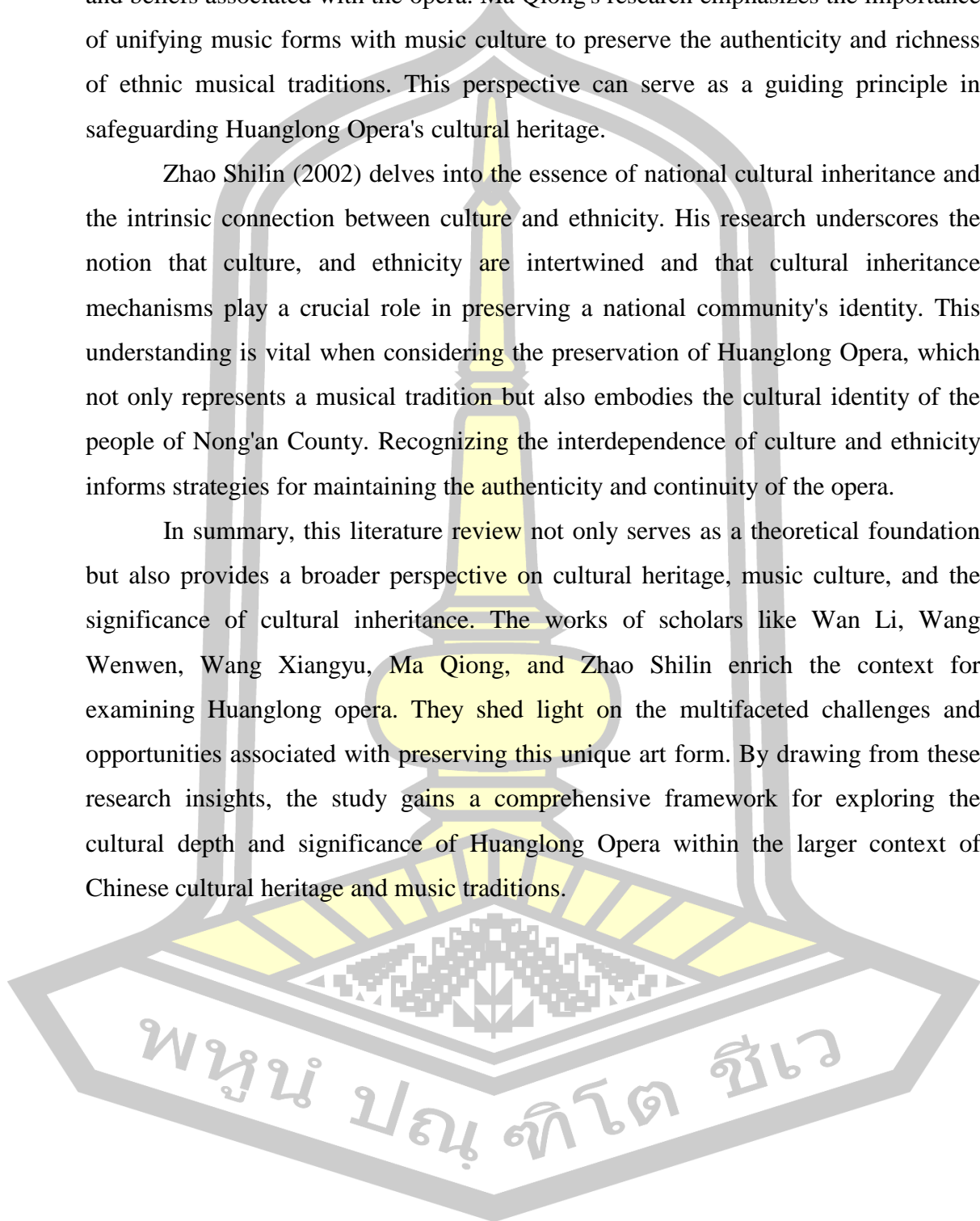
Wang Xiangyu (2021) research on music culture in Northeast China showcases advancements in the study of music cultures, especially among smaller ethnic groups and minorities. The emphasis on comprehensive research subjects and the need for a new research perspective align with the objective of deeply understanding Huanglong Opera's cultural context. Wang Xiangyu's insights can guide researchers in exploring the cultural dimensions of Huanglong opera and how it fits into the mosaic of music cultures in Northeast China.

Ma Qiong (2007) highlights the distinction between ethnic music and ethnic music culture, emphasizing the broader cultural elements that underpin musical forms. This differentiation is pertinent when considering the preservation of Huanglong

Opera, as it encompasses not only musical compositions but also the ethos, traditions, and beliefs associated with the opera. Ma Qiong's research emphasizes the importance of unifying music forms with music culture to preserve the authenticity and richness of ethnic musical traditions. This perspective can serve as a guiding principle in safeguarding Huanglong Opera's cultural heritage.

Zhao Shilin (2002) delves into the essence of national cultural inheritance and the intrinsic connection between culture and ethnicity. His research underscores the notion that culture, and ethnicity are intertwined and that cultural inheritance mechanisms play a crucial role in preserving a national community's identity. This understanding is vital when considering the preservation of Huanglong Opera, which not only represents a musical tradition but also embodies the cultural identity of the people of Nong'an County. Recognizing the interdependence of culture and ethnicity informs strategies for maintaining the authenticity and continuity of the opera.

In summary, this literature review not only serves as a theoretical foundation but also provides a broader perspective on cultural heritage, music culture, and the significance of cultural inheritance. The works of scholars like Wan Li, Wang Wenwen, Wang Xiangyu, Ma Qiong, and Zhao Shilin enrich the context for examining Huanglong opera. They shed light on the multifaceted challenges and opportunities associated with preserving this unique art form. By drawing from these research insights, the study gains a comprehensive framework for exploring the cultural depth and significance of Huanglong Opera within the larger context of Chinese cultural heritage and music traditions.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **Methodology**

This qualitative research is conducted within the context of Nong'an County, located in Jilin Province, which serves as the birthplace of Huanglong Opera and the primary research site for this study. Key informants from this region are chosen as valuable sources of information. This chapter outlines the research methodology and includes the following key components:

1. Research scope
  - 1.1 Scope of Content
  - 1.2 Scope of Time
2. Research process
  - 2.1 Selection of Research Sites
  - 2.2 Selection of 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**

This research aims to investigate the Huanglong opera's transmission in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China, focusing on training methods, cultural context, and artistic elements. It will also propose preservation guidelines, addressing cultural conservation, artistic authenticity, educational initiatives, community engagement, and sustainability. The study aims to provide comprehensive insights into the opera's journey and offer practical recommendations for its long-term preservation and prosperity.

##### **1.2 Scope of time is from June 2022 to June 2023**

## 2. Research Process

### 2.1 Selection of Research Site

The research site chosen for this study is Nong'an County, situated in Jilin Province, Northeast China. Nong'an County holds a unique distinction as the birthplace of Huanglong Opera, a cherished gem within the realm of traditional Chinese opera. Within its boundaries, one can discover numerous custodians of traditional Chinese opera, alongside a vibrant community of folk artists and enthusiasts. Huanglong Opera plays a pivotal role in Northeastern culture, serving as a mirror that reflects the essence of local culture and life. It stands as a testament to the collective wisdom of the people and embodies regional folk traditions and cultural customs.

The importance of preserving Huanglong Opera cannot be overstated, given its profound significance. While it currently enjoys recognition as part of the intangible cultural heritage project, it faces mounting challenges in light of the sweeping transformations in the broader social landscape. The urgency of undertaking the critical mission of safeguarding, protecting, and uncovering the cultural treasures within Huanglong Opera cannot be emphasized enough, as shown in Figure1.

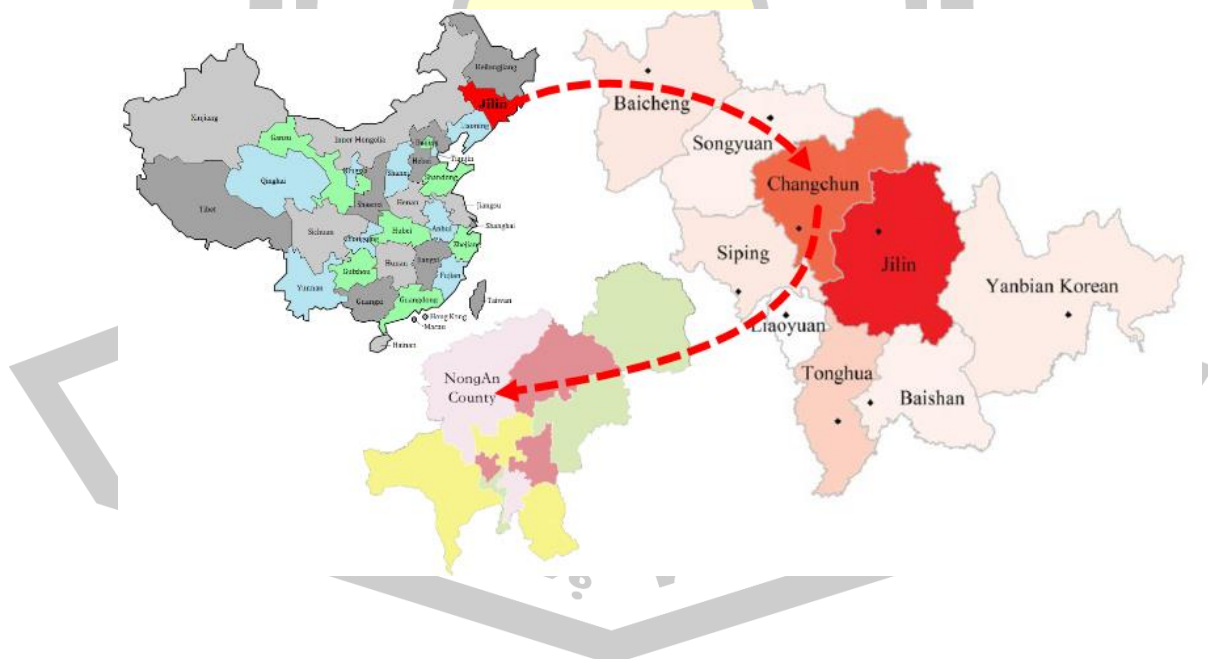


Figure 1. Map of research site

Source: <https://chinafolio.com/provinces>

## 2.2 Selection of Key Informants

The sources of key informants utilized by the researchers are primarily categorized into two groups: 1) Main Informants and 2) Random Informants.

2.2.1 Main Informants: The main informants and random informants serve as the primary torchbearers of Huanglong Opera, possessing an unparalleled understanding of the current state of Huanglong Opera's heritage. The selection criteria for informants are as follows:

- 1) They must be native-born and raised in Nong'an County
- 2) They should possess a profound understanding of the local culture and the developmental history of Nong'an County
- 3) They must be recognized as inheritors of Huanglong Opera's culture and artistic traditions
- 4) They should possess comprehensive knowledge of the various performance forms of Huanglong Opera and have a proven track record as exceptional performing artists

Here are profiles of some of the main informants:

- 1) Wu Xuechun: Born in 1935, Wu Xuechun is a pioneering figure in the world of Huanglong Opera, recognized as a distinguished senior artist in this traditional Chinese art form, as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Wu Xuechun

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in February 2023

2) Zhao Guijun: Born on March 3, 1955, Zhao Guijun is a prominent representative inheritor of the second batch of national intangible cultural heritage projects related to Huanglong Opera. He currently serves as the Director of the Huanglong Opera Inheritance Protection Centre. Zhao Guijun's lifelong dedication to music and the arts began at an early age, commencing his musical journey when he was just eight years old. At the age of fourteen, he enlisted in the army as a civilian soldier and published his first piece of music at fifteen. Later, he pursued a comprehensive study of traditional ethnic music theory at the Chinese Correspondence School of Music Theory of Composition Department. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, guided and supported by local veteran artists, he embarked on an innovative journey to revitalize the foundational music of Huanglong Opera. This pioneering effort injected newfound vitality, unique artistic charm, and regional cultural nuances into the singing music of Huanglong Opera. Even in retirement, Mr. Zhao Guijun remains a steadfast advocate for the continued inheritance and development of Huanglong Opera, as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Zhao Guijun

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in February 2023

3) Wang Fuyi, a male representative inheritor of Huanglong Opera, has made significant contributions to the heritage and development of the art form as a prolific scriptwriter, having authored numerous scripts for its performances, as shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Wang Fuyi

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in February 2023

#### 2.2.2 Random Informants

Primarily comprising local adults and students, this group represents individuals who engage with Huanglong Opera as spectators. As recipients of Huanglong Opera's cultural legacy, these audience members are well-suited to offer genuine insights into their emotions and responses during the preservation of Huanglong Opera's heritage. They hold a pivotal role in influencing the future of Huanglong Opera.

#### 2.3 Research tools

2.3.1 The interview form is a tool for conducting structured interviews with key informants, such as senior artists, scriptwriters, and musicians involved in the transmission and preservation of Huanglong Opera.

2.3.2 The observation form is a tool used to document observations during Huanglong Opera performances and other cultural events.

2.3.3 Survey questionnaires are used to gather insights from audience members and stakeholders about Huanglong Opera.

#### 2.4 Data Collection

The data collection process for this research project involves a multi-faceted approach, utilizing interviews, observations, and survey questionnaires to gather comprehensive information concerning the transmission and preservation of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China. In-depth interviews will be conducted with key informants, including recognized inheritors, artists, musicians,

and scriptwriters, who are actively engaged in the Huanglong Opera community. These interviews will seek to extract their personal experiences, insights, challenges, and recommendations regarding the opera's transmission and preservation. Additionally, observations of Huanglong Opera performances and related cultural events will be carried out to provide a contextual understanding of the art form's current state. Finally, survey questionnaires will be administered to local audiences and enthusiasts to gauge their perceptions and attitudes toward Huanglong Opera, contributing valuable insights into its audience base.

## 2.5 Data management

The data obtained through interviews, observations, and survey questionnaires will be systematically organized, cataloged, and stored in digital formats for efficient retrieval and analysis. Each dataset will be labeled and securely archived to ensure data integrity and confidentiality. Data management will adhere to established ethical standards and data protection protocols. Additionally, a backup and redundancy system will be in place to prevent data loss. This well-structured data management approach will facilitate the subsequent stages of data analysis and presentation, ensuring the reliability and validity of research findings.

## 2.6 Data Analysis

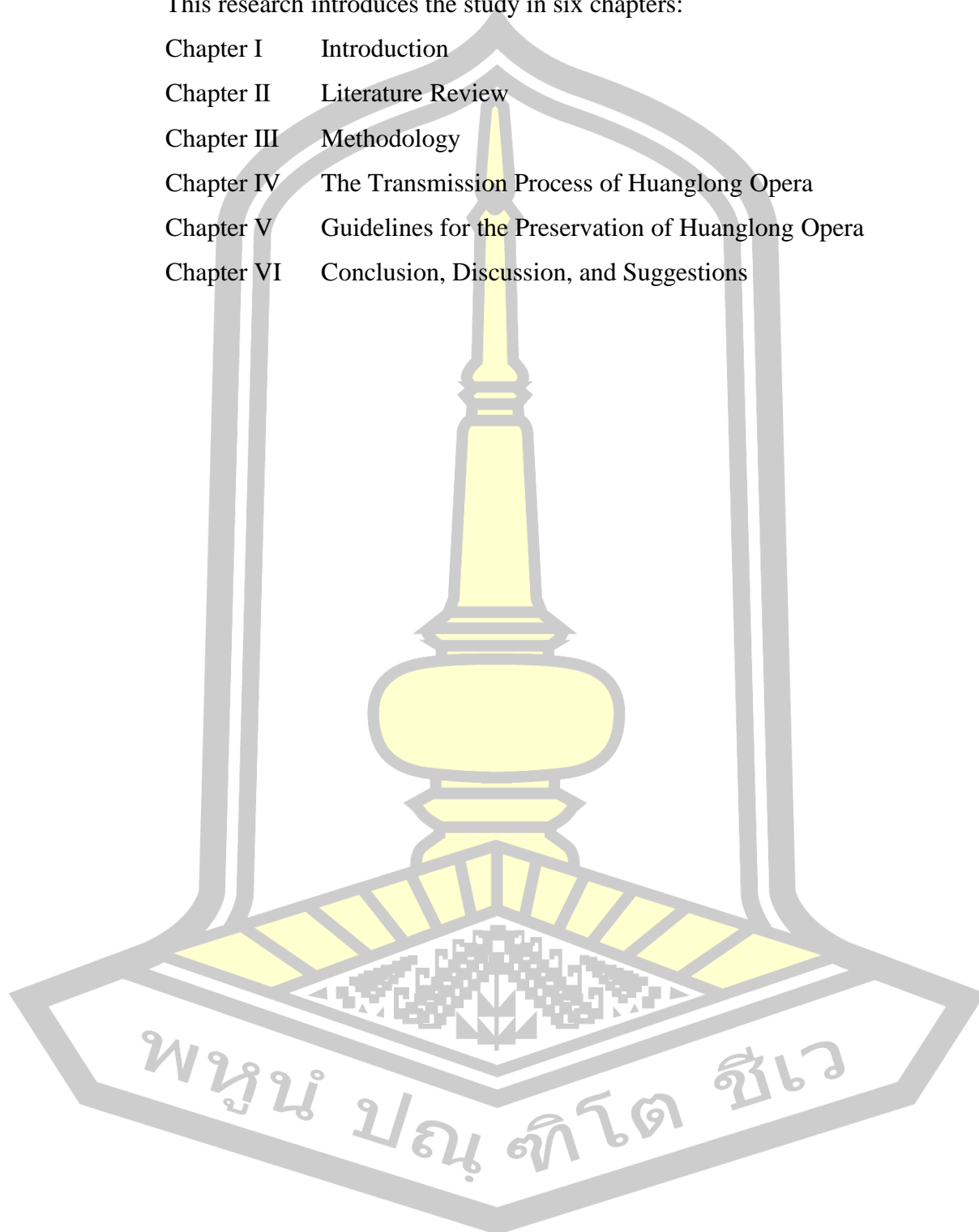
2.6.1 Objective 1: The study of Huanglong Opera's transmission in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China, involved a comprehensive qualitative analysis of data. The analysis identified recurring themes, patterns, and narratives, revealing historical development, key influencers, educational practices, and contemporary challenges. The study also highlighted the role of mentors and local community resilience.

2.6.2 Objective 2: The proposed guidelines for Huanglong Opera's preservation in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China. The analysis compared current efforts and successful models of intangible cultural heritage preservation. A set of tailored guidelines was formulated, focusing on safeguarding the opera's intangible heritage status, promoting community engagement, and ensuring its long-term sustainability.

## 2.7 Data Presentation

This research introduces the study in six chapters:

Chapter I	Introduction
Chapter II	Literature Review
Chapter III	Methodology
Chapter IV	The Transmission Process of Huanglong Opera
Chapter V	Guidelines for the Preservation of Huanglong Opera
Chapter VI	Conclusion, Discussion, and Suggestions



## CHAPTER IV

### The Transmission Process of Huanglong Opera

This chapter is structured to provide valuable insights into the methods, practices, and challenges involved in passing down this cherished art form from one generation to the next on the following:

1. Historical Evolution of Huanglong Opera
2. Oral Tradition and Apprenticeship
3. Role of Key Informants
4. Challenges in Transmission
5. Innovations in Transmission
6. Musical Performance in the Transmission of Huanglong Opera

Huanglong Opera, as a form of stage performance art, exhibits a unique narrative style and structure. It places notable emphasis on creating intricate dialectical relationships within its internal framework. These relationships involve the harmonization of reality and fiction, the blending of emotions and rationality, and the seamless navigation between the realms of imagination and reality. The opera dedicates careful attention to the multidimensional impact of storytelling. It not only imbues profound aesthetic layers into the progression of temporal elements but also intricately weaves complex and rich structures throughout the logical threads of its narrative. When conveying emotional cues, Huanglong Opera employs dramatic plot twists to evoke maximum emotional resonance with its audience.

#### 1. Historical and Development of Huanglong Opera

To comprehensively grasp the transmission process of Huanglong Opera, it is essential to embark on a journey through its historical evolution. Huanglong Opera's origins are deeply entwined with the art of narration, and its development represents a unique narrative journey. This section will delve into the historical roots of Huanglong Opera, tracing its evolution over time. By understanding the historical context and evolution, we gain valuable insights into the changes, adaptations, and narrative transformations that have occurred in its transmission.

The evolution of Huanglong opera is intrinsically tied to the concept of narration. The theatrical performance serves as an extension of textual narration, offering a distinctive form of storytelling. Within this theatrical art form, actors embody characters and utilize facial expressions and gestures to convey stories, enriching the narrative scope of the original text. The stories and events presented in Huanglong Opera, along with their vivid expressions by actors, constitute the essence of its narratives. This form of narrative relies on the actor's physicality, combining both narration and action, resulting in a unique form of self-narration.

Language plays a significant role in the performance aspect of Huanglong Opera. The script, composed of language, remains a literary text, but its full significance is realized only through stage performances and the enactment of lines by actors. This interaction between text and performance breathes life into the narrative, imparting theatrical significance. Actors are central to this process, serving as the conduits through which the narrative unfolds.

Dramatic narratology, as applied to Huanglong Opera, encompasses both textual and performance narratives, with a primary focus on "narration." This approach highlights that the fundamental aesthetic essence of theatrical art is rooted in narration, particularly the live narration that emerges when text is transformed into a dynamic performance.

Analyzing the narrative structure of Huanglong Opera involves an examination of the stories within the opera. This analysis delves into the logic and structure of the plot, the ontological structure, narrative subjects, narrative objects, and the intricate relationship between narrative supplements and the overall artistic composition of the narrative text. It also encompasses fundamental narrative techniques employed in Huanglong Opera, such as the implicit focus mode, functional mode, spatiotemporal mode, and dialogue mode utilized by playwrights in the storytelling process.

Distinctive characteristics emerge when the textual narrative of Huanglong Opera transitions into a performance narrative, setting it apart from Western drama. Huanglong Opera places less emphasis on the text, granting actors greater initiative and creative freedom in the realm of narration. Furthermore, the transformation from

textual narrative to performance narrative directs attention to the medium of transformation itself, including various theatrical expressions on stage, such as lighting and scenery, which enhance the overall narrative experience.

## **2. Oral Tradition and Apprenticeship**

In the realm of traditional Chinese opera, the passage of time has forged a profound connection between the past and present, generation after generation. Among the various forms of traditional opera, Huanglong Opera, with its rich history and vibrant cultural heritage, stands as a testament to the enduring power of oral tradition and apprenticeship in preserving and continuing this cherished art form. In this section, we embark on a journey to explore the intricate methods, practices, and cultural significance of the oral tradition and apprenticeship system within the realm of Huanglong Opera.

1) The Living Legacy of Oral Tradition: At the heart of Huanglong Opera's transmission lies the age-old tradition of oral storytelling, an art form that transcends the written word and embodies the very essence of cultural heritage. Within this tradition, Huanglong Opera is not merely a performance; it is a living, breathing repository of artistic wisdom, passed down through the spoken word from one generation to the next. The oral tradition, characterized by its fluidity and dynamic exchange, serves as the lifeblood of this traditional opera.

2) Masters and Apprentices: Central to the preservation and continuation of Huanglong Opera is the relationship between masters and apprentices. These seasoned practitioners, often referred to as "masters" or "teachers," bear the weight of tradition on their shoulders, serving as both custodians and transmitters of the art form. Apprentices, on the other hand, represent the eager torchbearers, driven by a deep passion for Huanglong Opera and a desire to perpetuate its legacy. The journey of an apprentice begins with a formal initiation into the world of Huanglong Opera. This initiation ceremony, often imbued with symbolic rituals, marks the apprentice's commitment to the art form. It is a rite of passage that connects them to a lineage of performers dating back centuries. Once initiated, apprentices embark on a rigorous and comprehensive training regimen. The training encompasses various facets of Huanglong opera, including vocalization, acting, movement, and cultural context. It is

an arduous journey, demanding unwavering dedication and a willingness to delve into the nuances of this intricate art form.

3) **Role-Based Learning:** Within the apprenticeship system, aspiring performers are assigned specific roles based on their aptitude, potential, and, at times, family lineage. These roles are not merely characters in a play; they are embodiments of the art form's history and cultural significance. Apprentices must immerse themselves in these roles, not as mere actors but as vessels through which the essence of Huanglong Opera flows. Under the watchful eye of their mentors, apprentices rehearse and refine these roles. The process involves meticulous attention to detail, from mastering vocal techniques and gestures to understanding the subtleties of character development. It is a journey of continuous learning and self-discovery where apprentices not only portray characters but also embody the emotions and cultural ethos woven into the fabric of each role.

4) **Cultural Immersion:** Beyond the technical aspects, apprentices are initiated into the cultural and historical context that informs every note and gesture of Huanglong Opera. They delve into the significance of the narratives, the symbolism embedded in the performances, and the broader cultural tapestry in which the art form thrives. This cultural immersion serves as a bridge between the past and the present, allowing apprentices to appreciate the profound stories and values encapsulated in Huanglong Opera. It is a holistic education that extends far beyond the stage, nurturing a deep connection to the cultural heritage they are entrusted to preserve.

5) **Mentorship and Evaluation:** The mentor-apprentice relationship is characterized by ongoing guidance and evaluation. Masters, drawing from their years of experience, provide constructive feedback, nurturing the artistic growth of their apprentices. This mentorship extends beyond the technical aspects of performance; it encompasses the transmission of values, ethics, and the spirit of Huanglong Opera. Apprentices, in turn, become devoted disciples, absorbing not only the techniques but also the ethos of their mentors. The bond between master and apprentice transcends the realm of performance, forging a profound connection that binds them as custodians of a shared heritage. As apprentices progress in their journey, they gradually assume greater responsibilities within the world of Huanglong Opera. They perform alongside experienced practitioners, honing their skills and building their

artistic identity. It is a transformative process that culminates in apprentices becoming full-fledged performers, ready to take on the mantle of mentors themselves.

6) Passing the Torch: The ultimate goal of the apprenticeship system is to equip apprentices with the skills, knowledge, and passion needed to become proficient Huanglong Opera performers. As they emerge from the crucible of training and mentorship, they carry with them not just the techniques but also the soul of the art form. These newly minted performers are not merely actors; they are the embodiment of a living tradition. They step onto the stage, donning the roles that have been entrusted to them, and breathe life into characters whose stories have resonated through the ages. They become the storytellers, the custodians, and the torchbearers of Huanglong Opera.

7) Cultural Significance: The oral tradition and apprenticeship system within Huanglong Opera hold profound cultural significance. They embody the essence of cultural continuity, where the wisdom of the past is passed down to shape the future. This transmission is not limited to the technical aspects of performance; it extends to the values, ethics, and cultural ethos that define Huanglong Opera. Through this system, Huanglong Opera remains a dynamic and living art form, continually evolving while staying rooted in its rich heritage. It is a testament to the resilience of traditional Chinese opera, where the interplay between masters and apprentices ensures that the stories, melodies, and emotions of Huanglong Opera resonate across generations.

In conclusion, the oral tradition and apprenticeship system are the life force of Huanglong Opera, ensuring that its legacy endures. They represent a bridge between the past and the future, where the art form's cultural significance remains vibrant and relevant in the ever-changing landscape of the performing arts. Huanglong Opera lives on, not just in performances but in the hearts and souls of those who have dedicated themselves to its preservation and continuation.

### **3. Role of Key Informants**

In the intricate tapestry of Huanglong Opera's cultural heritage, key informants emerge as the stalwart custodians, entrusted with the preservation and passage of this rich tradition to successive generations. This section delves into their indispensable

contributions and the profound knowledge they impart to nurture the legacy of Huanglong Opera.

1) Preserving the Authenticity of Tradition: At the heart of their mission is the preservation of the authenticity of Huanglong Opera. Key informants serve as living repositories of the art's foundational principles, techniques, and narratives. They safeguard the nuances that define the essence of this centuries-old tradition, ensuring that each performance resonates with the spirit of its origins. This preservation is not limited to the scripts and melodies but extends to the very essence of how characters are portrayed and the emotions they convey, which are integral to the opera's identity.

2) Transmitting Ancient Wisdom: Central to the role of key informants is the transmission of knowledge. They serve as mentors, passing down the intricate details of performance, the subtleties of character portrayal, and the intricacies of the libretto to the next generation. This oral tradition of passing on knowledge ensures that the opera's heritage remains alive and vibrant. The mentor-apprentice relationship is a time-honored tradition where apprentices learn not only the technical aspects but also the cultural and emotional depth that underpin each role.

3) Nurturing Artistic Talent: Key informants are instrumental in identifying and nurturing young talent within their communities. They possess a keen eye for potential, recognizing the spark of passion and dedication in aspiring performers. Through apprenticeships and mentorship programs, key informants shape the future stars of Huanglong Opera, imparting not just technical skill but also a profound understanding of the art's cultural significance. These mentorships are characterized by years of close collaboration and a deep bond of trust.

4) Cultural Preservation: Beyond the stage, key informants actively engage in cultural preservation efforts. They participate in archival work, meticulously documenting historical performances, scripts, and musical scores. Their contributions to the preservation of scripts, costumes, and traditional instruments are invaluable, ensuring that future generations have access to the tools of their trade. This archival work extends to recording oral histories, capturing the narratives and anecdotes that enrich the tapestry of Huanglong Opera's legacy.

5) Cultural Ambassadors: Key informants often serve as ambassadors of Huanglong Opera, spreading awareness and appreciation of the art form both locally

and internationally. They collaborate with educational institutions, cultural organizations, and fellow artists to promote the rich cultural heritage embodied in the opera. These collaborations not only introduce the art form to new audiences but also facilitate cross-cultural exchanges that enrich the opera's repertoire.

6) Guardians of Huanglong Opera's Legacy: In essence, key informants stand as the custodians of Huanglong Opera's legacy. They bridge the past and the present, ensuring that this treasured tradition continues to thrive, adapting to the evolving cultural landscape while remaining rooted in its rich history. Their dedication is a testament to their commitment to preserving the cultural wealth of Huanglong Opera, ensuring that it continues to enchant and inspire audiences for generations to come. Their role as guardians extends beyond the stage, encompassing the broader cultural heritage of the regions where Huanglong Opera holds a special place.

#### **4. Challenges in Transmission**

The transmission of Huanglong Opera, with its rich historical roots, is not devoid of challenges in the modern era. This section uncovers and examines these contemporary obstacles, which encompass an array of factors ranging from shifting demographics to evolving artistic preferences.

1) Adapting to Contemporary Realities: Huanglong Opera is renowned not only for its historical reconstructions but also for its active response to contemporary reality. This response is particularly evident in its adept utilization of panoramic documentary techniques. The opera meticulously observes and visually presents the pressing issues of its time, acknowledging the unique attributes and characteristics that define each era. As it constructs the backdrop of each historical period, Huanglong Opera painstakingly revives the authentic ecological features of that era, ensuring that the storyline unfolds organically. Through concentrated plot conflicts, it achieves a profound understanding and systematic recognition of prevailing mainstream values.

2) Celebrating Contemporary Role Models: Huanglong Opera's engagement with reality extends to its enthusiastic admiration for contemporary role models. Each era owes much of its progress to the pioneering roles and selfless dedication of exemplary individuals who provide spiritual guidance and leadership. The

contributions of these role models serve as a wellspring of motivation and intellectual support for social development. In its plot development, Huanglong Opera adeptly integrates real-life themes, seamlessly incorporating recent events like poverty alleviation campaigns into its artistic perspective. Through visual interpretation and artistic techniques, it vividly portrays the heroic image of contemporary role models leading poverty alleviation efforts. It celebrates the heroes who selflessly contribute to their nation's comprehensive development and social progress, immortalizing their monumental achievements.

3) **Chronicling Everyday Life:** Beyond its response to major events, Huanglong Opera excels in chronicling the minutiae of everyday existence, creating a panoramic portrayal of diverse human phenomena. As a quintessential representative of local drama, Huanglong Opera draws inspiration from the unique characteristics of the Northeast region. It delves into the daily lives of ordinary individuals, exploring their experiences and inner landscapes, and conveying positive values through the exploration of contrasting themes of good and evil.

A striking example of this is found in the modern Huanglong drama "Sticky Bean Buns." This play draws inspiration from everyday life, illuminating seemingly ordinary details to magnify the brilliance of human nature. Ding Dabao, a humble and unassuming sticky bean bun vendor, emerges as a symbol of innate kindness and moral conviction. His journey, marked by self-sacrifice and moral dilemmas, poignantly encapsulates the challenging decisions ordinary people face when torn between personal interests and moral convictions. Ding Dabao's actions and choices underscore the boundless love harbored within the hearts of common folk living unassuming lives. In essence, "Sticky Bean Buns" serves as a metaphorical representation of the preciousness of human life, echoing the profound depths within the seemingly mundane.

Through its portrayal of characters like Ding Dabao and its exploration of ordinary lives, "Sticky Bean Buns" masterfully captures the genuine emotions and vivid expressions of its time. It achieves a panoramic exploration and aesthetic portrayal of social life through a microscopic lens, exemplifying Huanglong Opera's ability to adapt and respond to evolving artistic tastes while staying true to its cultural heritage.

## 5. Innovations in Transmission

For the perpetuation of Huanglong Opera and its resonance with younger generations in the contemporary landscape, it is imperative to adopt innovative transmission methods and strategies. This section explores the inventive approaches that have been embraced to engage newer audiences and adapt to the demands of modern times.

1) **Multidimensional Narrative Construction:** Huanglong Opera distinguishes itself by skillfully constructing multiple dialectics within its internal structure. It seamlessly blends elements of reality and fiction, weaving together emotions and rationality and fostering a dynamic interplay between imagination and reality. Throughout its storytelling process, Huanglong Opera meticulously crafts narratives that achieve multidimensional effects. It not only embeds profound aesthetic connotations as it progresses through temporal cues but also establishes complex and rich structures while unfolding logical cues. In the realm of emotional storytelling, it adeptly employs plot twists to maximize emotional resonance with the audience.

2) **Departure from Conventional Linear Narratives:** While adhering to the natural progression of time clues in its narrative, Huanglong Opera deviates from the traditional linear narrative constraints. It embraces the audience's familiarity with sequential storytelling, but what sets it apart is its ability to infuse layers of meaning into the unfolding of time clues. While linear narration is readily accepted and appreciated, it inherently limits the depth and richness of plot construction. Modern drama often departs from this linear tradition to explore new aesthetic dimensions through diverse narrative styles. Huanglong Opera's uniqueness lies in its departure from these constraints, allowing it to construct profound connotations within limited timeframes.

3) **Fusing Fact and Value-Based Logic:** The fusion of factual and value-based logic in plot development is of paramount importance to Huanglong Opera. It meticulously adheres to historical accuracy while authentically integrating universal aesthetic ideals into its imaginative retelling of history. Take, for instance, "Empress Dowager Xingguo," which draws inspiration from historical accounts of Empress Dowager Feng Susu's pivotal role in supporting the turbulent Northern Wei regime. The plot design in this drama does not merely visualize historical records but delves

into the pursuit of ideal values within the artistic reconstruction of historical events. Feng Susu's character, with her unwavering commitment to political integrity and unyielding determination, epitomizes these values.

4) Seamless Fusion of Dimensions: Huanglong Opera harmoniously unifies both factual and value-based logic in its plot development. Despite the fact that Feng Susu's historical leadership was characterized by adherence to the country's laws, the drama portrays her as a representation of universally idealized political figures who embody the principles of unbiased law enforcement and the fight against corruption. The distinctive value of "Empress Dowager Xingguo" arises from the seamless fusion of these two dimensions through artistic creation. The drama faithfully depicts the historical backdrop of Feng Susu's political reforms while adhering to historical accuracy and fully embodying universal aesthetic ideals through artistic interpretation.

5) Enhanced Emotional Resonance: Huanglong Opera's multidimensional storytelling prowess is further evident in its strategic use of plot twists within the emotional narrative. These twists are designed to maximize emotional resonance with the audience. The artistry of Huanglong Opera lies in its delicate depiction of emotions and the vivid portrayal of characters' spiritual journeys, which gratify the audience's aesthetic expectations through both tragic fates and comedic experiences.

In conclusion, Huanglong Opera employs diverse narrative techniques to enrich its internal structure, providing the audience with heightened aesthetic enjoyment through subtle influences. These innovative approaches have propelled this traditional regional art form into new artistic frontiers, effectively addressing the challenges posed by the contemporary media landscape. They offer invaluable insights for the preservation and modernization of traditional cultural treasures like Huanglong Opera, ensuring its continued relevance in the evolving cultural panorama.

Huanglong Opera, a historical drama, brings to life the stories of the Liao and Jin dynasties through the medium of operatic music. It features plays that weave fictional characters into tales inspired by real historical events. Some of its prominent repertoire includes "Fan Lihua," "The Soul of the Huanglong House," "Empress Dowager Xingguo," "String of Pearls," "Mu Guiying Hanging Commander," "Shengming Building," "Iron Blood Nvzhen," "Lady Yingge," "Chen Sanliang Climbing the Hall," "The Bell of the Emperor's Son-in-law," "Wu Shu and Yingge,"

among others. The image below is a still from the historical drama "Empress Dowager of the Xingguo", as shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. The Figure Empress Dowager of the Xingguo

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

The first scene of the Huanglong Opera "Empress Xingguo", in which the emperor of Liao, having had a vision from a dream, absurdly thinks that in order to preserve his kingdom, he has to behead all the babies under the age of one in the Huanglong House to maintain his dominance, as shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6. The Empress Dowager of the Xingguo

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

A photograph of the first scene of the Huanglong Theatre's "Empress Dowager Xingguo," about the death of Emperor Wencheng in the Northern Wei Dynasty, as shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7. The Empress Dowager of the Xingguo

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

A still from Scene sixth of The Empress Dowager of Xingguo, which tells the story of a courtier who is proud of his achievements and who is corrupt and perverts the law. The Empress Dowager wants to punish him, but the civil and military officials intercede on his behalf, and the Empress Dowager and the Emperor can do nothing about it, as shown in Figure 8.



Figure 8. The Empress Dowager of the Xingguo

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

A photo of the seventh scene of the Huanglong Opera "Empress Dowager Xingguo", which tells the story of the Empress Dowager who, putting aside her personal feelings, upholds the new law, beheads the sinful officials, and enables the stormy Northern Wei Dynasty to move from chaos into an era of peace.

The modern drama of Huanglong Opera is a true record of the production and life of the people in Northeast China and reflects the production and life of the people at that time through the form of Huanglong opera. The main plays are "Much ado about Nothing", "Moving Kiln", "Wind Yu Ling Hua", "Sticky Bean Bao", etc., among which there are also plays that borrow from other kinds of opera. Below is a still shot of the modern drama "Sticky Bean Bao", as shown in Figure 9, Figure 10, and Figure 11.



Figure 9. Sticky Bean Bao

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023



Figure 10. Sticky Bean Bao

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023



Figure 11. Sticky Bean Bao

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

## 6. Musical Performance in the Transmission of Huanglong Opera

This section focuses on the intricate musical performance of Huanglong Opera, which is best exemplified by the Nong'an Huanglong Drama Troupe's captivating performance of "Soul of Huanglongfu" at the Chinese Theater Festival. This particular play, encompassing both the opening and closing music, unfolds across six scenes, intricately divided into 26 sections.

The opening piece, as shown in Figure 12, sets the stage with an F hexatonic mode, featuring a four-thirds-meter structure. Initiating on the triadic "F" of the dominant chord, the composition unfolds a modal progression in the high fourth. The rhythmic pattern, reproduced four times with melodic variations, serves as an introduction. The ending note, sustained in long tones, becomes pivotal material for subsequent melodic developments. The piece seamlessly integrates characteristic tones from Manchu and Yellow Dragon Opera, crafting a theme music emblematic of the genre and infused with national style and tragic undertones.

พหุ ประทีป ชีวะ

Score 1

## Opening song



Figure 12. The opening piece

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

Moving to the prelude, as shown in Figure 13, a single-part piece in D-gallery unfolds with a seven-tone mode and a four- or two-beat structure. Despite a medium-slow tempo, dotted rhythms infuse a rhythmic dynamic. The melody, primarily

progressing within the third degree, involves minimal jumps, and the melodic development, held at the end of each phrase, recaptures materials from the opening song. The use of less common elements, such as small diatonic intervals, auxiliary seconds, and a steady final landing on the dominant "D," concludes this section. The accompanying theme song, with lyrics evoking historical narratives, imparts a poignant and bleak musical mood.

### Score 2

6 历史长河， 几度潮涨潮落， 松漠大地， 几经铁马金戈。 契丹烽火连天涌。 女真狂飙卷地歌， 春秋虽逝往事如昨。

Figure 13. Moving to the prelude

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

Following the loose panel, as shown in Figure 14, the accompaniment for the chant begins with four sixteenth note connections, second up and down developments, and various melodic enrichments. Utilizing a four-sentence structure for the cantus firmus, each sentence concludes with an expanded variation and a small fluttering cadence. The final coda gracefully falls on the dominant Re, bringing this section to a close.

## Score 3



Figure 14. The loose panel

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

The fourth scene, as shown in Figure 15, divided into four passages, introduces varied tempos and movements. Plucked and strung instruments set the tone, transitioning between slower and allegro tempos, creating a preview of the subsequent musical narrative.

## Score 4



Figure 15. The fourth scene

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

The acoustic effects, as shown in Figure 16, embedded in Huanglong Opera's musical performance offer a direct emotional experience through auditory stimulation. This comprehensive art form, combining music, dance, and drama, transcends

auditory elements, providing a rich tapestry of expressive power. Huanglong Opera, with its ability to evoke emotions and convey narratives, stands as a testament to the enduring significance of traditional performing arts.

### Score 5



Figure 16. The acoustic effects

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

The coda, is shown in Figure 17. echoing the prelude with variations imparts a thematic connection between the beginning and end. The melody expands, shifting from a bright major key to a subdued minor key, concluding on the dominant "B" of the B minor major chord. This juxtaposition of major and minor keys contributes to a nuanced artistic effect, harmonizing the opera's musical journey from inception to culmination.

# The End

## Score 6

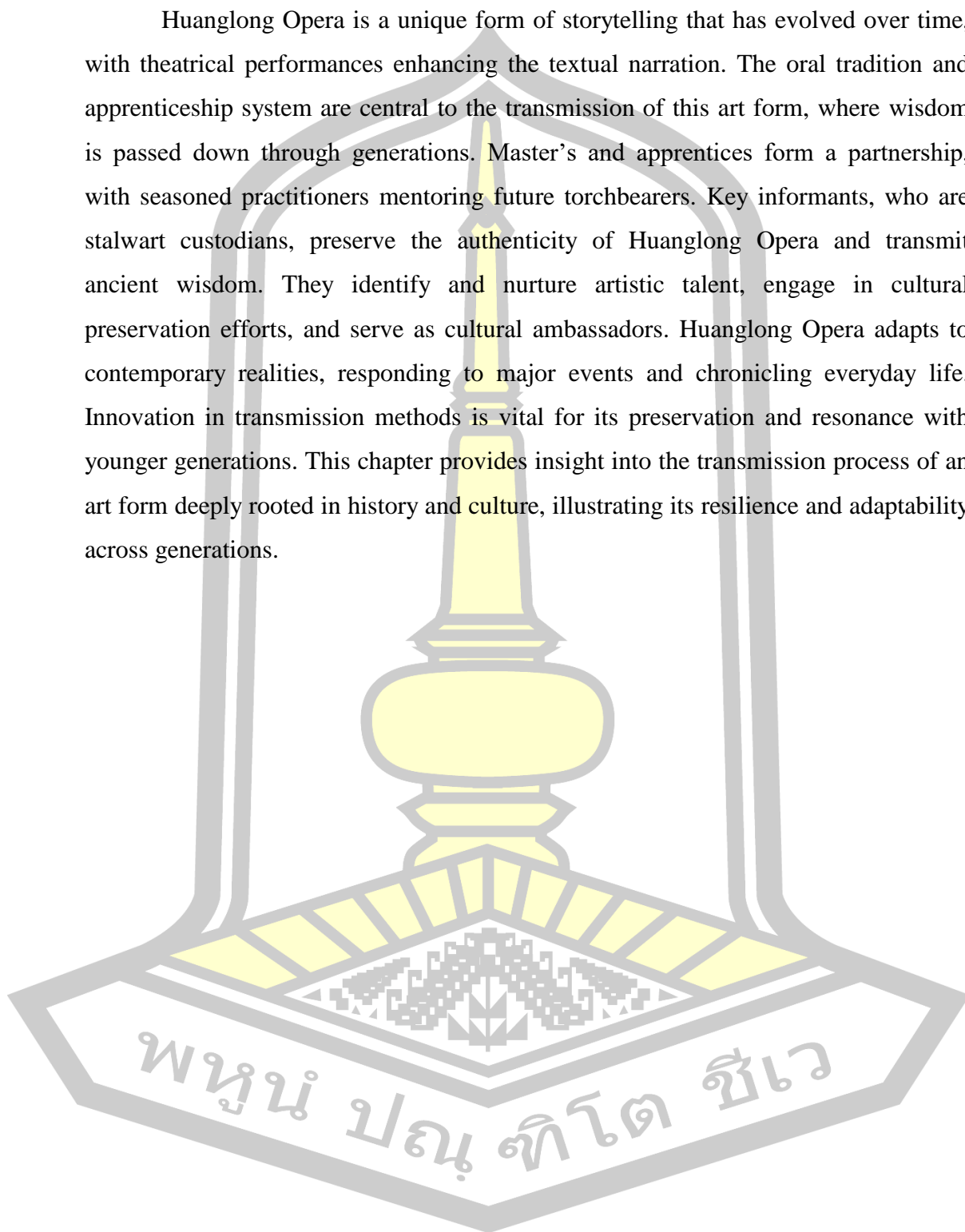
历 史 长 河 ， 几 度 潮 涨  
 cháo luò 。 sōng mò dà dì ,  
 jǐ jīng tiě mǎ jīn gē , qì dān fēng huǒ  
 lián tiān yǒng nǚ zhēn kuáng biāo juǎn dì gē , chūn qiū suī shì  
 wǎng shì rú zuó 。  
 33

Figure 17. The coda

Source: Qianqian Liu, from fieldwork in March 2023

### Summary

Huanglong Opera is a unique form of storytelling that has evolved over time, with theatrical performances enhancing the textual narration. The oral tradition and apprenticeship system are central to the transmission of this art form, where wisdom is passed down through generations. Master's and apprentices form a partnership, with seasoned practitioners mentoring future torchbearers. Key informants, who are stalwart custodians, preserve the authenticity of Huanglong Opera and transmit ancient wisdom. They identify and nurture artistic talent, engage in cultural preservation efforts, and serve as cultural ambassadors. Huanglong Opera adapts to contemporary realities, responding to major events and chronicling everyday life. Innovation in transmission methods is vital for its preservation and resonance with younger generations. This chapter provides insight into the transmission process of an art form deeply rooted in history and culture, illustrating its resilience and adaptability across generations.



## CHAPTER V

### Guidelines for the Preservation of Huanglong Opera

This chapter presents the insights gained from the investigation of Huanglong Opera's transmission process, these guidelines provide a clear path forward for the preservation and revitalization of this cherished art form. Having examined the historical evolution, oral tradition, role of key informants, challenges in transmission, and innovations in transmission, these guidelines are designed to address the multifaceted aspects of Huanglong Opera's preservation:

1. Holistic Documentation and Archiving
2. Cultural Education and Awareness Programs
3. Formalized Apprenticeship Programs
4. Leveraging Digital Technology
5. Innovation and Cultural Exchange

The Huanglong Opera, a cherished art form, has been studied extensively, revealing its history, oral tradition, key informants, transmission challenges, and innovations. This chapter aims to provide a roadmap for safeguarding and perpetuating this cultural gem. Guidelines are outlined to ensure the opera's future resonates with present and future generations. These guidelines, based on the wisdom of cultural preservationists, educators, and enthusiasts, include comprehensive documentation, archiving, cultural education, apprenticeship programs, digital technology, and cultural exchange. The preservation of Huanglong Opera is not just about safeguarding a historical art form but also about preserving the essence of a culture. It is a testament to tradition's resilience in the face of modernity, a bridge connecting the past to the present, and a legacy that can inspire and enrich the cultural landscape of tomorrow. The guideline sections will explore strategies, policies, and actions to ensure Huanglong Opera continues to enchant and inspire.

#### 1. Holistic Documentation and Archiving

The first pillar of preservation involves the comprehensive documentation and archiving of Huanglong Opera's historical performances, scripts, and oral traditions.

By employing modern digital archiving techniques, we can ensure that this wealth of knowledge is safeguarded for future generations, allowing them to trace the evolution of this art form.

1) Historical Performances: Preserving the performances of Huanglong Opera is crucial for understanding its evolution and the nuances of its various repertoires. Historically, performances were recorded through various means, including photographs, audio recordings, and written reviews. Today, modern technology allows for more sophisticated recording and archiving methods. High-definition video recordings capture not only the actors' movements and expressions but also the intricacies of their costumes and stage design. These recordings provide invaluable visual documentation that can be used for analysis, study, and appreciation.

2) Scripts and Librettos: The scripts and librettos of Huanglong Opera are at the heart of its narratives. These texts not only contain the dialogue but also the stage directions, character descriptions, and emotional cues that guide performances. Preserving these scripts, especially older and rare versions, is essential for maintaining the authenticity of the art form. Digital archiving ensures that these textual treasures are stored in a secure and accessible format. Additionally, efforts should be made to translate and transcribe scripts into multiple languages to facilitate cross-cultural research and appreciation.

3) Oral Traditions: Huanglong Opera, like many traditional art forms, relies on oral traditions for the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next. This includes the teachings and insights of key informants, the mentorship of experienced performers, and the anecdotes and stories that enrich the cultural context of the opera. While modern technology is instrumental in documenting these oral traditions, it's essential to strike a balance between digital archiving and the preservation of the intimate, face-to-face interactions that are integral to the art's transmission.

4) Modern Digital Archiving Techniques: Digital archiving offers a powerful tool for preserving Huanglong Opera. Modern techniques include high-resolution video and audio recording, 3D scanning of stage designs and costumes, and the creation of searchable databases. These techniques ensure that every aspect of Huanglong Opera, from the performances themselves to the intricate details of stagecraft, is recorded in meticulous detail. Moreover, digital archives can be made

accessible to researchers, students, and enthusiasts worldwide, democratizing access to this rich cultural heritage.

5) Preservation of Rare and Endangered Works: One of the primary objectives of holistic documentation and archiving is the preservation of rare and endangered works within the Huanglong Opera repertoire. Some operas may have limited performance opportunities or are at risk of being lost to time. Through digital archiving, these works can be preserved in their entirety, allowing future generations to appreciate and even revive them. This effort aligns with the broader goal of cultural preservation, ensuring that no gem within the Huanglong Opera tradition is lost forever.

In conclusion, holistic documentation and archiving are the cornerstones of preserving Huanglong Opera's legacy. Through modern digital techniques, we can create a comprehensive and accessible record of this art form's history, performances, and cultural context. This archival effort not only safeguards Huanglong Opera for future generations but also enhances our understanding and appreciation of its profound cultural significance.

## **2. Cultural Education and Awareness Programs**

To secure the legacy of Huanglong Opera, education and awareness programs must be established. These initiatives will introduce Huanglong Opera to younger generations and foster an understanding of its cultural significance. Workshops, seminars, and cultural exchange programs will be pivotal in achieving this goal.

1) Educational Initiatives: Huanglong Opera's inclusion in school curricula, particularly in Nong'an County and the broader region, is paramount. It introduces students to the art form, helping them understand its historical, cultural, and artistic dimensions. Schools should offer courses, workshops, and extracurricular activities related to Huanglong Opera, ensuring that young learners have ample opportunities to engage with this traditional art. Collaboration between local colleges and universities and the Huanglong Theatre Group can lead to specialized programs in Huanglong Opera studies. These programs can provide in-depth education on the history, performance techniques, and cultural context of the art form, producing experts and scholars dedicated to its preservation.

2) Public Awareness Campaigns: Experts and performers from Huanglong Opera can organize workshops and seminars to serve as platforms for knowledge exchange. These events can delve into various aspects of the art form, from its historical roots to its contemporary relevance. Workshops may include hands-on experiences where participants can try their hand at singing, acting, or stage design, fostering a deeper appreciation for the complexities of Huanglong Opera. Initiating cultural exchange programs with other regions, both within China and internationally, can introduce Huanglong Opera to a global audience. Collaborative performances, exhibitions, and artist residencies can showcase the art form's uniqueness and foster cross-cultural understanding.

3) Online Educational Resources: In the age of digital technology, creating online educational resources is essential for reaching a wider audience. Educational websites, video tutorials, and interactive apps can provide accessible and engaging avenues for individuals of all ages to learn about Huanglong Opera. These platforms can include historical archives, virtual performances, and interactive quizzes to test one's knowledge.

4) Community Involvement: Incorporating Huanglong Opera performances and exhibitions into local cultural festivals can expose community members to their own cultural heritage. These festivals can serve as celebratory events that bring together people from diverse backgrounds, fostering a sense of unity and pride in their shared traditions. Hosting workshops within local communities, especially in rural areas where Huanglong Opera has deep roots, can ensure that the art form remains relevant and cherished. These workshops can engage residents in various aspects of Huanglong Opera, from singing and acting to costume design and set construction.

5) Cross-Generational Learning: Establishing mentorship programs that connect experienced Huanglong Opera performers with aspiring artists can facilitate the transmission of knowledge and skills. These programs bridge generational gaps and ensure that the art form is passed down from master's to apprentices. Encouraging the practice of Huanglong Opera as part of family and community traditions can reinforce its cultural significance. Grandparents, parents, and children can share their experiences and knowledge, preserving the art form within the fabric of daily life.

In conclusion, cultural education and awareness programs are instrumental in securing the legacy of Huanglong Opera. By introducing younger generations to this art form and fostering a broader understanding of its cultural value, we can ensure that Huanglong Opera continues to thrive and inspire future generations. These initiatives serve as bridges between the past and the present, nurturing the art form's enduring vitality.

### **3. Formalized Apprenticeship Programs**

Building on the oral tradition, formalized apprenticeship programs will play a crucial role in passing down the skills and knowledge required for Huanglong Opera. These programs will offer aspiring performers structured training, ensuring the continuity of this art form through dedicated mentorship.

1) **Mentor-Apprentice Relationships:** Formal apprenticeship programs will create mentor-apprentice relationships, following the time-honored tradition of one-on-one guidance. Experienced performers, composers, directors, and choreographers will take on apprentices and provide them with comprehensive training. Mentors will impart not only technical skills but also the deeper cultural and emotional aspects of Huanglong Opera. Apprentices will learn character portrayal, vocal techniques, stage presence, and the nuances of performance, ensuring a well-rounded education in the art form.

2) **Curriculum Development:** Apprenticeship programs will incorporate structured training modules, covering various aspects of Huanglong Opera. These modules may include vocal training, acting techniques, script analysis, costume design, and stagecraft. In addition to practical skills, the curriculum will emphasize the cultural context of Huanglong Opera, providing apprentices with a holistic understanding of its historical and regional significance.

3) **Practical Experience:** Apprentices will have the opportunity to participate in actual performances alongside their mentors. This hands-on experience will allow them to apply their training in a real-world context and refine their skills. Apprentices will learn the intricacies of stagecraft, including set design, lighting, and sound production, ensuring a well-rounded understanding of all elements that contribute to a successful Huanglong Opera performance.

4) Certification and Recognition: Upon completing their apprenticeship, students will undergo evaluations and assessments to gauge their proficiency in Huanglong Opera. Those who meet the standards will receive certification, acknowledging their status as trained performers. Certified apprentices will be recognized as the next generation of Huanglong Opera artists. They may receive support, including opportunities for professional performances and collaborations with established troupes.

5) Preservation of Artistic Lineages: Formalized apprenticeship programs aim to preserve the artistic lineages of Huanglong Opera. By passing down knowledge through structured training, these programs ensure that traditions, techniques, and styles remain intact. Through apprenticeships, the generational transmission of Huanglong Opera will be strengthened, allowing for the seamless transition of knowledge and skills from one generation to the next.

6) Inclusivity and Access: Apprenticeship programs will be inclusive and open to individuals of all backgrounds who have a passion for Huanglong Opera. This inclusivity ensures that talent is nurtured regardless of social or economic status. Efforts will be made to ensure that apprenticeship programs are accessible to aspiring performers in both urban and rural areas, fostering a broad pool of talent.

In conclusion, formalized apprenticeship programs are essential for the preservation and continuation of Huanglong Opera. By offering structured training, mentorship, and opportunities for practical experience, these programs empower aspiring performers with the knowledge and skills required to excel in this traditional art form. Through this dedicated mentorship, Huanglong Opera will thrive and inspire future generations of artists.

#### **4. Leveraging Digital Technology**

Preservation efforts must embrace digital technology, encompassing the recording and digitization of performances, interviews with key informants, and the creation of immersive digital experiences. Virtual reality and augmented reality can transport audiences into the world of Huanglong Opera, making it more accessible and engaging.

1) Recording and Digitization: Performances of Huanglong Opera should be systematically recorded and digitized using modern audiovisual equipment. This process ensures that historical performances are preserved in high-quality formats. Interviews with key informants, including experienced performers, composers, and directors, should be conducted and recorded. These interviews capture invaluable insights into the history and cultural significance of Huanglong Opera.

2) Creation of Digital Archives: The recorded performances, interviews, scripts, and historical documents should be organized into a comprehensive digital database. This database serves as a repository of knowledge for researchers, students, and enthusiasts. The digital archives should be accessible online, allowing people from around the world to explore the rich history and heritage of Huanglong Opera. Online accessibility ensures the widest possible audience.

3) Immersive Digital Experiences: Virtual reality experiences can be created to transport audiences into the world of Huanglong Opera. Through VR headsets, users can virtually attend performances, explore historical settings, and interact with characters. Augmented reality apps can enhance the physical world with digital overlays related to Huanglong Opera. Visitors to cultural sites can use AR apps to access additional information and experiences.

4) Educational Tools: Digital technology can be harnessed to create interactive educational tools. Schools and cultural institutions can use digital platforms to teach students about Huanglong Opera in an engaging and interactive manner. Online courses and tutorials can be developed to educate aspiring performers and enthusiasts about the art of Huanglong Opera. These courses can include video demonstrations and interactive exercises.

5) Global Outreach: Leveraging digital technology enables global promotion of Huanglong Opera. Online platforms and social media can be used to introduce this traditional art form to audiences worldwide, fostering cross-cultural appreciation. Live streaming of Huanglong Opera performances allows audiences who cannot attend in person to experience the art form in real time. This extends the reach of Huanglong Opera beyond geographical boundaries.

6) Preservation of Fragile Artifacts: Fragile historical artifacts, such as scripts, costumes, and musical scores, can be digitized to ensure their preservation. Digital

copies provide an alternative when physical artifacts are too delicate for handling. 3D scanning technology can be employed to create digital replicas of intricate props and costumes, preserving their intricate details for future generations.

Incorporating digital technology into preservation efforts not only safeguards the heritage of Huanglong Opera but also makes it more accessible and engaging for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. By embracing modern tools and platforms, Huanglong Opera can transcend physical boundaries and continue to inspire new generations.

## **5. Innovation and Cultural Exchange**

To preserve Huanglong Opera's relevance, innovation is paramount. Productions that blend traditional elements with modern storytelling techniques and multimedia can captivate contemporary audiences. Collaborations with cultural organizations and international tours will introduce this art form to a global audience, ensuring its continued vitality.

1) **Contemporary Productions:** Productions of Huanglong Opera should explore modern storytelling techniques while preserving traditional elements. This fusion of old and new can make the performances more relatable to contemporary audiences. Incorporating multimedia elements such as digital projections, interactive screens, and innovative stage design can enhance the visual and auditory aspects of Huanglong Opera.

2) **Youth Engagement:** Special performances and adaptations targeted at younger audiences can spark interest in Huanglong Opera among the youth. These productions should incorporate themes and narratives that resonate with younger generations. Collaborate with schools to introduce Huanglong Opera to students through interactive workshops, performances, and educational initiatives.

3) **Cultural Exchange Programs:** Partner with cultural organizations and theaters in other countries to facilitate cultural exchange programs. These collaborations can lead to joint productions, workshops, and festivals. Organize international tours of Huanglong Opera troupes to showcase this art form to a global audience. These tours can include performances at prestigious venues and participation in international arts festivals.

4) Festivals and Competitions: Host and participate in opera festivals that celebrate traditional and regional opera forms. These festivals can serve as platforms to showcase Huanglong Opera's uniqueness. Organize competitions for young performers to encourage their participation in and preservation of Huanglong opera.

5) Digital Outreach: Utilize online platforms to stream Huanglong Opera performances, making them accessible to a global audience. Subtitles and educational content can accompany the streams to enhance understanding. Develop engaging social media campaigns to promote Huanglong Opera, share behind-the-scenes content, and connect with a younger and wider audience.

6) Creative Collaborations: Collaborate with artists and creators from different cultural backgrounds to develop innovative productions that fuse Huanglong Opera with diverse artistic expressions. Establish artistic residencies that bring contemporary artists to work with Huanglong Opera troupes, infusing new ideas and perspectives.

Innovation and cultural exchange are essential for the preservation of Huanglong Opera. By adapting to the preferences and expectations of modern audiences and engaging in collaborations at home and abroad, Huanglong Opera can continue to thrive and find new admirers among diverse demographics. This commitment to innovation ensures that this cherished art form remains a vibrant part of China's cultural heritage.

## Summary

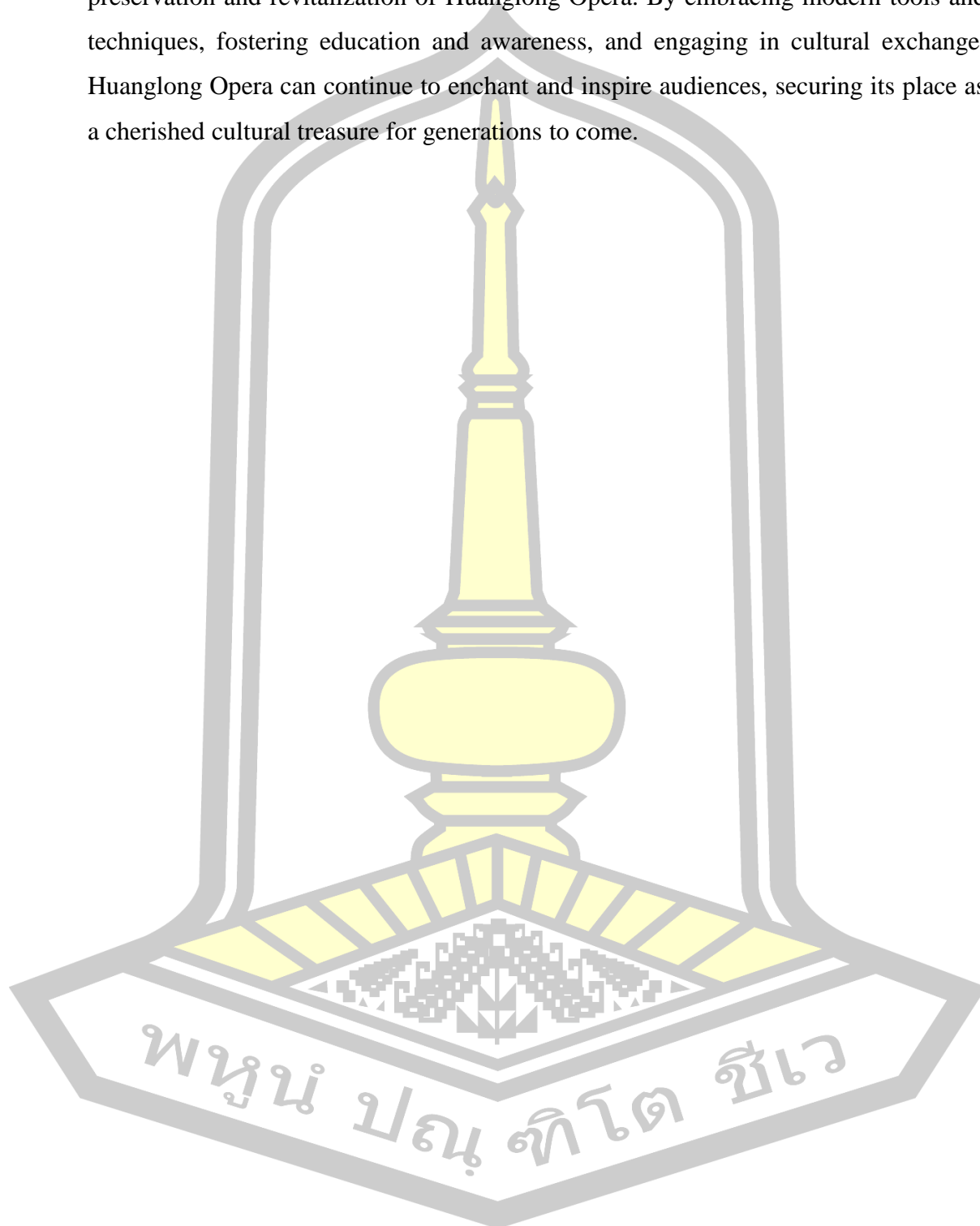
Huanglong Opera, a significant part of China's intangible cultural heritage, is under threat due to its rich history and cultural significance. To preserve its continuity, the chapter proposes a strategic framework. It emphasizes holistic documentation and archiving, ensuring the preservation of historical performances, scripts, and oral traditions. It also calls for cultural education and awareness programs, such as workshops, seminars, and cultural exchange initiatives. Formalized apprenticeship programs will provide structured training and mentorship for aspiring performers. The chapter also highlights the importance of digital technology in preservation, including recording and digitizing performances, interviews, and immersive digital experiences. The chapter also emphasizes innovation and cultural exchange, blending traditional elements with modern storytelling techniques and

multimedia. These guidelines aim to ensure Huanglong Opera's continued relevance and enchantment for future generations.

Table 1. Summary of Key Points

1. Holistic Documentation and Archiving	The chapter emphasizes the importance of preserving Huanglong Opera's historical performances, scripts, and oral traditions through modern digital archiving techniques. This comprehensive documentation lays the foundation for future generations to trace the evolution of this art form
2. Cultural Education and Awareness Programs	To introduce Huanglong Opera to younger generations and foster an understanding of its cultural significance, education, and awareness programs are vital. Workshops, seminars, and cultural exchange initiatives will play a pivotal role in achieving this goal
3. Formalized Apprenticeship Programs	Building on the oral tradition, formalized apprenticeship programs will ensure the continuity of Huanglong Opera. These programs offer aspiring performers structured training and dedicated mentorship
4. Leveraging Digital Technology	Preservation efforts must embrace digital technology, encompassing the recording and digitization of performances, interviews with key informants, and the creation of immersive digital experiences. Virtual reality and augmented reality can transport audiences into the world of Huanglong Opera, making it more accessible and engaging
5. Innovation and Cultural Exchange	To preserve Huanglong Opera's relevance, innovation is paramount. Productions that blend traditional elements with modern storytelling techniques and multimedia can captivate contemporary audiences. Collaborations with cultural organizations and international tours will introduce this art form to a global audience, ensuring its continued vitality

These guidelines collectively provide a comprehensive strategy for the preservation and revitalization of Huanglong Opera. By embracing modern tools and techniques, fostering education and awareness, and engaging in cultural exchange, Huanglong Opera can continue to enchant and inspire audiences, securing its place as a cherished cultural treasure for generations to come.



## **CHAPTER VI**

### **Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions**

#### **1. Conclusion**

1.1 The transmission of Huanglong Opera is a complex and multifaceted process deeply rooted in tradition and culture. Key informants emerge as stalwart custodians, preserving the authenticity of this centuries-old tradition and transmitting ancient wisdom to successive generations. They nurture artistic talent, actively engage in cultural preservation, and serve as cultural ambassadors, safeguarding Huanglong Opera's legacy. However, this transmission process faces contemporary challenges, including demographic shifts and evolving artistic preferences. Innovations in transmission techniques have enabled Huanglong Opera to adapt to the demands of modern times while staying true to its cultural heritage. The opera's multidimensional narrative construction, departure from conventional linear narratives, and fusion of fact and value-based logic have propelled it into new artistic frontiers. The transmission process of Huanglong Opera is a dynamic and multifaceted journey, characterized by the dedication of key informants, the preservation of tradition, and a commitment to innovation. This process ensures that this treasured cultural heritage continues to thrive and inspire audiences for generations to come.

1.2 The guidelines for Huanglong Opera include five pillars: holistic documentation and archiving, cultural education and awareness programs, formalized apprenticeship programs, digital technology, and innovation. Comprehensive documentation and digital archiving of historical performances, scripts, and oral traditions will be used for future preservation efforts. Cultural education and awareness programs will introduce Huanglong Opera to younger generations, while formalized apprenticeship programs will ensure its continuity. Preservation efforts will also utilize digital technology, including recording and digitizing performances, interviews, and immersive digital experiences. Innovation is crucial, as productions blending traditional elements with modern storytelling techniques and multimedia, along with collaborations and international tours, will ensure its continued vitality. By

embracing modern tools, fostering education and awareness, and engaging in cultural exchange, Huanglong Opera can continue to enchant and inspire audiences.

## 2. Discussion

The investigation into the transmission process of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China, has shed light on the rich cultural heritage and intricate dynamics involved in the preservation and continuation of this traditional art form. Additionally, the proposed guidelines for the preservation of Huanglong Opera provide a comprehensive framework for addressing the multifaceted aspects of safeguarding this cherished cultural treasure.

The crucial role that key informants played in the Huanglong Opera transmission process is one of the research's main findings. These individuals serve as custodians of the tradition, preserving its authenticity and passing down knowledge through oral tradition and apprenticeship programs. This aligns with the theoretical principles of cultural heritage preservation, which emphasize the significance of individuals and communities in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (Pal Nyíri, 2011).

Furthermore, the challenges in the transmission process highlight the need for innovative approaches to ensure the continued vitality of Huanglong Opera. These challenges, such as adapting to contemporary realities and appealing to evolving artistic preferences, underscore the importance of cultural awareness programs and innovation in transmission. These strategies are consistent with the principles of adapting traditional cultural forms to contemporary contexts and engaging younger generations (Zhong Zhiyong, 2008).

The formalized apprenticeship programs proposed are essential for passing down the skills and knowledge required for Huanglong Opera. This aligns with the theoretical principles of transmitting cultural heritage through mentorship and structured training (Wu, 1997). Additionally, leveraging digital technology, as recommended, resonates with the broader trend of using digital media for the preservation and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage (Yang Chun, 2007).

The holistic documentation and archiving efforts emphasized are consistent with the theoretical principles of preserving intangible cultural heritage through

comprehensive documentation (Zhang Zhongmou, 2010). This modern digital archiving approach aligns with contemporary practices for safeguarding cultural heritage.

Lastly, the discussion of cultural exchange and innovation underscores the importance of adapting Huanglong Opera to contemporary tastes and reaching a global audience. Collaborations with cultural organizations and international tours are in line with the principles of promoting cultural heritage through cross-cultural engagement (Zhu Wenshang, 2006).

In summary, the research results on the transmission process of Huanglong Opera and the proposed preservation guidelines are consistent with established theoretical principles of cultural heritage preservation. The multifaceted approach outlined in the guidelines, encompassing education, apprenticeship, digital technology, and cultural exchange, reflects a comprehensive strategy for ensuring the continued vitality and relevance of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, Jilin Province, China.

### **3. Suggestions**

#### **3.1 Suggestions for Using the Research:**

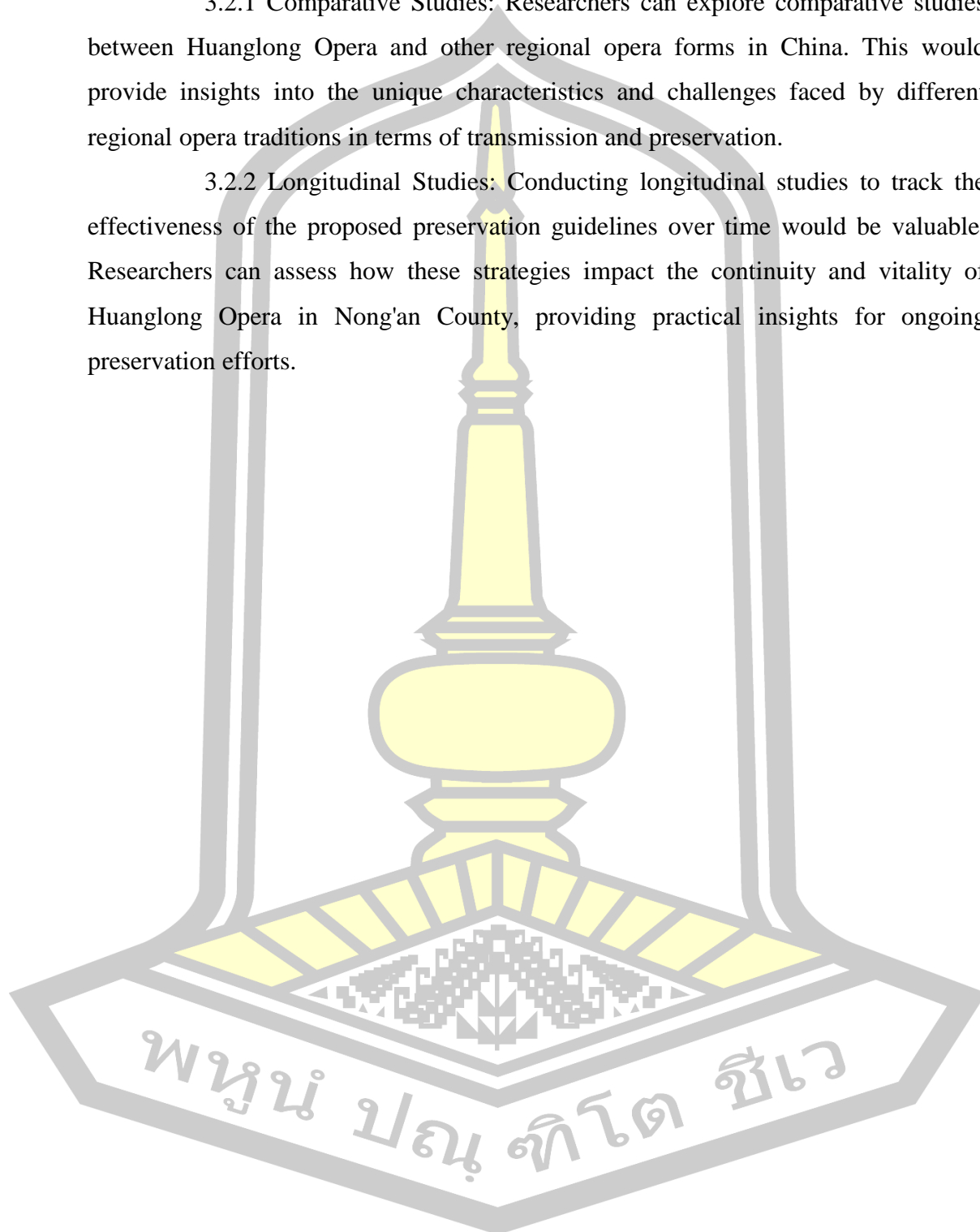
**3.1.1 Cultural Heritage Preservation Initiatives:** Policymakers, cultural institutions, and researchers can use the findings from this research to inform and improve cultural heritage preservation initiatives, not only for Huanglong Opera but also for other intangible cultural heritage forms. The guidelines proposed in Chapter V provide a comprehensive framework that can serve as a model for preserving traditional art forms in other regions.

**3.1.2 Educational Curriculum Development:** Educational institutions, particularly those in regions with rich cultural traditions, can integrate the insights from this research into their curriculum development. By incorporating the study of Huanglong Opera's transmission process and preservation strategies into music and cultural education, students can gain a deeper understanding of their local heritage and the broader principles of cultural preservation.

### 3.2 Suggestions for Further Research:

3.2.1 Comparative Studies: Researchers can explore comparative studies between Huanglong Opera and other regional opera forms in China. This would provide insights into the unique characteristics and challenges faced by different regional opera traditions in terms of transmission and preservation.

3.2.2 Longitudinal Studies: Conducting longitudinal studies to track the effectiveness of the proposed preservation guidelines over time would be valuable. Researchers can assess how these strategies impact the continuity and vitality of Huanglong Opera in Nong'an County, providing practical insights for ongoing preservation efforts.



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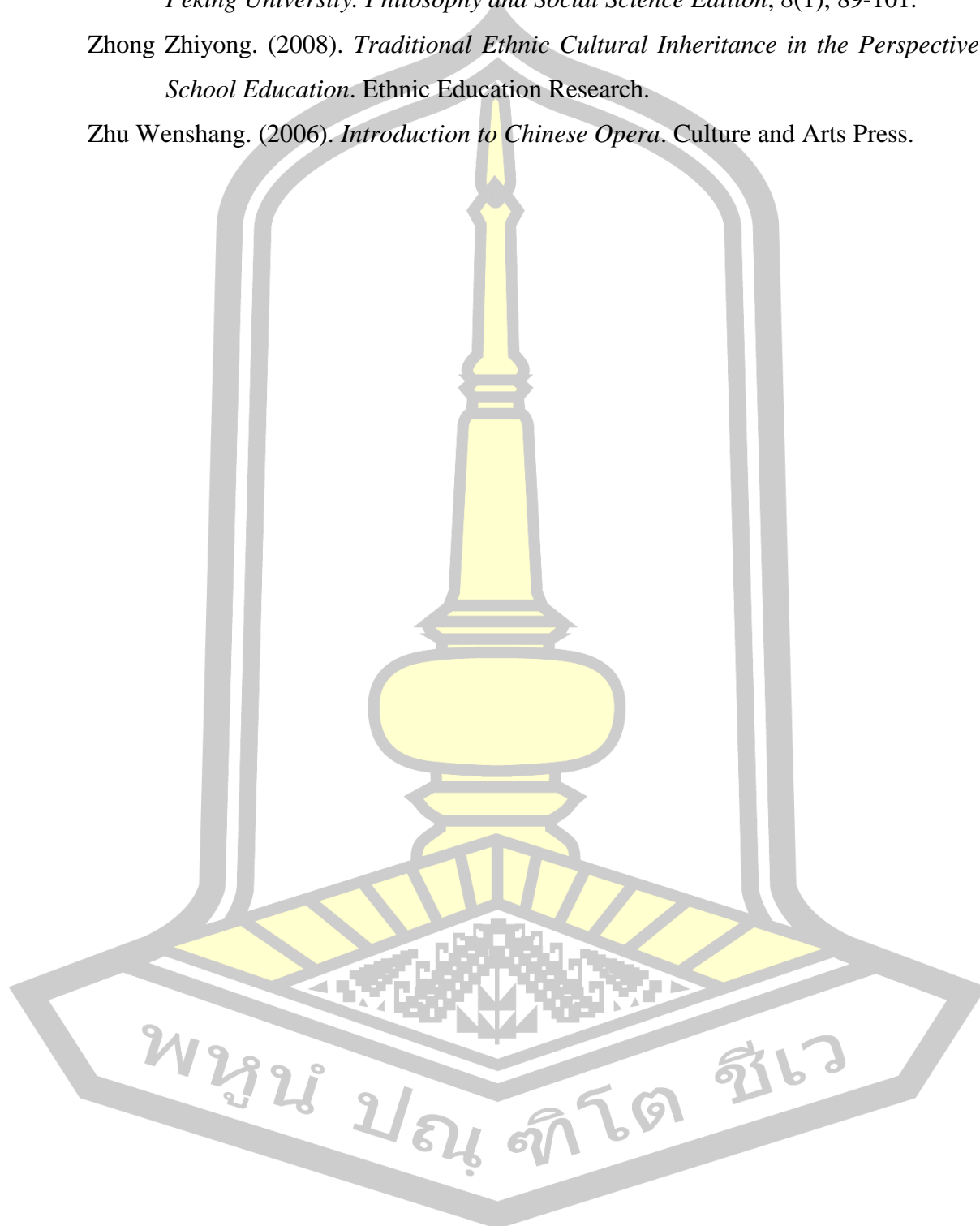
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## APPENDIX

### Questionnaire 1

Adult audience

Hello!

We sincerely hope that with your help, this questionnaire survey can provide a more solid empirical foundation and basis for the inheritance and protection of Huanglong Opera. This survey is conducted anonymously and will be kept strictly confidential. The results will only be used for research purposes. Please rest assured to fill out this form. Please read the instructions carefully before filling out, and do not miss any questions.

1. Your gender: ☐ Male or female
2. Your age: one year old
3. Your ethnic group: ☐ Han ☐ Other, is a ethnic group
4. Your profession:
5. Your education level: ☐ Never attended school ☐ Primary school ☐

Junior high school or above

6. Your marital status: ☐ Married ☐ Unmarried
7. Do you enjoy watching Huanglong Opera? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Why?

8. Your motivation for coming to the Huanglong Opera performance is: ☐ I enjoy watching and enjoying the excitement

9. Can you sing a few Huanglong operas? ☐ Can you speak or not

10. Can you sing a few pop songs or TV series interludes? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. Do you understand the historical and cultural value of Huanglong Opera?

Understanding the mouth, not understanding the mouth

12. Which of the following plot themes do you prefer? ☐ Historical themes ☐

Modern themes

Why?

13. Would you agree if your child had the opportunity to learn Huanglong Opera? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Why?

14. What are the tracks in Huanglong Opera that left a deep impression on you? What is your favorite track?

15. Your suggestions for the future inheritance of Huanglong Opera:

Thank you again for your cooperation! Sincerely wish you success in your work! Live a happy life!

## Questionnaire 2

Dear classmates: Hello!

We sincerely hope that with your help, this questionnaire survey can provide a more solid empirical foundation and basis for the inheritance and protection of Huanglong Opera. This questionnaire survey is conducted anonymously and will be strictly confidential. The results will only be used for research purposes. Please rest assured to fill in. Please read the instructions carefully before filling out, and do not miss any questions.

1. Your gender: **A** Male **B** Female
2. Your age:
3. Your ethnic group: **A** Han **B** Other
4. You are currently in grade.
5. Do you enjoy watching Huanglong Opera? **A** Yes **B** No
6. Your motivation for going to watch the Huanglong Opera performance is:  
**A** likes it **B** joins the fun
7. Can you sing a few Huanglong operas?  
**A** can sing a few lines **B** can't sing
8. Do you understand the history of Huanglong Opera and the culture it represents? **A** understands **B** does not understand
9. Your main forms of leisure and entertainment in your spare time:  
**A** listening to pop music **B** watching cartoons  
**C** playing electronic games **D** Listen to Huanglong Opera e Others

10. If the plot of Huanglong Opera were adapted into fairy tales or fables, would you like it?    **A** likes    **B** doesn't like it

Why?

11. Do you hope to learn the adapted Huanglong Opera in school?

**A** hopes    **B** doesn't want

12. If you had the opportunity to learn Huanglong Opera, would you learn it?

**A** can    **B** can't

Why?

14. What are the tracks in Huanglong Opera that left a deep impression on you? What is your favorite track?

15. Your suggestions for the future inheritance of Huanglong Opera:

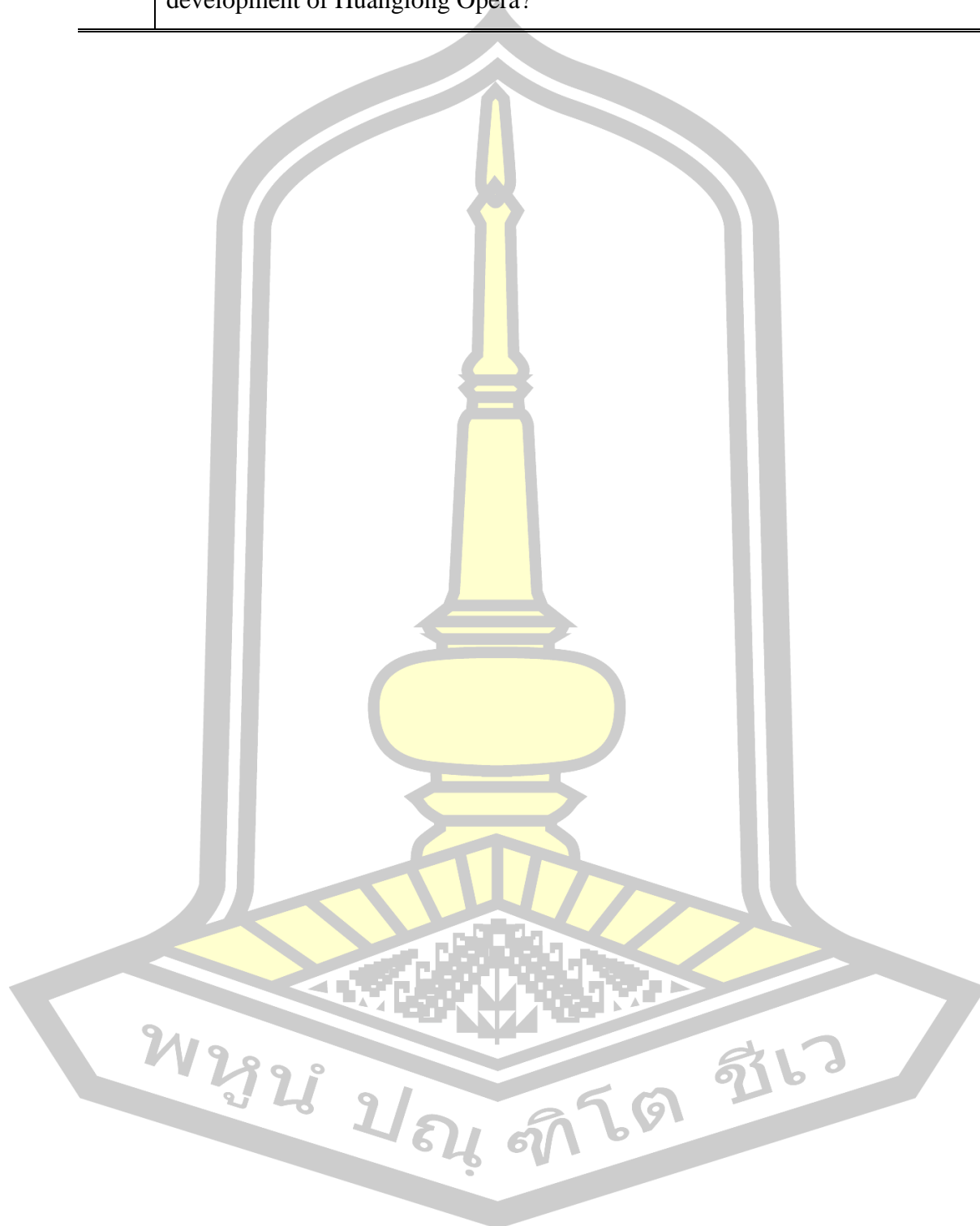
Table 2. Questionnaire about Huanglong Opera by QianQian Liu

No.	Questions
1.	The origin of Huanglong Opera
2.	The development of Huanglong Opera
3.	Characteristics of Huanglong Opera
4.	Musical content and expression form of Huanglong Opera
5.	What are the methods of preservation and promotion of Huanglong Opera?
6.	With the development of society, what changes have taken place in Huanglong Opera?
7.	The social influence of Huanglong Opera in Northeast China

Table 3. Questionnaire about the performance form and inheritance of Huanglong Opera by QianQian Liu.

No.	Questions
1.	How many Huanglong operas represent operasons?
2.	What types of operas can Huanglong Opera be divided into?
3.	What are the singing styles of different types of Huanglong Opera?
4.	How the opera is passed down

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 5. | What have the government, theaters and performers done to promote the development of Huanglong Opera? |
|----|---|



## BIOGRAPHY

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