



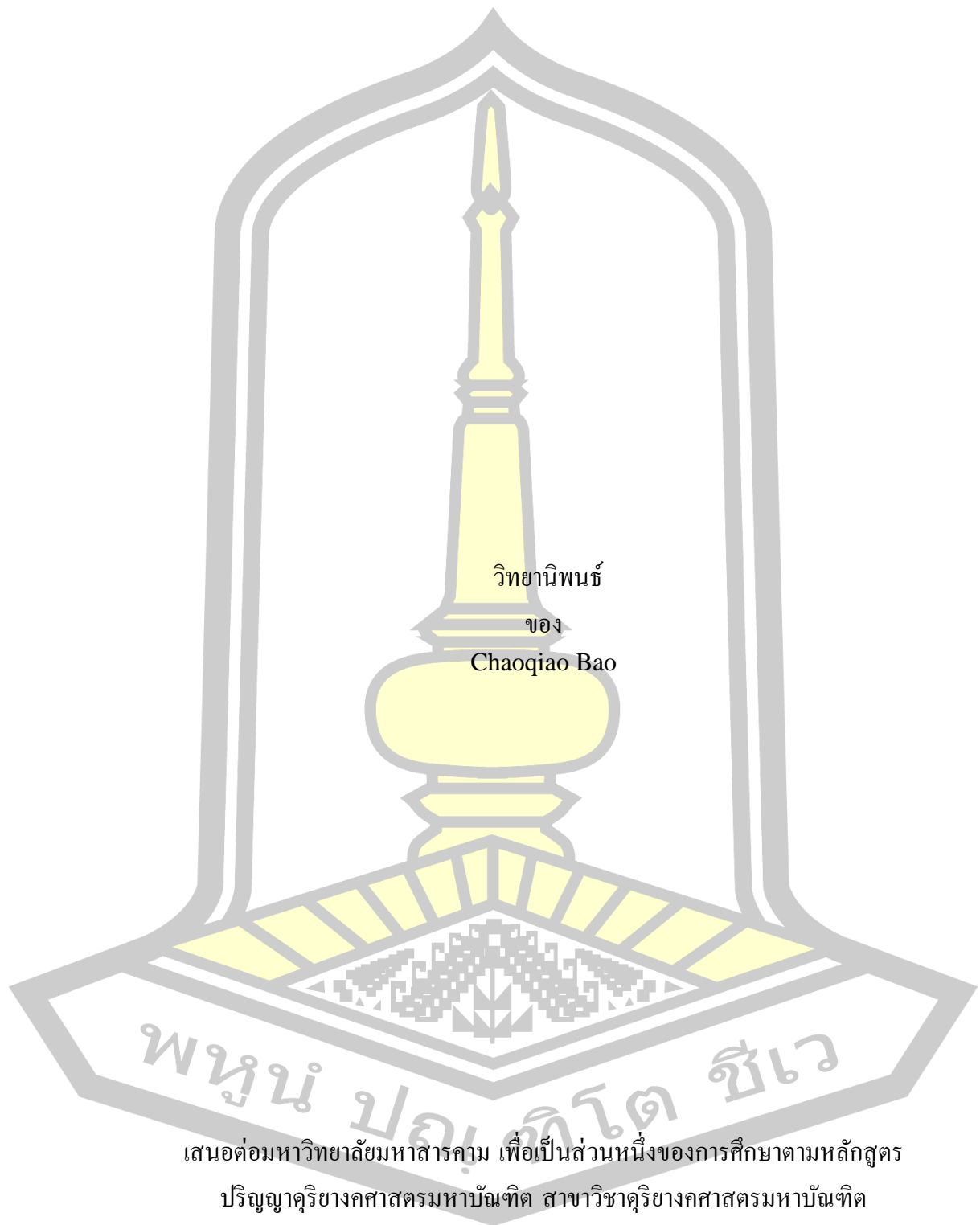
Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Guizhou Province, China

Chaoqiao Bao

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Master of Music in Music
September 2024

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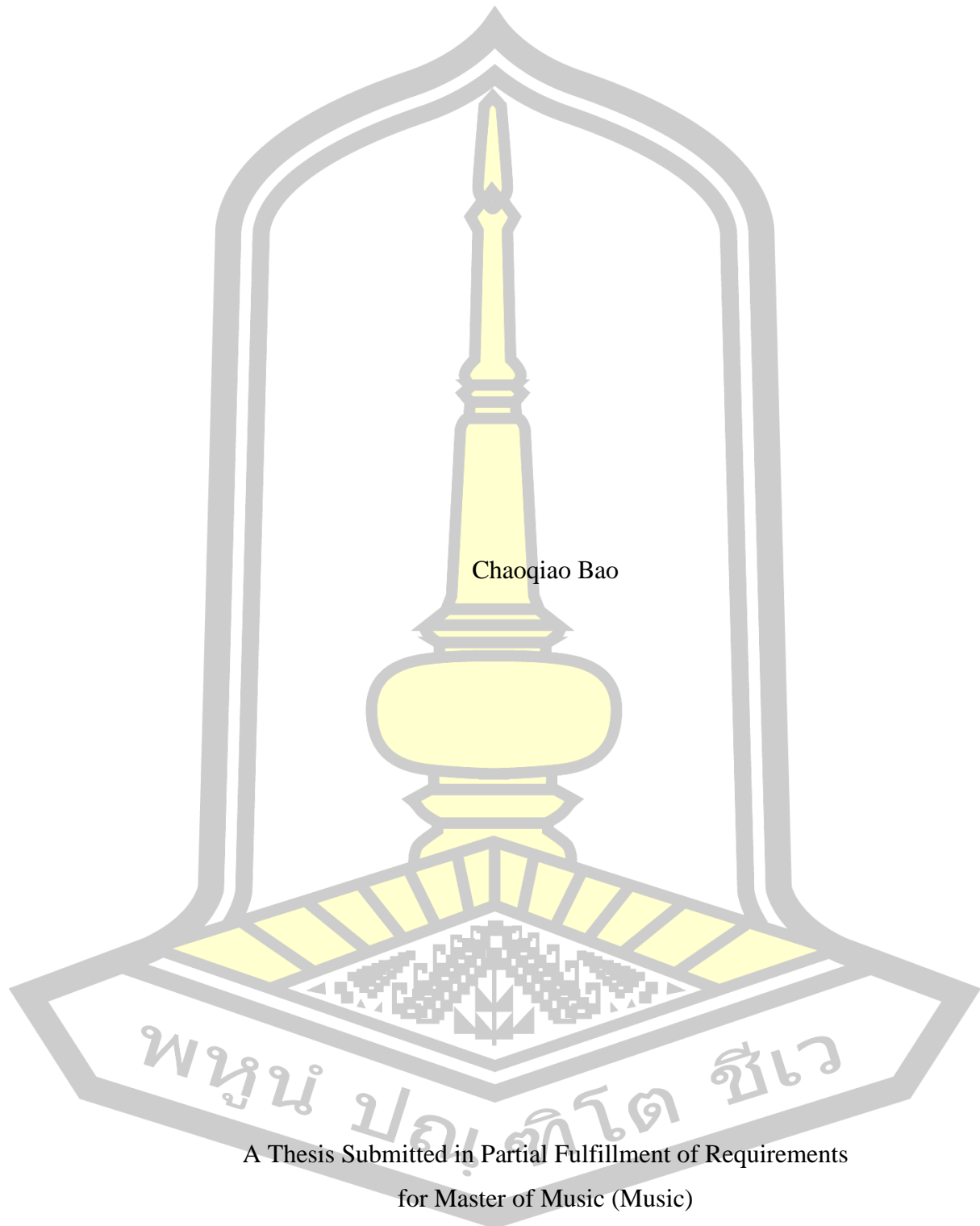
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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
for Master of Music (Music)

September 2024

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the Miao Feige, a unique form of vocal expression deeply embedded in the cultural and historical fabric of the Miao people. The research objectives are to 1) investigate the current status of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Guizhou Province, China, and 2) analyze the characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Guizhou Province, China. Data were collected from three key informants through qualitative methods, field observations, interviews, and thematic analysis. The research results show that:

1. Miao Feige folk songs, categorized into five types, are crucial for festivals and cultural preservation. They serve various social functions and are transmitted through family-based activities, folklore activities, teacher training, schooling, and modern media. Miao Feige's inheritance value encompasses social, historical, cultural, spiritual, scientific, aesthetic, educational, and economic aspects.

2. Miao Feige folk songs are shaped by historical, cultural, geographical, and social factors, making them unique among minority music traditions. They feature long, fluid melodies with wide intervals, often incorporating glissandos for emotional expression. The rhythms reflect natural speech patterns and physical movements, with drones and parallel intervals for rich texture. Singing techniques include high-pitched voices and vocal ornamentations.

The study suggests integrating Miao Feige into educational curricula and using modern media for cultural promotion. Comparative studies with other ethnic music traditions and exploring the impact of modernization on Miao Feige's preservation are also suggested. These strategies aim to promote cultural understanding and preserve the traditional music form.

Keyword : Guizhou Qiandongnan Region, China, Miao Feige, Folk songs, Singing characteristics, Cultural heritage

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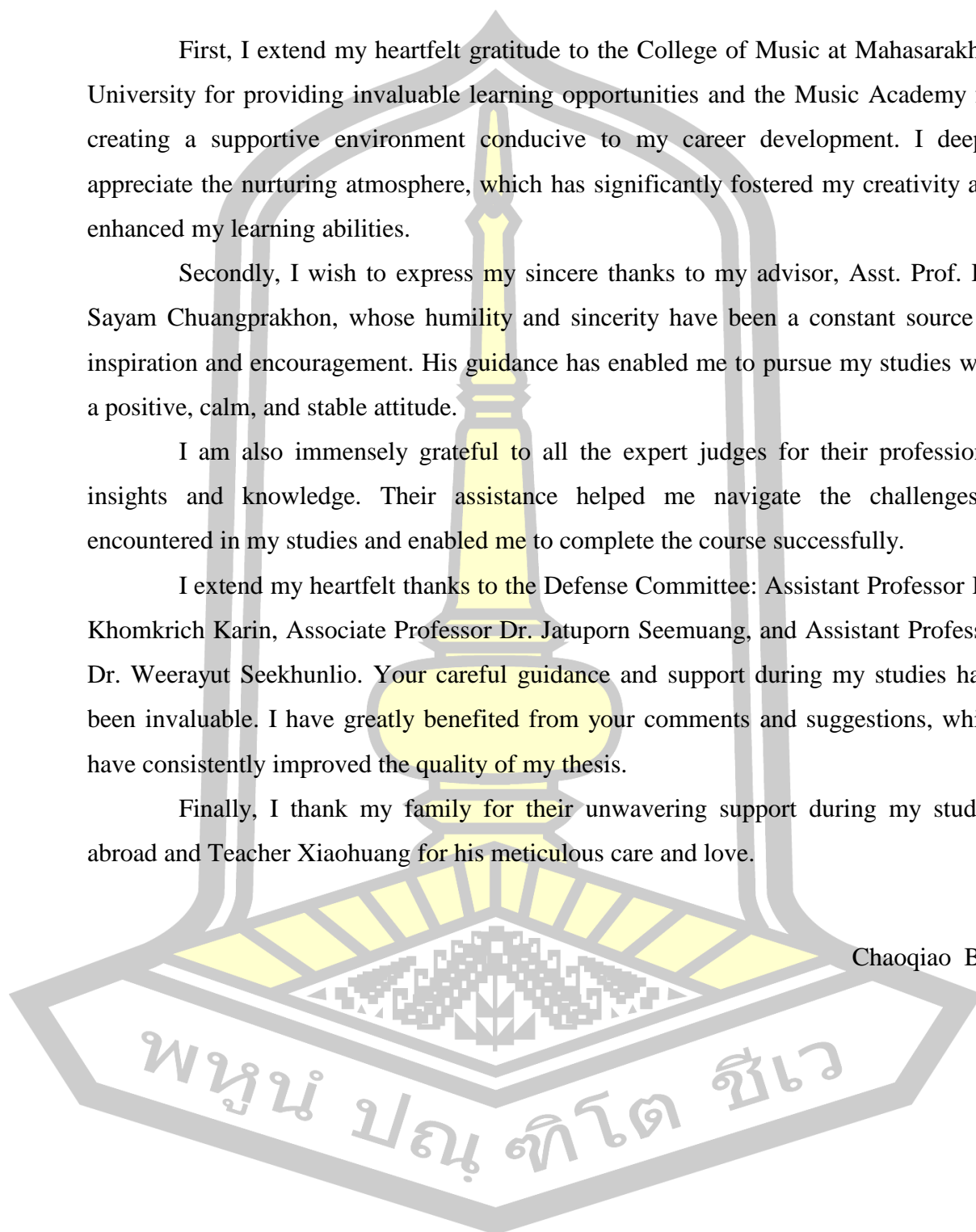
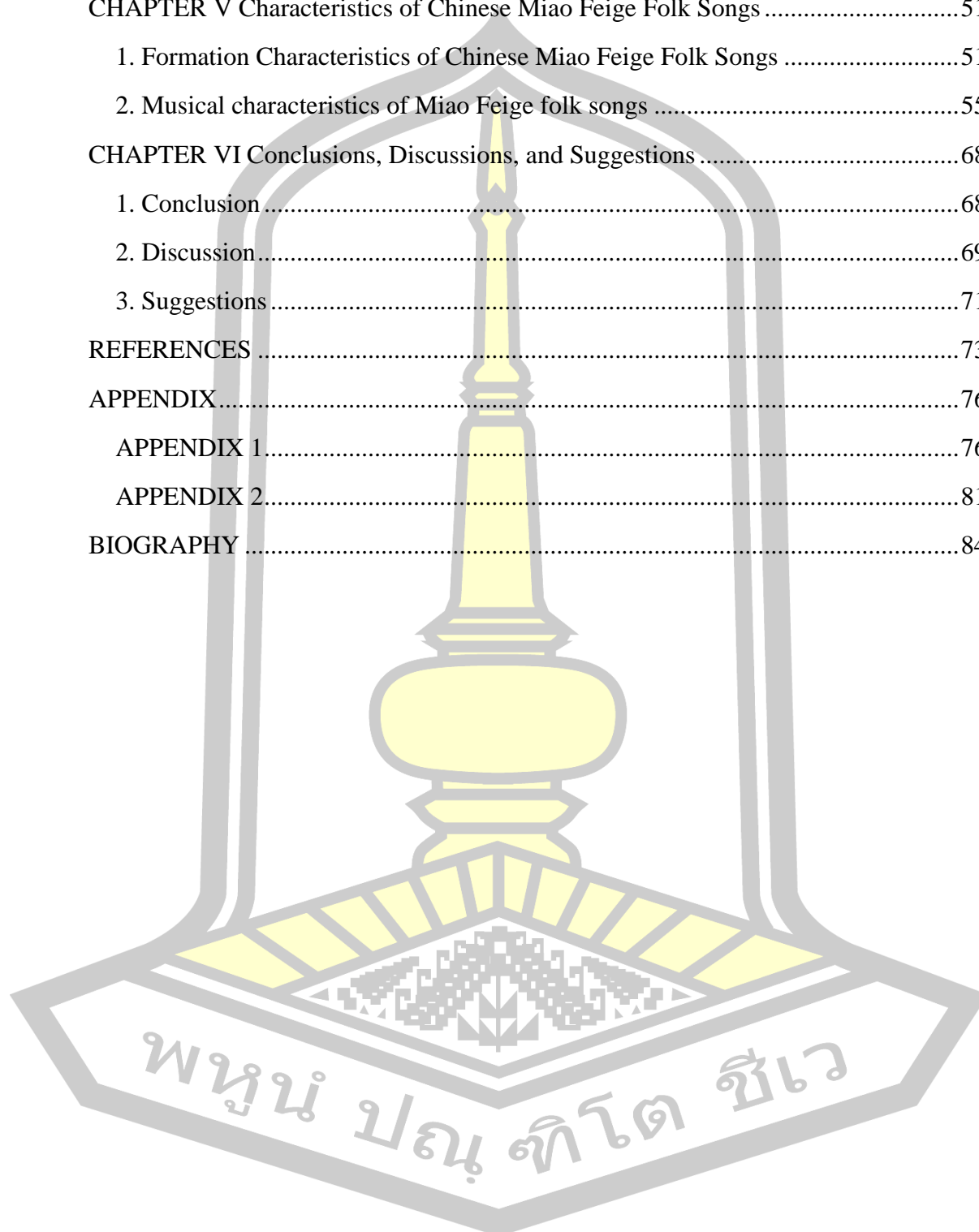


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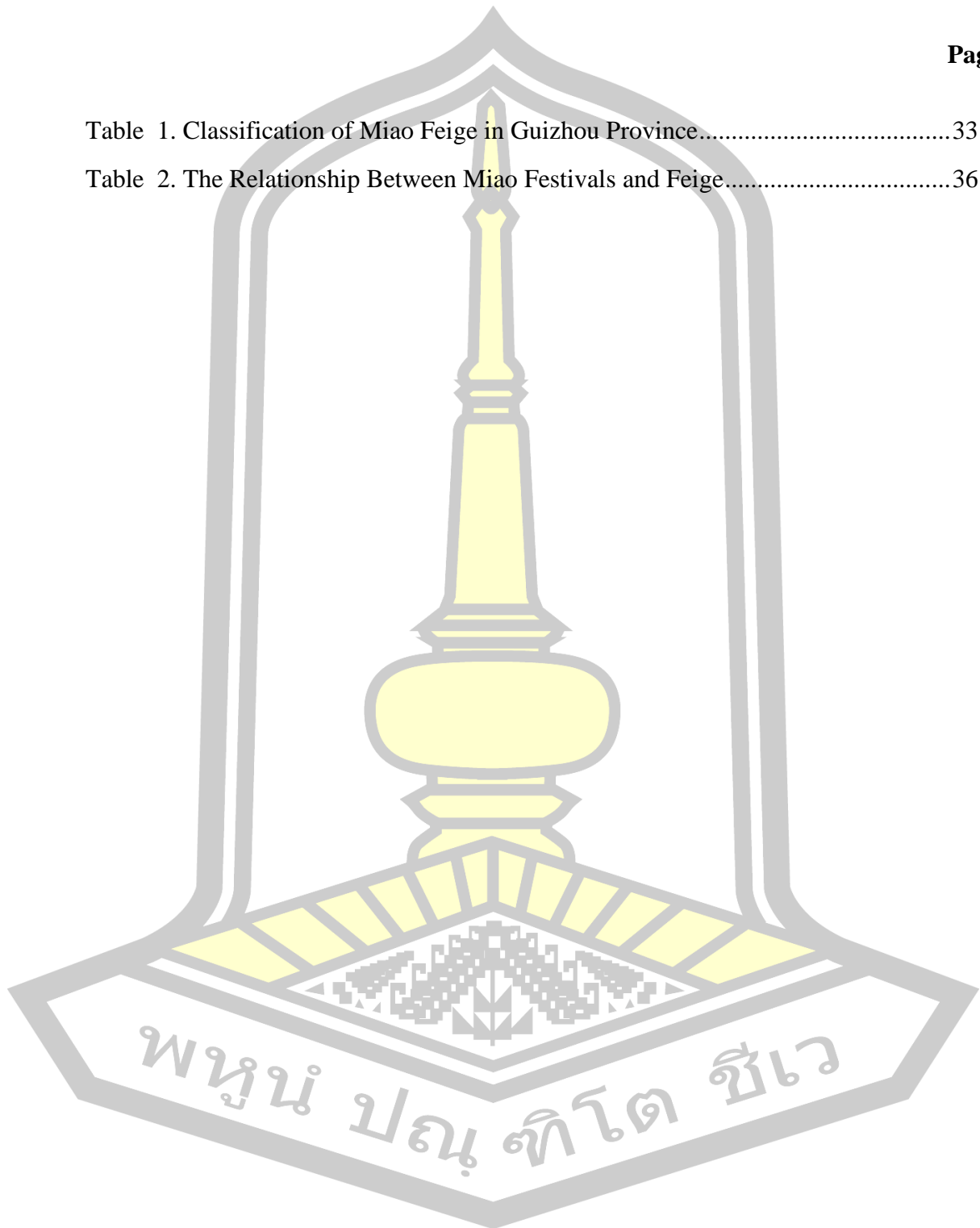
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

1. Research Background

China's extensive historical tapestry is adorned with the rich cultural contributions of its 56 ethnic groups, each adding unique traditions and practices to the nation's diverse heritage. Among these, the Miao people of Guizhou province stand out for their vibrant cultural expressions, particularly through their traditional music known as Feige, or "flying songs." The historical significance of Chinese music is underscored by archaeological discoveries such as the 21-bone flute, dating back 8,000 to 9,000 years, found in Wuyang County, Henan province. This ancient artifact highlights the deep-rooted musical traditions of Chinese civilization (Dong, 2023; Hao, 2020). In contemporary China, the government's emphasis on "cultural confidence" aims to bolster national pride and preserve its diverse cultural heritage amidst globalization and rapid modernization. This policy is crucial for maintaining the rich musical traditions of the 55 ethnic minorities, including the Miao, whose population of over 11 million, significantly contributes to China's ethnic musical diversity (CHU Y, 2020)

Despite their cultural significance, Miao Feige folk songs face numerous challenges in modern times, including cultural dilution, forgetfulness, and the risk of extinction. As younger generations migrate to urban centers or assimilate into dominant cultural practices, the traditional methods of transmitting these songs—primarily through oral transmission and communal participation—are weakening. This raises concerns about the future viability of Feige songs. While these songs are vital to Miao's identity and social cohesion, there is a notable lack of comprehensive academic literature exploring their intrinsic musical qualities, thematic richness, and roles within Miao society (Luo, 2022). This gap underscores the urgency of documenting and analyzing the current status of Miao Feige songs to devise effective preservation strategies.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to ethnomusicology and cultural anthropology by providing a deeper understanding of

how minority cultures can be preserved and promoted in a rapidly modernizing world. By examining the current status of Miao Feige songs—how they are practiced, transmitted, and preserved within contemporary Miao communities—this research will shed light on the adaptive strategies employed by the Miao people to keep their traditions alive. Additionally, understanding Feige songs enriches our appreciation of Miao cultural practices and enhances broader efforts to preserve minority cultures. This study will also explore the impact of external influences, such as technology and media, on the transmission and transformation of Feige songs, providing insights into cultural resilience and adaptation (Dong, 2015; Qi, 2021).

This research aims to investigate the current status of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Qiandongnan Guizhou Province and to analyze their characteristics. The first objective focuses on understanding the present state of these songs, including how they are practiced, transmitted, and preserved. This encompasses examining the roles of oral traditions, communal participation, and modern influences in maintaining these songs. The second objective involves a detailed analysis of the musical characteristics of Miao Feige, including melody, rhythm, harmony, lyrical content, and singing techniques. By comprehensively documenting and analyzing these aspects, the research aims to provide a holistic understanding of Miao Feige songs and their cultural significance. Ultimately, this study will contribute to academic knowledge and advocate for policies and initiatives that support the sustainability of minority cultures, offering a model for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in China and beyond. The findings will have implications for cultural policy, educational practices, and community-based initiatives, ensuring that the rich musical heritage of the Miao people continues to thrive in the modern era.

2. Research objectives

2.1 To investigate the current status of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Qiandongnan Guizhou Province, China.

2.2 To analyze the characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Qiandongnan Guizhou Province, China.

3. Research Questions

3.1 What is the current status of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Qiandongnan Guizhou Province?

3.2 What are the characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Qiandongnan Guizhou Province, China?

4. Research Benefits

4.1 Will identify challenges and opportunities for their preservation and ensure effective sustainability measures.

4.2 Will offer valuable insights into their distinctive qualities and facilitate their integration into broader cultural and educational contexts.

5. Research definitions

5.1 Miao Feige folk songs refer to a traditional form of vocal music belonging to the Miao ethnic group, primarily found in Guizhou Province, China. These songs are characterized by their lyrical nature, often centered around themes of love, daily life, historical events, and natural landscapes. Feige, which translates to "flying songs" or "mountain songs," are typically performed during communal gatherings, festivals, and rituals, serving as a medium for storytelling and cultural expression.

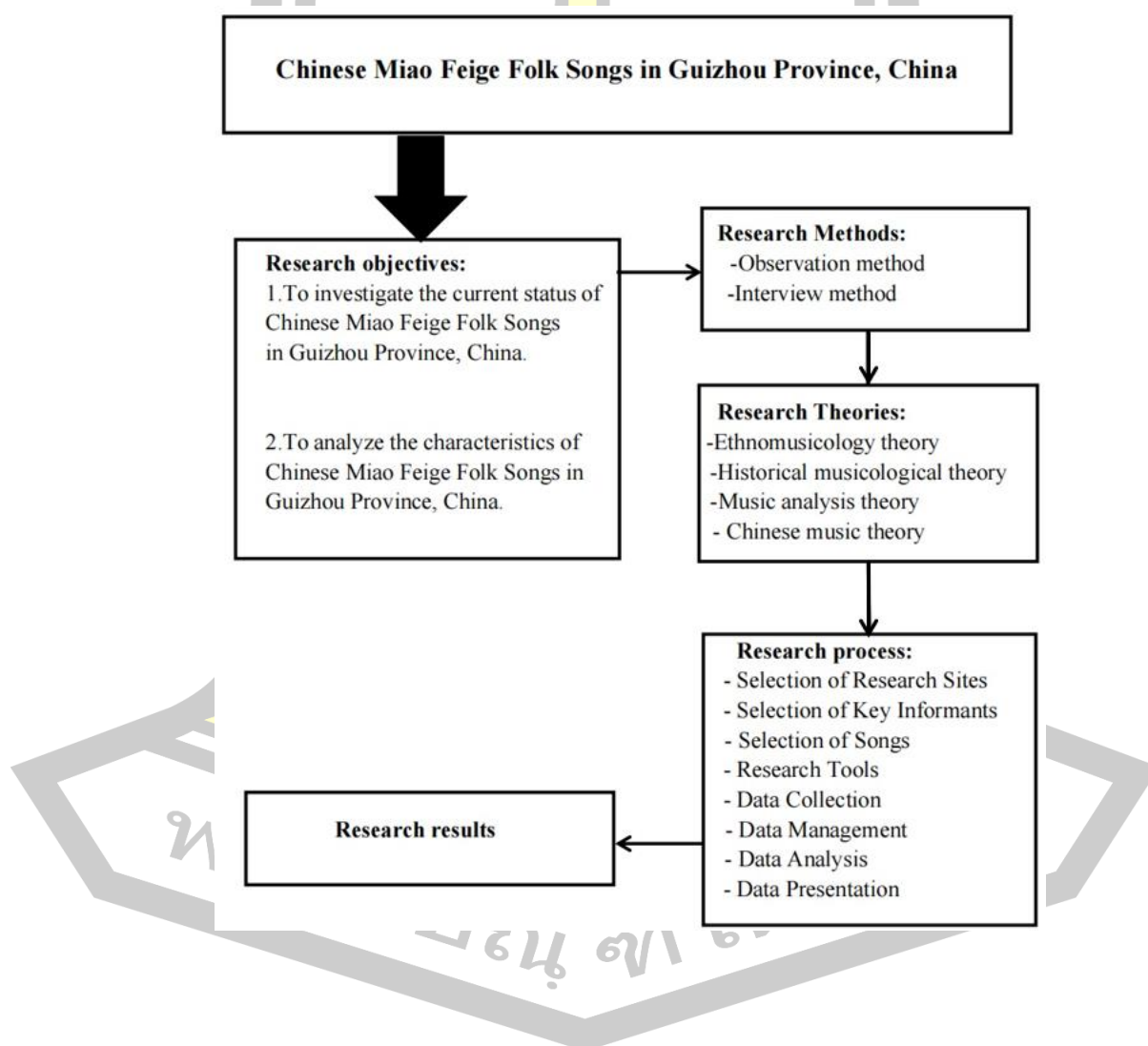
5.2 Current Status refers to the present condition and circumstances surrounding Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs, including their classification, the practices observed during their performance at festivals, the methods through which they are disseminated, and their transmitter's value and social function within the community.

5.3 Characteristics refers to the distinctive attributes and elements that define Miao Feige folk songs. It includes the analysis of musical structure with melody, rhythm, harmony, and singing techniques

6. Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework outlines a comprehensive study of Chinese Miao Feige folk songs in Guizhou Province, aiming to illuminate the current state and the distinct musical characteristics of these traditional songs. By employing various

research methods, including observation and interviews, the study is rooted in several theoretical approaches, such as ethnomusicology, historical musicology, music analysis, and Chinese music theory. The research process is systematically structured to encompass selecting research sites, key informants, and specific songs and deploying tailored research tools for data collection, management, analysis, and presentation. This framework is designed to provide a thorough understanding of the Miao Feige folk songs, thereby contributing valuable insights to Chinese folk music studies.



CHAPTER II

Literature Reviews

This chapter examines the theme of Miao ethnic Feige in Guizhou Province, involving an in-depth investigation and comprehensive gathering of significant information. Following the theme and objectives, the researchers initially reviewed the geographical and cultural profiles of Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province:

1. General Knowledge of Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture
2. General Knowledge of the Music Culture of the Miao Ethnic Group
3. General Knowledge of the Feige of the Miao Ethnic Group
4. Research Theories Used
5. Related Research

1. General Knowledge of Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture

Guizhou, abbreviated as "Qian" or "GUI," is a provincial-level administrative region of the People's Republic of China, with Guiyang City as its capital. It borders Sichuan Province and Chongqing Municipality to the north, Hunan Province to the east, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region to the south, and Yunnan Province to the west. The terrain in the region is high in the west and low in the east, sloping from the middle to the north, east, and south. Known as "eight mountains, one water, and one field," it has a subtropical monsoon climate. With a total area of 176,200 square kilometers, Guizhou has 6 prefecture-level cities and 3 autonomous prefectures. By the end of 2022, the resident population of Guizhou was 38.56 million (Guizhou Provincial Government, 2022).

Guizhou Province is located in the hinterland of the southwest inland region, serving as a transportation hub in the southwest region and an important part of the Yangtze River Economic Belt. It is the country's first national-level comprehensive big data pilot zone, a world-renowned mountain tourism destination and a major province for mountain tourism, a national ecological civilization pilot zone, and an

inland open economy pilot zone. The historical representative culture is "Qiangui culture" (Guizhou Provincial Museum Qiangui Land Culture Colorful 2022). It is also the birthplace of ancient Chinese humans and one of the birthplaces of ancient Chinese culture, with evidence of human habitation dating back five or six hundred thousand years.

Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture covers an area of 30,300 square kilometers and has a total population of 4,886,500. There are 30 resident ethnic groups, such as Miao and Dong. Ethnic minorities account for 81.7% of the total population of Qiandongnan, with Miao comprising 43.4% and Dong 30.5%. It is also the autonomous prefecture with the highest proportion of ethnic minority population among the 30 ethnic autonomous prefectures in China and the core area of Miao culture (Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture People's Government 2021).

As the core of Miao culture in China, the region is known for its harmonious coexistence of various ethnic groups and for creating a rich folk culture. The Miao flying song, recognized as China's intangible cultural heritage, is a treasure of ethnic music culture, attracting experts, scholars, and enthusiasts worldwide. The Miao music culture in southeast Guizhou, developed in the context of Guizhou's vast landscape, embodies the customs and emotions of the local people. It is representative of Guizhou Miao music culture and a classic example of Chinese Miao music culture. We focus on studying Miao music culture in Qiandongnan Autonomous Prefecture of Guizhou Province. First, we should have a basic understanding of the natural environment of Qiandongnan Autonomous Prefecture.

1.1 Natural Environment

Guizhou is a province in southwest China, located on the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, bordering Hunan to the east, Guangxi to the south, Yunnan to the west, and Sichuan and Chongqing to the north. It is a province with beautiful mountains and rivers, a pleasant climate, numerous ethnic groups, rich resources, and great potential for development. The province is 595 kilometers long from east to west and 509 kilometers from north to south, with a total area of 176,167 square kilometers, accounting for 1.8% of the national land area. The average elevation is about 1100 meters. The territory is mountainous and hilly, with many rolling mountains, known

as "eight mountains, one water, and one field." Its geological type is a typical karst landform. The climate belongs to the subtropical monsoon climate, warm and humid, with an annual average temperature of about 15 degrees Celsius. Affected by atmospheric circulation and terrain, Guizhou's climate is diverse, "a mountain is divided into four seasons, ten miles of different days." Abundant rainfall throughout the year has brought many rivers to Guizhou, which flow continuously everywhere. Favorable geographical conditions made Guizhou an ideal home for ancient humans five or six hundred thousand years ago and one of the birthplaces of ancient humans in China (Guizhou Provincial Government, 2021).

1.2 Economic and Social Environment

In 2023, the gross regional product of Guizhou Province reached 2,091.325 billion yuan, an increase of 4.9 percent over the previous year at constant prices (Guizhou Provincial Government, 2024). In recent years, the Guizhou provincial government has increased investment in the tertiary industry, deepened the promotion and management of the tourism market, taken the unique natural landform and the cool climate in summer as the natural highlights, explored the many generations of ethnic minorities as the cultural highlights, and regarded tourism as an important growth point of the province's economy, which has achieved remarkable results, driven local economic development, and increased people's income. It has greatly improved people's living standards. In 2022, the per capita disposable income of the province's residents reached 25,508 yuan, an increase of 6.3 percent over the previous year. By permanent residence, urban residents' per capita disposable income was 41,086 yuan, up by 4.8 percent, and rural residents' per capita disposable income was 13,707 yuan, an increase of 6.6 percent (Guizhou Provincial Government, 2023). The per capita consumption expenditure of residents in the province was 17,939 yuan. At the end of the year, there were 54.85 family cars per 100 urban households in the province, an increase of 3.7 percent over the previous year; the whole year, the province received 492 million tourists, and the tourism revenue was 524.564 billion yuan.

The province has 95 A-level tourist attractions and 1434 A-level tourist attractions. There were 81 key cultural relics under national protection at the end of the year. At the end of the year, the province had 101 art performance troupes, 23 art

performance venues, 133 museums, 99 public libraries, and 1,701 mass art galleries and cultural centers (stations). There were 88 nature reserves in the province, of which 11 are national nature reserves. By the end of the year, nature reserves covered 847,700 hectares. The afforestation area was 183,300 hectares, and the forest coverage rate of the province was 62.81 percent by the end of the year. In 2022, 99.1 percent of the days had good air quality in central cities of the province. The water quality rate at major rivers' exit sections was 100%. The rate of sewage treatment in cities and county seats and the rate of harmless treatment of household garbage rose to 98.2 percent and 99.3 percent, respectively. Energy consumption per 10,000 yuan of GDP fell 3.7 percent over the previous year. 321,400 hectares of soil erosion have been controlled (Statistical Bulletin of Guizhou Province's National Economic and Social Development 2022, 2023).

1.3 Cultural Environment

The number of items representing national intangible cultural heritage in Guizhou Province is 72 (as of the latest data update). The number of cultural relics under protection in the province is more than 2,300, including 71 key national cultural relics under protection. Regarding the cultural industry's development, its added value has maintained double-digit growth in recent years, and its proportion in the gross regional product has increased yearly. Regarding the number of cultural enterprises in the province, as of the latest data, the number of legal persons in cultural and related industries exceeded 15,000. In terms of provincial cultural activities and facility construction, as of the latest data, there are more than 80 public libraries in the province. Regarding the number of provincial cultural stations, the coverage rate of township (street) comprehensive cultural stations in the province has reached 100% (Official website of Guizhou Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, 2019).

In summary: The Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture overview provides essential information about the region's geography, climate, and demographic composition. Understanding these aspects is crucial for contextualizing the Miao ethnic group's cultural practices, including their music. This geographical and cultural context helps explain the unique development of the Miao's musical traditions, particularly how their environment and social structure influence their music. This background sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the region's music

culture, forming the foundation for understanding the specific characteristics and significance of Miao Feige.

2. General Knowledge of the Music Culture of the Miao Ethnic Group

Miao's music is rich and full of lively folk life, portraying Miao's social life. It is composed of two parts: folk songs and folk instrumental music. Miao folk songs can be divided into folk, wine, marriage, and narrative songs according to their social functions and genres. Folk songs are the most freely sung genre in Miao social life. They can be sung in Chinese and Miao languages, and compilation and singing are random. It is a necessary singing form for the Miao people to go to the market, sing, visit relatives and friends, and talk about love. It is widely spread and has great influence. In addition to rich folk songs, the Miao people spread many unique musical instruments and music pieces. It shows the national character of "being able to sing and dance." The wind instruments of the Miao ethnic group include Lusheng, Xiao drum, Mang drum, and Suona, among which the most representative instruments are Lusheng and Suona. The string instruments include Gubaiqin, Erhu, and Yueqin (Wang, 2021; Yang, 2021).

Lusheng is a multi-voice folk musical instrument most loved and commonly used by the Miao. It comprises six bamboo pipes of different lengths and is equipped with copper reeds of different sizes with sound holes. Press the sound holes to produce different sound effects and form harmony tones and chords when playing.

From the perspective of playing form, Lusheng can be divided into four categories: one is row Lusheng (also known as set Lusheng); one is the mother and child reed brush composed of large Lusheng and small Lusheng, which are two octaves apart from each other; one is a pair of Lusheng (also known as unison Lusheng) composed of a pair of Lusheng with the same tone quality, quantity, and scale; one is the burial tube Lusheng composed of three Lusheng with a difference of one octave between the upper and lower scales and nine to fifteen burial tubes.

There are two kinds of Lusheng sets. One comprises four four-octave Lusheng sets with high, middle, low, and double bass pitch. The length varies; the long one is more than ten feet, and the short one is more than one foot. The treble Lusheng has

six notes, the middle Lusheng has three notes, the bass Lusheng has two notes, and the double bass Lusheng has only one chord accompaniment; one is composed of six Lusheng with extra high, treble, middle, low, and double bass tones. The trunk of a mang tube is hollowed out, or bamboo is made into a tube, and a bamboo tube with a reed is installed inside; when used, the bamboo pipe is played, accompanied by the resonance and sound in the barrel, and the sound is deep and bright, vigorous, and profound. A mang tube has only one sound. Without playing the melody independently, it can only play the role of accompaniment for the Lusheng.

Xiaotong: A kind of wind instrument. It is popular in the southern Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and the Miao, Yi, and Yao ethnic areas of Yunnan and Guizhou provinces. It is made of small bamboo, with a total length of 30-40 cm. The bamboo pipe has 5 to 7 sound holes, and the mouthpiece part differs. A sound hole is made at the top and back of the Yao Xiao tube. The Yi and Miao people make a wooden plug at the top of the xiao drum. A sound hole is made at the back of the cork. The sound is soft and gentle for everyday entertainment.

Mangtong: also known as "Lusheng tube". It is a wind instrument popular in the Miao and Dong ethnic areas of Guizhou and Guangxi. A reed is placed on the bottom two-fifths of a thin bamboo pipe, and then the reed pipe is placed into a large bamboo tube as its resonance tube. The large bamboo tube is about 200 cm, and the small one is about 40 cm. The tone is deep and vigorous, played in unison with bass and Lusheng.

Suona: Widely popular in southeast Guizhou among the Miao people, its style is the same as that of the Han people. Some areas are equipped with a large Suona, and there are five-hole, six-hole, and eight-hole varieties, generally having a complete set of tunes with strong melodies.

The Dasuona of the Miao ethnic group is a double-reed instrument. The shape of the Suona is the same as that of the Han ethnic group, but it has a larger body and a deeper, thicker tone. It is often used in folk wind and percussion ensembles. It is a very distinctive bass instrument. It is popular in Sichuan Junlian, Hong County, Junlian County, Weixin, Yiliang, and Junlian County, Yunnan Province, where the Miao people live. According to legend, more than 200 years ago, opera artists changed the small Suona in the south into the mezzo-tone Suona Erjie Zi during the

Qing Dynasty. Later, they scaled up the sizes of each part and gradually developed the large Suona favored by the Miao people.

String Musical Instruments: The string instruments of the Miao ethnic group in southeast Guizhou Province include Duoli accompaniment instruments, mainly "Gubaiqin," Erhu, and Yueqin. "Gubaiqin" is popular in Paitiao Town, Danzhai County. It is an ancient folk instrument. It looks like a half-gourd and gourd called "Gubaiqin." The instrument is made by cutting paulownia wood into a half-gourd shape, hollowing it out, and covering it with a thin piece of wood. It has two cow strings, a bridge, and a bow made of horsetail or brown wire, generally with two to four strings. The left hand plays the strings, and the right hand pushes the bow. The sound quality is strong and thick, suitable for men and women, young people to accompany or dance. In addition, Erhu and Yueqin are mainly used for song accompaniment.

Percussion instruments: The percussion instruments of the Miao people include bronze drums, wooden drums, and benches. The bronze drum is a cherished folk musical instrument of the Miao people. It has a history of several years. Its shape is the same everywhere among the Miao people and similar to that of other nationalities. The bronze drum of the Miao people in southeast Guizhou belongs to the Majiang type, with the largest diameter of about 100cm and generally 50-60cm. The bronze drum is exquisitely made. The drum face has a relief pattern, the center is sun-shaped, and the edges are engraved with main decorations such as frogs, turtles, oxen, and horses. Patterns surround the drum body and are rich and colorful. When struck, the drum is often assisted by a small wooden barrel on the back of the drum. Its sound quality is strong and profound, sharp ears are round, and the sound carries very far (Cui, 2013).

Wooden drum: Different styles and sizes. The diameter of the large is about a foot, the small is only four or five inches, about five feet long, and the short is about a foot. The trunk is hollowed out, covered with cow skin, symbolizing ancestors, and cannot be moved without reason. In addition, leather drums, hand drums, waist drums, and other musical instruments have become part of the national musical instruments of the Miao people through assimilation and transformation over thousands of years.

Bench: A Miao percussion body singing instrument popular in Guizhou Miao areas. When played, the left and right hands each hold one and touch each other to make a sound. The timbre is crisp and loud. It is said that when the Miao ancestors migrated to Guizhou, they would hit the bench as a signal to boost morale and drive away wild animals. The sound would shake the mountains.

In summary: The music culture of the Miao ethnic group in Guizhou Province is rich and varied, encompassing folk songs and instrumental music. This section details the types of music, the instruments used, and their cultural significance. For the research, this information is vital to comprehending the diversity and complexity of Miao music, which is integral to their social life and traditions. It highlights the role of music in daily activities, ceremonies, and social interactions, providing insights into how these traditions have been preserved and evolved. Understanding these elements is essential for analyzing the unique features of Miao Feige.

3. General Knowledge of the Feige of the Miao Ethnic Group

According to the data released by the State Ethnic Affairs Commission of China, the Miao population in China is 9.4 million, ranking fifth among 56 ethnic groups in China (State Ethnic Affairs Commission of China, 2010). According to the fifth national census, the Miao population in Guizhou Province is up to 4.3 million, accounting for almost half of the total Miao population in China. According to the data released by the Qiandongnan People's Government, the resident population of the Miao people in the Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture is the largest in Guizhou Province, with a population of more than 2 million Miao people (Qiandongnan People's Government, 2019). Therefore, it can be said that the Miao music culture in Guizhou Province represents the Miao music culture in China. The unique Miao Feige in Qiandongnan Prefecture is an outstanding representative of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in China.

Since the Miao ethnic group is a people without writing, the origin time cannot be verified. Because of the two sides singing across the mountains, the voice is too soft to hear. Only shouting can let the other side hear the singing content. Therefore, the Ledong Miao Feige folk song is sung with a real voice, strong penetrating force,

and more infectiousness. Miao Feige's singing uses the Miao language with a loud and bold voice (LI, 2012).

Qiandongnan Miao Feige is one of the Miao folk songs, also known as Miao folk songs, popular among Miao compatriots in southeast Guizhou. Its melody mainly comprises third and sixth intervals with a simple structure. Each song is generally about 30 sentences, often including three-character sentences, five-character sentences, seven-character sentences, eight-character sentences, etc., but most are five-character sentences. The song's tone is loud and clear, bold and bright, singing the sound of the valley, and has a strong appeal. Therefore, Feige is commonly used in festive, welcome, and other public occasions. It is now composed and sung, allowing people to appreciate the happy life of the Miao people deeply.

In traditional Miao culture, feige is an important part of the culture. Miao women and men set up a playground or a playground slope near their village during festivals and idle farming, gathering together to sing songs. When men and women sing duets, they sing Feige. This activity is called "traveling Fang" or "shaking Malang." When men and women sing duets, they express their eagerness to fall in love. The songs are enthusiastic, cheerful, and loud, deeply attracting people's attention.

The Feige tunes in southeast Guizhou have roughly fixed scores, and the length and speed of beats have roughly fixed formats. However, the singer can perform based on the original, starting slowly and gradually accelerating to the climax, then slowing down with a small part near the end. The singer can drag as much as they like, and the drag length depends on the singer's breath. It can be seen that singing Feige requires skills and talent, emotional expression, and personal characteristics of the singer (Huang, 2017).

In summary: The Feige, a distinctive form of Miao folk song, is central to the cultural expression of the Miao ethnic group. This section describes its characteristics, performance practices, and social functions. For the research, this provides a focused examination of Feige, offering a detailed understanding of its structure, lyrical content, and the contexts in which it is performed. This understanding is crucial for analyzing Feige's role in Miao culture and its significance as an intangible cultural

heritage. It also aids in identifying how Feige has been maintained and adapted in modern times, a key aspect of the research.

4. Research Theories Used

This study uses ethnomusicology theory, historical musicology theory, music analysis theory, and Chinese music theory, combined with field investigation and interviews, to conduct an in-depth study of Guizhou Miao Feige's creation's current situation and main characteristics.

4.1 Ethnomusicology

Ethnomusicology is mainly a scientific study of the music of countries and regions with different social systems and levels of development. It belongs to the interdisciplinary discipline of musicology and ethnology. After the end of World War II, it developed rapidly in Europe, the United States, and some Asian countries (Yu, 2004). Ethnomusicology is a highly practical discipline, requiring researchers to conduct on-site collection and investigation of music in a certain region through various types and methods to obtain first-hand research data. The Miao people have a rich musical culture. For the study of Feige of the Miao people in Guizhou Province, the researcher went to Qiandongnan Prefecture, where the Miao people live in the largest population, and used ethnomusicology theories and methods to obtain important data supporting this study.

4.2 Musicology

Musicology is the historical research field of musicology. With music history as the main body, it studies music and its related phenomena from a historical point of view. The research object of historical musicology is the history of music, which mainly includes the following research areas and objects: collection and preservation of works and other musical historical materials; music works; musicians and their times; the performance, dissemination, and reception of the work; the connection between ancient and modern to reveal the law and enlightenment of music history (Lin, 2023; Qi, 2023). The Miao ethnic group has a long history, and its music culture has gradually formed various forms over time. The flying songs of the Miao ethnic group occupy a very important position in the musical life of the Miao people, with

wide application scenarios and frequent use. Researchers use historical musicology to study the evolution of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs.

4.3 Music Analysis

Music analysis is an in-depth study of the structure of music. It covers multiple aspects, from tune to form to style and creative process, each of which is crucial.

First, tune analysis is the basis of music analysis, which mainly includes studying its pitch, rhythm, and melodic line to reveal its inner emotion and meaning.

- Tune: Also called melody, it is the most expressive part of music. It consists of rising and falling musical notes organized horizontally in an orderly manner according to a certain rhythm. It reflects the overall idea or main idea of the music.

- Rhythm: The rhythm of the music refers to the length and intensity of the tones in the movement of the music. The melody is the relationship between organized tones of different lengths (Li, 2000). Rhythm is often thought of as the structure of music. A beat is the periodic repetition of heavy and weak beats in music.

- Harmony: Includes "chords" and "harmonic progression." In polyphonic music, combinations of more than three tones arranged according to a three-degree relationship are called chords.

- Chord: Usually a combination of three or more sounds that overlap vertically (simultaneously). The horizontal organization of the chords is harmonious. Harmony has an obvious color effect of thick, light, thick, and thin, and also has the function of forming clauses, fragments, and stopping music (Li, 2000).

Secondly, music form analysis is also an important part of music analysis. Musical form is the structural form of music. Various paragraphs are formed in the development of the melody. According to the regularity of the formation of these paragraphs, the common format is musical form. Through the analysis of the form, we can better understand the overall structure and layout of the music.

In addition to the tune and form, musical analysis also needs to consider the style of the music. Different musical styles have unique characteristics and expressions. By comparing and analyzing pieces of different styles, one can gain a deeper understanding of the diversity and variation of music.

Many excellent classic Feige works have been left in the long process of spreading. By collecting the music score and singing data, researchers use the theory of song form analysis to make a more scientific and detailed analysis of Miao Feige and further study the musical structure and characteristics of Miao Feige.

4.4 Chinese Music Theory

Unlike Western music theories, Chinese music theory has tonal system, scale, pattern, and musical symbol concepts. It mainly includes Chinese traditional music theory and Chinese traditional aesthetic theory. Chinese music has a long history. Over this long history, many excellent music works have emerged, and a relatively perfect music theory system has gradually formed. Based on the theory of Chinese music, the researchers conduct an in-depth study of the traditional folk songs of the Miao ethnic group and explore the music and aesthetic features of Miao Feige in combination with the background of Chinese music culture and national aesthetic habits.

In summary: The research employs various theoretical frameworks, including ethnomusicology, historical musicology, music analysis, and Chinese music theory. These theories provide a comprehensive approach to studying Miao Feige by combining fieldwork, historical analysis, and musicological methods. Ethnomusicology helps understand Feige's cultural context and significance, while historical musicology offers insights into its evolution. Music analysis breaks down the structure and components of Feige, and Chinese music theory contextualizes it within broader Chinese musical traditions. These theories collectively facilitate a thorough and multi-faceted analysis of Miao Feige, enhancing the depth and rigor of the research.

5. Research Related

The researchers have consulted much literature about the Miao music culture and Feige in Qiandongnan Prefecture. In recent years, the research mainly focuses on the historical origin of the Miao music culture in Qiandongnan Prefecture, the influence of the geographical and cultural environment of Qiandongnan Prefecture on the formation of the characteristics of Miao Feige, the Miao festival and the application scene of Feige, and the social function of Miao Feige.

5.1 Historical Origin of Miao Music Culture

Qiandongnan Miao culture is one of China's most colorful and time-honored cultures, showing the profound wisdom of Miao people's life and unique artistic creativity, with distinct regional and national characteristics. Qiandongnan Prefecture is home to the largest concentration of Miao people in China. The original ethnic culture represented by the flying song of the Miao ethnic group is famous at home and abroad, and it is the core place for the preservation of the original ecological cultural heritage of the Miao ethnic group in the world.

The Miao, Dong, Han, Shui, Yao, Zhuang, Buyi, and Tujia ethnic groups live in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture. Qiandongnan is known as the "hometown of 100 festivals," there are more than 200 festival gatherings a year. Festival activities include singing and dancing, bullfighting, horse racing, playing Lusheng, riding bronze drums, dragon boat racing, playing dragon lantern, singing Dong opera, and so on. The main national festivals include the Miao Lushan Festival, Climbing Festival, Sister Festival, "April 8", Eating New Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, Miao Nian, the traditional customs of young men and women in love with songs on the third day of March, eating Wu fan on the eighth day of April, worshipping the earth God on the sixth day of June, etc. "Eating New Festival" is the grandest festival of the Miao ethnic group at the turn of spring and summer, which evolved from ancient sacrifices. The festival time varies, generally in the lunar calendar, from early June to mid-August. Southeast Guizhou is known as "the sea of singing and dancing." Miao people's Feige and Youfang Ge, as well as ancient songs, drinking songs, and big songs, have different modes (Li, 2016).

The Miao people have created a material culture with rice composition as the core, a spiritual culture with "Ancient Song of the Miao" as the core, and an institutional culture with "Yi lang" as the core. The folk music and dance of the Miao people are colorful, and the folk dance is bold and bold, swallowing the mountains and rivers. There are many festivals and grand gatherings. Folk music and dance are an important part of Miao culture, showing the enthusiasm and vitality of the Miao people.

5.2 Influence of Geographical and Cultural Environment

Guizhou is one of the birthplaces of ancient human beings. There are many mountains in Guizhou, and the peaks stretch continuously. Each landscape has its unique features. The climate is warm and humid. The typical subtropical monsoon humid climate is warm in winter and cool in summer, and the climate is pleasant. Compatriots of all ethnic groups live harmoniously and tolerate and influence each other. People in Guizhou are naturally open-minded and warm-hearted, and they accept and learn from foreign cultures with an open mind, forming their own unique national culture handed down from generation to generation. The music culture of the Miao ethnic group has its unique characteristics.

The geographical environment creates national culture. Therefore, different national cultures will also show the characteristics of pluralism because of regional differences. Guizhou Province is the most typical place in the world for the development of karst landforms, and the most distinctive karst landforms are a major landscape in Guizhou. Guizhou's karst landforms cover an area of 19,084 square kilometers, accounting for 61.9 percent of the province's total land area. Karst is densely covered with various forms. From ancient wars to modern national migration to the current population flow, all ethnic groups have been distributed to various areas of Guizhou, forming the living situation of "large and small living together," "both living together and living separately." Some are influenced by specific geographical environments, some by history and culture, and some by religious beliefs. Each has its unique national culture (Mo, 2017).

According to legend, in ancient times, the ancestors of the Miao people, "Chiyou," and the head of the Han people, "Huangdi," fought a decisive battle in the Central Plains. Eventually, "Chiyou" was defeated and forced to migrate south to Hunan, Guizhou, and Yunnan. These areas are mountainous, with numerous rivers and high peaks, often requiring loud calls to convey information. During festivals, the singing of the two sides across the mountains could not be heard clearly, so they had to shout to let the other party hear the singing content, resulting in the real voice singing with strong penetration, leading to the unique Miao Feige song form, which continues to this day.

5.3 Miao Festivals and Application Scenarios of Feige

The Miao people have a long history. Over thousands of years, the Miao people, with their profound wisdom and unique artistic creativity, have formed a variety of original ecological cultural festivals. The Miao people have numerous festivals, grand gatherings, profound festival assembly culture, simple customs, profound folk customs, and rich customs. Folk music at festivals is even more colorful and profound. The folk dance is bold and grand, swallowing the mountains and rivers (Qiandongnan People's Government, 2022).

Miao Year, the grandest traditional festival of the Miao people, is popular in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture in Guizhou Province and Rongshui Miao Autonomous County in Guangxi Province. Miao New Year dates vary from place to place, but it is after the grain is collected into the warehouse. In the first few days of Miao New Year, every family cleans the house and actively prepares goods for New Year, such as making glutinous rice cake, brewing rice wine, making tofu, sending bean sprouts, and generally killing pigs or buying pork. Wealthy families also make sausage and blood tofu and sew new clothes for the family. On the evening of Miao's 30th year, the whole family will have a New Year's dinner at home and set off firecrackers at midnight to welcome the dragon into the house (Long, 2007).

Miao Sister Festival, also known as "Sister Rice Festival," called "Nongga Liang" in the Miao language, centers around young Miao women inviting lovers to visit, eat sister rice, dance Lusheng and wooden drum, exchange tokens, make marriage contracts, and more. It is "the festival hidden in the flower core" and "the oldest Oriental Valentine's Day." Every year, from March 15 to 17 of the lunar calendar, young men and women of the Miao ethnic group dress up in festive costumes and gather for this traditional festival with national characteristics. The Sister Festival of the Miao people has a long history and has been passed down to the present day as a folk custom, marriage, and social interaction.

Guzang Festival, commonly known as "Eating Guzang," is a major ceremony for the Miao people to worship the ancestral gods of the clan. It is a drum offering activity carried out by the blood clan as a unit. It is the most solemn and sacred festival of the Miao people. The "Gula" in the Guzang Festival is the symbol of the

ancestral gods, and the ritual activities are carried out with the "drum" as the core. The Guzang Festival of the Miao ethnic group has specific festival procedures, rituals, and a special "Guzang language." At the same time, once the "Guzang Tou" is born, they are regarded as the spokesperson of the ancestral God.

"Eating New Festival" is the grandest festival for the Miao ethnic group at the turn of spring and summer. It evolved from ancient sacrifices. The festival time varies from place to place, generally from early June to mid-August of the lunar calendar. On this day, guests dress up in festive costumes, bring gifts, and lead bullfights as guests. After the sacrifice, the guests and hosts frequently raise their glasses to wish for a good harvest. On the second day, activities such as bullfighting, horse racing, and Lusheng dancing are held. The house is filled with the old people's wine songs as night falls, and the Lusheng court is filled with youthful laughter and happy melodies. The Lusheng, wine songs, love songs, and Feige fills the night sky of Miao Zhai.

The Lusheng Festival, popular in Qiandongnan Prefecture, Guizhou Province, begins on the third day of the first lunar month every year. It mainly worships ancestors and celebrates the harvest. Generally, a ceremony will be held before the festival. The venerable old man of a certain village will preside over ancestor worship. Meanwhile, every family will offer sacrifices to their ancestors in their own houses. Then, girls from all villages dress up in costumes and wear silver flowers and silver ornaments, and young men and women from all villages gather in circles to play the sheng and dance, singing duets of Miao love songs. Lasting for four or five days, the atmosphere is very warm, and it is a kind of mass literary and artistic activity integrating song, dance, and joy (Qiandongnan People's Government, 2022).

5.4 Social Function of Miao Feige

As the most standard singing form in Miao folk songs, Miao Feige is a treasure of Miao music. Its content and emotion are closely related to the customs and daily life of the Miao people. It is not only a form of entertainment and auditory enjoyment in people's lives but also a spiritual sustenance, running through the whole life of the Miao people. When the Miao people celebrate festivals or happy events, they sing Miao Feige aloud. For example, when celebrating the birth of a child in a Miao home, the host will prepare several bar door wines, waiting for relatives and friends to come to celebrate. When guests enter the door, women hold the bar door

wine and sing Feige to persuade them to drink. For guests about to return home after staying in the host's home for a few days, the host will also prepare guest wine, and the women will sing the Feige of Wine, inviting the guests to drink and expressing their farewell feelings (LIU, 2000).

Many experts and scholars have asked the Miao people for advice on their vocal skills and the use of breath when studying Feige. Still, the answer is always the same: not to pay too much attention to the quality of their voice, but to show the emotions they want to express fully. Perhaps in the eyes of others, Feige is only a form of singing, but for the Miao people, Feige is not only a way of singing but also a way to express and vent their emotions. It fully reflects the original and simple folk customs of the Miao people, their emotions, and life experiences, and sustains the national spirit and emotions.

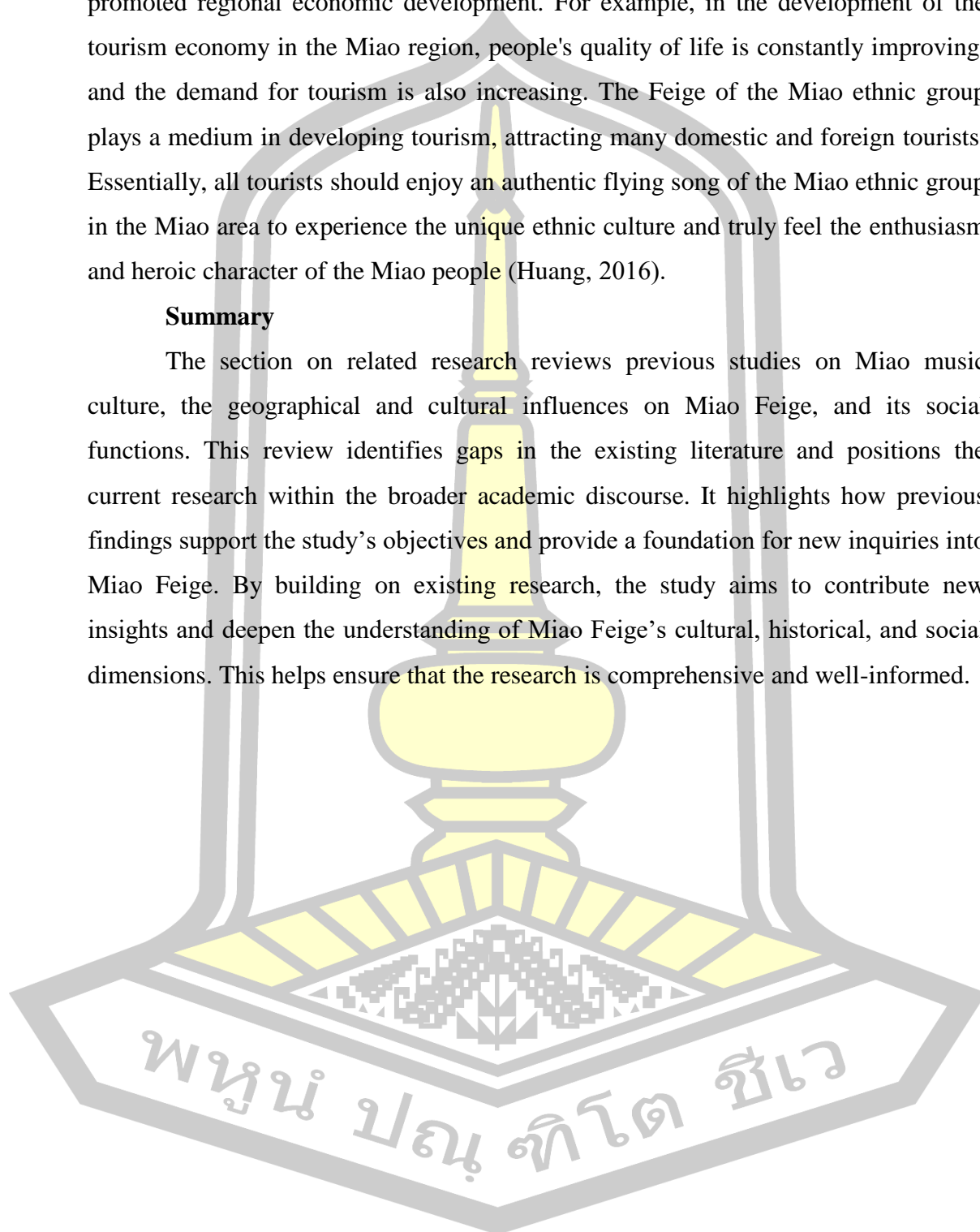
To inherit the national culture, Feige has a long history containing rich national culture and emotions. It has considerable research value from both historical and musical aspects. Miao Township is known as the ocean of poetry, and the lyrics of Miao Feige are often dominated by poetry. Although the Miao people had no systematic writing system in ancient times, their national culture has survived in the form of flying songs. The flying songs contain all aspects of the life of the Miao people, permeating various festivals, activities, and even the feelings of men and women. Miao culture's fundamental spiritual existence and reproduction are closely related to Feige. Because of this, Feige can fully reflect Miao history, culture, custom culture, emotional culture, and other ethnic-related cultures, ensuring that the national culture is well inherited.

In recent years, the Feige of the Miao ethnic group has been deeply loved by the Miao people and has also attracted people worldwide, occupying an important position in world folk songs. Many singers, performers, and composers, deeply influenced by Miao Feige, actively use it as material to create a large number of excellent music works. Some of these works have been widely circulated and have become irreplaceable classics. For example, the violin piece "Morning in Miaoling," adapted by Chen Gang, and the piano concerto "In the Forest," created by Liu Dunnan, not only carry on the inheritance of Miao ethnic culture but also realize the innovative development of Miao ethnic culture.

Miao Feige, a characteristic of the Miao ethnic group, has also greatly promoted regional economic development. For example, in the development of the tourism economy in the Miao region, people's quality of life is constantly improving, and the demand for tourism is also increasing. The Feige of the Miao ethnic group plays a medium in developing tourism, attracting many domestic and foreign tourists. Essentially, all tourists should enjoy an authentic flying song of the Miao ethnic group in the Miao area to experience the unique ethnic culture and truly feel the enthusiasm and heroic character of the Miao people (Huang, 2016).

Summary

The section on related research reviews previous studies on Miao music culture, the geographical and cultural influences on Miao Feige, and its social functions. This review identifies gaps in the existing literature and positions the current research within the broader academic discourse. It highlights how previous findings support the study's objectives and provide a foundation for new inquiries into Miao Feige. By building on existing research, the study aims to contribute new insights and deepen the understanding of Miao Feige's cultural, historical, and social dimensions. This helps ensure that the research is comprehensive and well-informed.



CHAPTER III

Research Methodology

The content of this chapter provides an important premise and lays an important foundation for the study of Miao folk songs in Qiandongnan Guizhou, China. The research structure is as follows:

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

1. Research scope

1.1 Scope of content

The study explores Feige's performances, location, participation, transmission methods, and preservation strategies. It will also examine the role of Feige in reinforcing community bonds, cultural continuity, and intergenerational communication. The study will also examine Feige's performances' melody, rhythm, harmony, and singing techniques.

1.2 Scope of time

Data collecting time from October 2023 to May 2024. An analysis time from May 2024 to August 2024.

2. Research process

2.1 Selection of the research sites

Guizhou Province is located in the southeast of southwest China. It is located on the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, with high terrain in the west and low in the east. There are many mountain ranges in Guizhou, including Dalou Mountain, Miaoling Mountain and Wuling Mountain, etc. Guizhou is a multi-ethnic province with 56 ethnic groups. Among them, there are Han, Miao, Buyi, Dong, Tujia, Yi, Gelao, Shui, Hui, Bai, Yao, Zhuang, She, Maonan, Manchu, Mongolian, Mulao, Qiang, and 18 other ethnic groups. According to the fifth national census, there are 4,299,900 Miao people, accounting for 12.2 percent of the province's population.



Figure 1. Map of research in Guizhou Province, China

Source: Chinafolio (n.d.)

Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture of Guizhou is an autonomous prefecture under the jurisdiction of Guizhou Province. In the southeast of Guizhou Province, Qiandongnan Prefecture has the largest concentration of Miao people in China. It is known as the State of ecology, singing and dancing, and the magical state. The original ecological folk music of the Miao people in southeast

Guizhou has its unique musical form and great musical value. Studying the Feige folk song of the Miao people to choose Southeast Guizhou is very beneficial.



Figure 2. Map of research Qianxian Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture in Guizhou Province, China

Source: Chinafolio (n.d.), Taodocs (n.d.)

2.2 Selection of Key Informants

For the smooth development and value of this study, the researcher lists the following criteria for selecting key informants:

2.2.1 They must be actively involved in the research field relevant to this study.

2.2.2 They must be native Hmong individuals currently residing in the research area.

2.2.3 They must possess extensive knowledge and expertise in Miao Feige folk songs, deeply understanding their historical and cultural significance.

2.2.4 They must be recognized as representative transmitters of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs, either at or above the provincial level or holding a high reputation within the local community.

2.2.5 They must have substantial experience and have significantly contributed to the performance of Miao Feige folk songs.

According to these selection criteria, the researchers determined that the key informants would be Ms. Zhang Xiaomei, Ms. Yang Xingli, and Mr. Liu Ming. The reason for choosing these three informants is that most of the Miao Feige songs have been passed on orally, with few musical scores recorded in the past. Most were written records, and the melody was remembered through continuous singing. The three informants are not only inheritors of the intangible cultural heritage of Miao Feige but also excellent Miao Feige singers.

1) Zhang Xiaomei

Zhang Xiaomei of the Miao ethnic group was born in Gedongzhai Village, Gedong Town, Jianhe County, Guizhou Province, in June 1978. She is currently a representative provincial-level inheritor of Feige of the Miao Ethnic Group, a national-level intangible cultural heritage.



Figure 3. Key Informant Zhang Xiaomei

Source: Chaoqiao Bao, from fieldwork in March 2024

Zhang Xiaomei is a true Miao family member who learned to sing Miao Feige folk songs from her mother when she was young. In 2005, under the guidance of her teacher, Liu Lihong, her singing skills improved significantly. She has participated in various competitions at the county, state, province, and national levels, winning many awards. Notably, she won the Excellence Award at the Colorful Guizhou Singing Contest in 2005, the "Advanced Individual" award at the 13th CCTV Young Singer Contest in 2008, the Silver Award at the Chengdu Military Region Singing Contest in 2010, and the Silver Award at the Southwest Folk Song Contest in 2014. In 2015, she won the "Best Singing Award" at the Liuzhou National Folk Song Contest in Guangxi, the title of Excellent Vocal Music at the Hohhot Minority Vocal Music Performance, and the "Best Singing Award" at the second China Love Song Festival in Yunnan. In June 2016, she won the title of Western Champion at the Hunan Nanshan Folk Song Festival and the National Top Ten Folk Song King. In September 2016, she won the second prize at the 14th Western China Folk Song (Flowers) Song Contest of the China (Ningxia) International Culture and Art Tourism Expo and the Special Award for Folk Song Singing. On September 25, 2016, she participated in the Yuting Bay Cup of Hubei Wufeng Tujia Tea Village Daughter Association, winning the second prize at the National Minority Love Song Invitational Competition. She also participated in the 2016 Chinese Farmers Spring Festival Gala. In 2019, she was invited to participate in the opening ceremony of the second Yangtaishan National Reality Folk Song Competition and the sixth Kirin Cultural Festival in Shenzhen.

2) Yang Xingli

Yang Xingli, born in 1980, is an inheritor of the Miao Feige folk song intangible cultural heritage in Qiandongnan Prefecture. She has been invited by the county's cultural and sports department to record the Love Song of Lei Shan Miao ethnic and has frequently served as a judge for Miao song competitions.



Figure 4. Key Informant Yang Xingli
Source: Chaoqiao Bao, from fieldwork in March 2024

Yang Xingli has collected 145 Miao Feige, 20 ancient songs, 60 love songs, and 18 children's songs in the Miao language. She led students to sing Miao songs in the Xijiang Festival Miao song contest, where they won third prize, and in the county's second "Ten Thousand Miao" vocal competition, where they secured second prize. Renowned film and television actors and singers, including Su Youpeng, Jing Tian, and Mao Zijun, have invited Yang Xingli to teach Miao songs, allowing these performers to experience Miao culture deeply and appreciate the beauty of Miao songs.

3) Liu Ming

Liu Ming, of the Miao ethnic group, was born in 1985 in Jianhe County, Qiandongnan Prefecture, Guizhou Province. He is an inheritor of intangible cultural heritage in Qiandongnan Prefecture and currently works at the Jianhe County Cultural Center. Liu Ming has made significant contributions to the preservation and promotion of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs. He has been recognized for his outstanding performances and has received numerous awards for his singing.



Figure 5. Key Informant Liu Ming

Source: Chaoqiao Bao, from fieldwork in March 2024

Liu Ming's notable achievements in Miao Feige singing include winning the second prize for the original ecological singing method at the Miao people's "Sister Festival" in Taijiang County in March 2004. In June 2016, he was honored in the "Top Ten National Song Kings" Competition at the Mountain Song King of Nanshan "June 6" Folk Song Festival in Hunan Province. In March 2017, Liu advanced to the CCTV-3 Star Avenue Guizhou contestant selection contest finals. He won the second prize in the "Miao Singing King" contest in Huayuan County, Hunan Province, in May 2017 and participated in the fourth Cross-Strait Intangible Cultural Heritage Month performance in September 2017. Liu continued to excel, winning the second prize at the 2018 China Miao Sister Festival Kaili City duet competition and securing the first prize in the "Miao ethnic Feige Group" at the fifth Hundred Villages Singing Contest of Qiongzhusi Ethnic Cultural and Ecological Protection Experimental Zone in July 2022.

2.3 Selection of Miao Ethnic Feige Folk Songs in Guizhou

The criteria for selection are as follows:

2.3.1 Recommendations from transmitters of Intangible Cultural Heritage

2.3.2 Representative Works of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs

2.3.3 Contemporary and newly created Miao folk songs with significant influence

2.3.4 Popular Feige among the local people

Based on these criteria, the researchers selected the following three Miao Feige song works, which include both classic Feige heritage and contemporary Feige folk songs:

- 1) Zui Miaoxiang
- 2) Gedong Feige
- 3) Guests Come to My House

2.4 Research Tools

The research tools utilized in this research primarily encompass interview and observation forms. To gather research data effectively, the researcher devised questionnaires and created corresponding interview and observation forms tailored to various research subjects. The process of development based on research objectives:

- 1) Submitted to the advisor for examination.
- 2) Revisions were made based on the edits provided by the advisor.
- 3) Before utilization, it was reviewed by an expert.
- 4) Modifications were implemented in alignment with the expert's feedback before they were employed in fieldwork.

2.4.1 Observation Form

The observation form is a crucial research tool designed to facilitate the systematic collection of data via structured tabular records. This tool enables purposeful, planned, and repeatable non-intrusive observations of the observed subjects. The form documents the interactions and dynamics between subjects without altering their natural behavior, ensuring an authentic data capture. It allows researchers to verify relationships and gather essential information tailored to the study's objectives. Key features of the observation form include spaces for attaching photos and noting dates, enhancing the reliability and organization of data collection. This structured approach ensures comprehensive data capture and preservation, aligning with the study's goals.

2.4.2 Interview Form

The interview form is a flexible and effective instrument for conducting thorough interviews. This tool is meticulously designed to include necessary details such as the interviewee's name, date, time, and interview location, setting a clear framework for data collection. The structure of the form supports the recording of vital information, allowing researchers to prepare an interview guide that encompasses all relevant topics while facilitating a natural flow of conversation. This method helps elicit detailed and nuanced responses, essential for the depth and breadth of qualitative research.

2.5 Data Collection

The data collection process involves obtaining an initial understanding and familiarity with relevant information through observations and interviews, allowing researchers to gain basic insights into the subject. Researchers can achieve a deeper understanding and ask more detailed questions through questionnaires.

2.5.1 Observation: Researchers conducted field investigations and observations of Miao Feige folk songs in Guizhou Province, using various tools and techniques. They documented performances, documented events, and used participatory or non-participatory methods to ensure authenticity. The collected data was analyzed for meaningful conclusions.

2.5.2 Interview: The researcher used an interview method in Qiandongnan, Guizhou Province, to gather personal experiences, achievements, interests, personality traits, and family backgrounds from intangible cultural heritage inheritors. The approach was flexible, allowing for in-depth information collection.

2.6 Data Management

Data management for this research involved systematically organizing and securing the data collected through observations and interviews. Miao Feige folk songs were studied and observed in the Guizhou Province. Performances and events were carefully recorded using various tools, and both participatory and non-participatory methods were used to ensure the data was real. Additionally, interviews conducted in Qiandongnan, Guizhou Province, provided in-depth insights into intangible cultural heritage transmitters' personal experiences and backgrounds. All collected data was securely stored, processed, and analyzed to maintain its quality and accuracy, ensuring meaningful conclusions could be drawn and the data could be effectively used for further research.

2.7 Data Analysis

2.7.1 Current Status of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Guizhou Province

Using qualitative methods, this study will focus on in-depth interviews and participant observation to gain rich, contextual insights into how these songs are practiced and preserved. Participant observation at various cultural events and daily gatherings will allow for direct engagement with the music and its performers, providing a real-time glimpse into the songs' role within the community. Additionally, interviews with song practitioners, cultural custodians, and community members will uncover personal narratives and opinions on Feige's transmission, evolution, and significance. This qualitative approach will facilitate a deeper understanding of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs' social dynamics and cultural significance, highlighting their contemporary relevance and challenges in preservation efforts.

2.7.2 Characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Guizhou Province

The research will employ qualitative methodologies to explore these songs' intricate musical and thematic elements. A detailed thematic analysis of the lyrics will be conducted, exploring the underlying messages and cultural expressions within the songs. This will be complemented by examining the musical style through field recordings analyzed during interviews and observational study sessions. The study will capture the expressive nuances and cultural layers embedded in the music by focusing on the performance context and the interaction between performers and their audience. This qualitative lens will provide a comprehensive understanding of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs' artistic and social dimensions, emphasizing their importance in maintaining Miao's cultural identity.

2.8 Data presentation

2.8.1 Chapter I: Introduction

2.8.2 Chapter II: Literature Review

2.8.3 Chapter III: Methodology

2.8.4 Chapter IV: Current Status of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs

2.8.5 Chapter V: Characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs

2.8.6 Chapter VI: Conclusion, Discussion, and Suggestion

CHAPTER IV

Current Status of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs

This chapter presents a comprehensive analysis of the current status of Miao Feige based on extensive data gathered from on-site interviews and investigations. The specific content is summarized as follows:

1. Classification of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs
2. Performance Practices of Miao Feige Folk Songs during Festivals
3. Dissemination Methods of Miao Feige Folk Songs
4. The Transmitters Value and Social Function of Miao Feige Folk Songs

1. Classification of Miao Feige Folk Songs

Miao songs are categorized into five types based on their social functions and Miao customs: Youfang songs, drinking songs, ritual songs, ceremonial songs, and narrative songs. Each category possesses distinct characteristics and embodies rich ethnic flavors, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Classification of Miao Feige in Guizhou Province

Type	Song name	Description
Youfang songs (Love songs)	Come and have a heart-to-heart conversation with me, Thinking Too Much at night, Fangshao Love Song, The Song of Spring	These songs are mostly sung during the Miao Sisters' Festival
Drinking songs (Jiu Ge)	Toast Song, Zui Miao xiang, Let's have a drink, Miao Family Welcome Song, The Guest Comes Home	These songs have a wide range of usage scenarios, suitable for both daily life and festivals
Ritual Songs (Li Yige)	Dragon Boat Song, The Drum Society Song, Sisters Song, Please Drum	These songs are used during the Dragon Boat Festival and Guzang

Type	Song name	Description
		Festival
Ceremonial songs (Yi Shige)	Song of Prohibition, Song of Sacrificing Drums	These songs are exclusively used during Miao ethnic ceremonies
Narrative songs (Xu Shige)	Son of the Mountain, Standing in Miaoling Looking at Hometown, On the High Miaoling Mountain	These songs are performed during Miao sacrificial ceremonies and the Miao New Year festivals

1.1 Youfang Song (Love Song)

Youfang Song is a vital means for young Miao people to express love between men and women through singing. Young men and women, separated by mountains and waters, invite each other with high-pitched and clear Feige melodies. Decorative tones such as Yiyin glissando and Boeing often appear in Youfang's melodies, enhancing the effect of sighing. The singing technique of Qi Sheng is used to create a strong sense of lamentation. 'Youfang' is a transliteration of the central dialect of the Miao language, and in Miao script, it is 'Yex Fangb,' meaning visiting villages and towns. Youfangge is a love song sung during village visits, known as "Qiaoyou" in Miao and "Hxak Vangt" in another Miao dialect. Youfang Song is a way for young Miao men and women to make friends and express their emotions. Its conveyed emotional values are simple and upright, making it the most numerous type of song in Miao folk songs and highly significant in the lives of the Miao people.

1.2 Miao Drinking Songs(Jiu Ge)

The Miao people have always enjoyed drinking alcohol, considering wine an important gift for festivals and celebrations. They express their emotions through their unique musical form. Wine songs are integral to these celebrations, enhancing the festive atmosphere and allowing people to bond over shared experiences and traditions.

1.3 Miao Ceremonial Songs(Yi Shige)

Traditional Miao culture includes weddings, funerals, house-building, and child-rearing customs. Each festival has corresponding songs to celebrate. People sing Dragon Boat, Drum Club, Seven Girls, and Sisters Song during festivals. Wedding customs also have songs for matchmaking, marriage proposals, marriage receptions, marriage companionship, and blessings. These songs are rich in content and diverse in melody, reflecting the vibrant cultural heritage of the Miao people.

1.4 Miao Narrative Songs(Xu Shige)

Narrative songs in the southeastern Guizhou region are based on real deeds and are enriched through collective creation and oral singing. Over time, these songs have become numerous, with themes and abstract titles. They resemble ancient poetry with their vast length, rich plots, vivid imagery, and profound meaning. Ancient poetry can be roughly classified into three categories: narrative content such as mythology, history, litigation, and marriage; bitter songs expressing feudal oppression and marital confinement; and songs of rebellion and struggle against tyranny.

1.5 Miao Ritual Songs(Li Yige)

Miao ritual songs originate from Miao folk culture, including shamanism. The Miao people believe that all things have gods, with numerous types and numbers of gods. It is said that there are 36 types of gods and 72 ghosts. Ritual songs are sung during folk activities, containing rich cultural heritage and forming an important part of the traditional culture of the Miao people. Notable examples include prohibition songs and sacrificial drum songs, which hold significant cultural and spiritual value.

2. Performance Practices of Miao Feige Folk Songs during Festivals

Through on-site visits and interviews with key informants Zhang Xiaomei, Liu Ming, and Yang Xingli, a preliminary understanding of the current performance practices of Miao Feige during festivals has been obtained. Miao Feige is primarily used in festival celebrations and daily work processes, with festival performances being more artistic and ornamental. These performances represent the refined forms of Feige that have evolved, highlighting the importance of elaborating on current festival practices to study the overall situation of Feige folk songs.

2.1 The Relationship Between Miao Festivals and Feige

Miao Feige, belonging to the mountain song category, typically represents Guizhou's traditional music culture and an intangible cultural heritage. Miao Feige must be associated with folk festivals to reflect its existence and value. The "Chinese Sea of Words" defines music as an art form that reflects people's real lives and emotions through musical sounds or images. This definition underscores the necessity and importance of music in human life, regardless of country or ethnicity. Guizhou Miao music is no exception. Most traditional folk festivals in Guizhou are closely related to the Miao people's history, religious beliefs, marriage, love, and labor. Each festival has strict date regulations that cannot be changed at will. People's attire varies during festivals, and different singing categories are used. According to Miao folk song experts, traditional Miao songs are primarily inherited through folk traditions, accompanying the Miao social festivals in Guizhou. This connection highlights the significant position of traditional festivals in the hearts of the Miao people and the close relationship between Miao Feige and traditional cultural festivals, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The Relationship Between Miao Festivals and Feige

Name of Miao Festival	Holiday Dates	Miao Feige
Sister's Day	March 14 th to March 16 th	Ah Ge, let us talk about a few words of wisdom: Thinking too much at Night, Fang Zhao Love Song, Little Red Leaf Firewood, Song of Spring
Dragon Boat Festival	May 24 th to 27 th	Dragon Boat Song, Drum Society Song
Eating New Festival	July 15 th to 16 th	Noble Guest Comes Home, Toast Song, Zui Miaoxiang, Let's Drink a Cup, Welcome Song of Miao Family

Name of Miao Festival	Holiday Dates	Miao Feige
Commemorating Chiyou Festival	October	The Song of Prohibition, The Song of Sacrificing Drums, The Son of the Mountain
Miao New Year	Early October	Forbidden Song, Song of Sacrificing Drums, Son of the Mountain, Return of Noble Guests, Toast Song, Zui Miaoxiang, Feige of Miao Ridge, Welcome Song of Miao Family
Guzang Festival	Held once every thirteen years	Please Drum, Ge Dong Feige

2.2 Performance Practice of Miao Feige: The Miao Sister Festival of Youfang Duige

The Miao Sister Festival's origins are conveyed through oral traditions in the form of folk stories or songs. One widely known tale involves the sisters Yuejiu and Yingjiu from Shidong Liangtian village, who, unable to bear the separation after marriage, initiated the annual gathering on March 15th for young people to find marriage partners, leading to the "Eat Sister Rice" activities (Liu, 2014). The performance practice of Miao Feige during festivals is extremely significant. Miao folk songs are deeply rooted in social life and spread rapidly among the Miao people through these celebrations. Each festival has distinct processes, but singing Miao songs, including solo, chorus, and duet forms, is indispensable. Among these, the Youfang Duige, a form of duet singing, is particularly interesting, highly appreciated, and widely loved, and tests the singer's improvisation and skill levels.



Figure 6. Miao Sister Festival of Youfang Duige
Chaoqiao Bao, from fieldwork in March 2024

Youfang Duige is a transliteration of the Miao language "Youb Fangb," meaning "wandering around the village." It refers to the entertainment and social activities of young Miao men and women. Miao marriage customs have two types: arranged marriages by parents and matchmakers and free marriages where men and women choose their partners through traveling. Free marriage is common in southeastern Guizhou's Miao villages, where designated travel slopes serve as gathering sites. The travel process includes stages like calling a girl, meeting, getting acquainted, making an appointment, falling in love, betraying, breaking up, and eloping. Young men and women find their ideal partners through singing and conversing, thus entering marriage through this primary communication bridge for love (Yu, 2023).

The Youfang Duige is integral to Miao festivals, with specific practices for singing. "Youfang Chang" is an outdoor space where young men and women express their emotions through song. During the Chinese New Year or agricultural off-season, they gather to sing love songs. If no suitable partners are found, duets are sung to express friendship. Youfang Ge's performance times are divided into agricultural leisure and festive seasons. During agricultural leisure, young men seek female partners in groups, singing to invite responses. These songs are relaxed and slow-

paced, primarily focused on seeking partners. The singing usually begins at one or two in the afternoon and continues until five or six in the evening. In the festive season, songs express talents and appearance, with unmarried men and women singing in full dress, reflecting family status and temperament.

Festival Youfang is a place for young men and women to entertain, play, and sing during festivals and holidays. Most festive parties participate in festivals such as the Spring Festival, Sister's Day, and Eating Festival, with the Spring Festival celebrations being the most grand. During the Chinese New Year, the holiday starts on the seventh or eighth day of the first lunar month and lasts until the end of the month. Singing between the two parties is a way to meet each other through songs and an opportunity for young men and women to showcase their talents and appearance.

During the "Festival Youfang," unmarried men and women sing songs to each other in the Youfang field, and older men from the village often observe from outside the field. Almost all unmarried women attend the festival in full dress to show their respect. Dress is a symbol of an unmarried woman's status and the face of her family and clan, so it becomes the responsibility of the parents to prepare a set of dresses for their daughters. In the Miao people's concept, even poor families must prepare a dress for their daughters, even if it means borrowing money. Parents and girls understand that the appearance of the festival tour party song is not only about entertainment but also a display of the family's financial strength and comprehensive personal temperament. In this sense, the singing field is like the battlefield of life. If a girl becomes famous at the Song Festival, it signifies better marriage opportunities for her, her family, and even her clan. The same applies to men.

The Festival Youfang has a wider range of participants and serves not only the function of lovemaking but also provides a place for boys and girls of the appropriate age to sing songs. The Festival Youfang has a wide range of participants and serves not only the function of lovemaking but also an educational function, so the songs sung by different groups of people are different. During the festival, everyone sings songs at the festival grounds, and the great singers from both sides come to instruct the young people, and the songs are sung between villages and villages. Because older people are in attendance, unlike the agricultural leisure Youfang exclusive young people talk about love place, the festival song has to pay attention.

Above, we have discussed the performance practice of Miao Flying Songs in the festival in the form of duet singing. In addition to duet singing, Miao Flying Songs can be used for group singing in festivals. Miao Flying Songs encompass folk songs, including love, wine, and labor songs. Each type of song has unique tunes and styles, making them an integral part of many traditional Miao festivals. Presently, many traditional Miao festivals are still inherited and preserved in the Qiandongnan region of Guizhou, where the Miao people actively participate in the performance practice of Flying Songs. This active participation highlights the relatively optimistic current performance practice of Flying Songs in Miao festivals.

3. Dissemination Methods of Miao Feige Folk Songs

The Miao Feige folk songs in the Qiandongnan region of Guizhou showcase the cultural diversity and artistic creativity of the Miao people, reflecting their character traits, emotional world, and attitudes toward life. These songs evolved through the daily lives and labor of the Guizhou people and are rich in historical, literary, and musical values. As a national intangible cultural heritage, Miao Feige embodies the historical migration, ancestral life, and ethnic reproduction of the Miao people, as well as their connection with nature and emotional expressions. The dissemination of these folk songs is crucial for preserving and protecting this cultural treasure, enabling more people to understand and appreciate the uniqueness and charm of Miao culture. This, in turn, promotes the emotional expression and cultural characteristics of the Miao people (Xiong, 2018). Specific modes of transmission include the following:

- 1) Family-based transmission
- 2) Dissemination through folklore activities
- 3) Teacher-training transmission
- 4) Schooling transmission
- 5) Modern media transmission

3.1 Family-based Transmission

The Hmong society emphasizes familial bonds, and Miao Feige music is often taught within families and passed down from elders to juniors, maintaining cultural inheritance. This method, known as the "family system of transmission," is the most

representative and universal in Miao folk music culture. No matter the type of music, families can serve as the bond for its transmission. An investigation case based on key informant Zhang Xiaomei illustrates this:

Researcher: People say you are a very good singer!

Zhang Xiaomei: (hereinafter referred to as Zhang) I learned it as a child.

Researcher: Who did you learn from when you were young?

Zhang: I learned from my mother and my aunt.

Researcher: How did they teach you?

Zhang: There was no special teaching, but when I was small and followed them to work on the slopes, my mother sang songs beside me, and I hummed along with them. When I was at home, my mother embroidered and sang songs with me. My mother and my aunt sang very well, and when I went to my aunt's house, she always taught me to sing songs about flying, traveling, and drinking.

Researcher: Do you teach other people to sing?

Zhang: Yes, I do, and I have a few disciples, but fewer people are learning now.

Researcher: What kind of songs do you teach them?

Zhang: Mainly the Feige, because nowadays most people sing Feige.

Researcher: Do you teach them to sing songs about You Fangge and drinking?

Zhang: You Fangge? Wine songs? Nowadays, many songs do not have a fixed form as in the past. They are integrated into a category to sing, with a slight change in the singing style, possibly due to changing times.

The dissemination of the family system of Hmong folk songs helps maintain a stable cultural inheritance and strengthens the sense of cultural identity. Family learning enhances the cultural connotation of members learning Hmong music, increasing their sense of identity and pride in Hmong culture. Family-based dissemination can adjust teaching content, provide personalized instruction, and add new cultural elements based on traditional culture. Additionally, family-based dissemination strengthens emotional ties between family members, promotes family and friendship through shared cultural activities, and enhances kinship and friendship through common cultural practices (Wang, 2014).

3.2 Dissemination through Folklore Activities

Mr. Liu Ming, a teacher from Jianhe County, Guizhou Province, introduced us to learning Miao Feige, emphasizing the importance of folklore activities in acquiring folk vocal music. He began learning Miao songs from Master Li in his village around 1995. Liu recalled a vivid memory from his childhood:

"When I was 10, our village held a grand Miao New Year event. My parents took me there, and I was deeply attracted by the beautiful costumes and various activities, especially the Miao song festival, where men and women sang together, in pairs, and danced while singing. The unique, charming, and evocative tunes captivated me so much that I didn't even hear my parents calling me. From then on, my friends and I would hum with the adults while playing. When my parents noticed my interest, they took me to a teacher to learn to sing systematically, and thus began my journey of learning Miao Flying Songs."

Liu explained that the initial stages of learning Miao Feige involved mastering breathing techniques and proper singing methods. Through this process, he gained extensive knowledge of Hmong folk traditions and customs, as understanding the context and meaning of the songs is essential. The songs reflect the social and folk customs of the time they were written, which learners must fully grasp.

"Back then, learning Miao songs did not require tuition fees," Liu continued. "During New Year's festivals, we would bring some rice wine, rice, and salt as offerings. I learned Miao songs with several other students, but most gave up. Only I persisted. Learning to sing Miao songs cannot be accomplished in a year or two; it requires a lot of time and cumulative practice. The first few years are spent mastering basics like breathing and tone. Singing Miao songs requires coordination, understanding, and consistency between music and singing, which can only be achieved through practice on singing occasions. Initially, one must sing with masters, then gradually sing alone or with a partner. The two biggest challenges are singing in harmony with others and mastering the technique of using a low tone to lay the groundwork before hitting high notes with the fluttering cavity. This requires continuous practice to achieve harmony."

In conclusion, the content of Miao Feige and folk songs is deeply intertwined with the Hmong people's history, culture, folk beliefs, and production, holding rich

cultural connotations. Teaching these songs through practical activities is much more effective than merely memorizing them orally. This method also imparts knowledge about the people's history and culture, reinforcing national cultural awareness among the Hmong community. Historically, the Hmong people had no specialized learning institutions, making folklore activities an excellent method for teaching Miao Feige.

3.3 Teacher-training Transmission

Teacher training is a key mechanism for the transmission of Hmong folk songs. According to folklore, these songs are an oral tradition passed down through generations. The learning of Hmong folk songs generally follows the teacher-training system, aside from family learning or ancestral guidance through self-epiphany.

Research indicates specific procedures and rules in the Miao Feige teacher-training mechanism. The process begins with the worship of the master. The learner, after passing the master's examination, selects an auspicious day and brings offerings such as a chicken (or duck in certain places like Gedong in Jianhe County), some rice, some fish, and one tael and two coins of silver (nowadays replaced with one yuan and twenty cents of RMB) to pay tribute to the God of Songs and the master. The chicken is used to divine good and bad luck, while glutinous rice honors the god of grain, reflecting the ancestors' diet by the river. Once the gifts are received, the singer chooses an auspicious day between the third and fifteenth day of the first month of the lunar calendar to hold the "Inauguration Ceremony."

The first step of the "Teaching Ceremony" is to "worship the God of Songs." This involves filling a wooden liter with white rice, placing one or two taels of silver on top, inserting burning joss sticks, and placing it next to a central pillar where the ancestors' souls are believed to reside. A rooster (or duck) is then killed, cut into pieces according to the number of students, and the pieces are placed in a bag with joss sticks. After the singer performs the "Invitation Song," all the disciples eat the pieces, and the one who gets the rooster's head becomes the eldest brother.

During the teaching, the apprentice holds up a piece of bamboo for each song section, which is said to house the god of the song but aids in memorizing the song. Songs are usually taught from the first month to the fifteenth day of the third month of the lunar calendar. If the apprentice cannot complete the lesson in one year, they continue the following year, up to a maximum of three years. The songs' content

includes "song bones" (main story contents) and excludes "song flowers" (padding and embellishments). This method includes an element of mysticism, reflecting the era and culture of the Miao folk songs.

Miao folk songs are the oral history of the Miao people, requiring a teacher to sing and a "classic" to produce, reflecting the Miao people's desire to preserve their history. Each teaching and performance of Hmong folk songs constructs Hmong oral history and showcases Hmong cultural self-identity. The specific learning process allows for reinvention in the singing of Miao Feige, ensuring that even apprentices in a mentorship relationship bring their own "flower" to a folk song.

3.4 Schooling Transmission

The dissemination of Guizhou Miao Feige folk songs in schools is a strategic response to the influence of dominant foreign music cultures. As Western music culture increasingly infiltrates school curricula, the original Miao folk songs have been gradually modified, neglected, or even forgotten. This necessitates spreading Hmong folk songs and music within the community through oral tradition and school education, facilitating cross-cultural exchanges, and preserving the essence of Hmong folk songs.

There are three main aspects of Hmong Flying Song folk song dissemination at the school level: Professional Hmong music education, Structural Hmong music school education, and Cultivation-based Hmong music school education.

3.4.1 Professional Hmong Music School Education: This education aims to cultivate specialized talents in Hmong music culture, focusing on "subjective" inheritors and disseminators of Hmong music culture protection, inheritance, and original promotion. Xiao Xuejun emphasizes specialization and originality as fundamental characteristics of Hmong music education. This specialized education occurs in higher, middle, and vocational schools, encompassing Miao folk song singing, Miao folk instrumental music performance, and Miao song and dance performance. The originality of Miao music education covers two aspects: using original Miao music culture as the teaching content's root and employing Miao folk singers and specialized talents trained in professional Miao music schools as the primary teaching body.

3.4.2 Structural Hmong Music School Education: This education focuses on individuals' knowledge systems and cognitive structures, considering Hmong music an essential component of one's inner knowledge and cognitive structure. Through purposeful education, students gain a comprehensive emotional and rational understanding of Hmong music culture and develop the ability to perform, create, and research Hmong music. Structural Hmong music school education includes college-level professional education and Hmong primary and secondary school education. College music professional education targets both professional and non-professional Hmong music students, aiming to internalize Hmong music culture in students' knowledge structures for effective international dissemination. Hmong primary and secondary school education shapes the internal knowledge system and cognitive structure of young Hmong generations, taking the originality of teaching content and the subjectivity of the teaching team as fundamental principles.

3.4.3 Cultivation-Based School Education on Hmong Folk Songs: This education aims to provide a certain level of knowledge about minority music and culture to all non-Hmong learners globally. Under the cultural diversification concept, Hmong music culture is vital to the world's culture. Cultivation-based education in schools popularizes minority music culture, improves students' minority music quality, and strengthens cultural recognition among different ethnic groups. This education aims to cultivate Hmong music and cultural literacy in learners worldwide, focusing on cross-cultural exchange as the fundamental goal of teaching.

After integrating the school education dissemination system, it became a new aesthetic music education, profoundly impacting music education practice. It promoted the development of multicultural music education in China and effectively disseminated ethnic minority music within school education (Hang, 2002; Tang, 2009).

3.5 Modern Media Transmission

Modern media transmission is a method of music dissemination that has evolved with the advancement of modern industrial production and science and technology. This approach uses modern media such as radio, television, electronic media like the Internet, and printed media like music scores to disseminate music. These platforms facilitate the creation, performance, and distribution of music. With

time, the methods of music culture dissemination have transformed, and to effectively spread Miao Feige, modern media must be utilized.

New elements should be incorporated into the music to integrate Miao music into contemporary music art better and increase its familiarity and understanding. These elements should be applied to modern music performances, allowing Miao folk music to be conveniently disseminated to diverse cultural groups across different regions. This modern approach ensures the widespread dissemination of Miao folk music.

In addition to traditional methods such as family transmission, folklore activities, teacher transmission, and school education, modern media communication has emerged as a powerful new method with the rapid development of information technology. There are three significant ways modern media impacts the spread of Miao Feige:

3.5.1 Local Government Initiatives: The Miao people's government in Guizhou has utilized activities, television, and radio programs to promote Miao music. Specific initiatives include weekly grand "village super" events and live broadcasts promoting Guizhou's local specialties and Miao folk songs and music. These efforts, including leveraging modern media technology, vigorously promote the local tourism industry, attracting tourists to experience Miao culture and music. This exposure helps tourists understand and appreciate Miao Feige as a vocal art form, fostering its spread.

3.5.2 Promotion by Famous Local Singers: Renowned singers from the local Hmong areas promote Miao music on national radio, TV, and new media short videos. For example, A Youduo from Guizhou, a typical Miao girl, won the gold medal in the Youth Singers Grand Prix organized by Guizhou Province. She later participated in the CCTV Spring Festival Gala, singing the classic Miao Feige "Cheers," significantly promoting Miao Feige. A Youduo continues actively promoting Miao music culture and Miao Feige on various stages.

3.5.3 Short Video Platforms: The Miao people in Guizhou use short video platforms to promote Miao Feige with their original forms of singing. Although the influence of this type of promotion is relatively limited and subject to big data technology, most of the users targeted are local Miao people in Guizhou or

individuals interested in Miao music. Despite its limitations, this method still promotes Miao Feige (Fu, 2019).

4. The Transmitter Value and Social Function of Miao Feige Folk Songs

Miao Feige folk songs are integral to China's intangible cultural heritage, attracting significant governmental focus. Intangible cultural heritage encompasses traditional cultural forms passed down through generations, representing a crucial aspect of China's social, historical, and cultural evolution. These traditions serve as key vehicles for transmitting the nation's rich cultural legacy. The relationship between cultural dissemination and heritage is interdependent, with dissemination being essential for transmitters and inheritance being the ultimate goal of dissemination. Our earlier discussions on various dissemination methods of Miao Feige highlight the importance of promoting these songs due to their significant cultural and social values (Sun, 2008; Tian, 2022).

4.1 Values of the Feige Legacy

4.1.1 Social Value: Feige is acknowledged as a national representative of intangible cultural heritage, listed in the second batch in 2008 and the third batch in 2011, project serial number 608. Feige holds substantial historical and cultural significance and has far-reaching socio-economic impacts. This precious heritage encompasses rich socio-historical, economic, educational, and scientific resources, embodying the essence of traditional culture. It underpins civilization, reflects cultural diversity, and symbolizes the Chinese nation's cultural survival and innovative capacity, playing an irreplaceable role in sustainable development.

4.1.2 Historical Value: Miao Feige, originating from the Miao settlements in Leishan County, southeastern Guizhou, has a profound cultural history. The Miao people have used high-pitched voices from their ancestors to express emotions and messages. These songs have been preserved and passed down through generations, witnessing the blend of modernity and tradition. Studying Miao Feige offers insights into the Miao people's production development, social structure, customs, and moral codes across different historical periods. It allows the Miao people to connect with their ancestors and understand their culture, values, and wisdom, which is crucial for historical preservation.

4.1.3 Cultural Value: Feige is significant in Miao culture, reflecting their traditions and way of life. It preserves the unique lifestyle and thought processes of the Miao people, serving as a living testament to their historical and cultural development. This active cultural expression is a precious heritage that underscores the Miao people's cultural identity and development, highlighting its historical significance.

4.1.4 Spiritual Value: Miao Feige encapsulates the essence of Miao culture, expressing unique work methods and reflecting historical and social changes. It passes down the Miao people's experiences and wisdom, influencing their social life and identity. As a vital cultural component, Miao Feige enhances cultural cohesion and serves as a spiritual home for the Miao people, fostering national cultural rejuvenation and sustainable societal development.

4.1.5 Scientific Value: Miao Feige is a unique cultural form that reflects the creativity and cognitive level of the Miao people across different eras. It preserves primitive cultural essence, providing valuable scientific materials for studying human history. Miao Feige offers abundant academic information and research materials for history, folklore, linguistics, and art.

4.1.6 Aesthetic Value: Created by the Miao people daily, Miao Feige is a unique performing art, oral literature, and living custom embodying artistic elements. It showcases the Miao people's hard work and wisdom, reflecting their unique lifestyle, creativity, and aesthetic tastes. This enduring cultural expression highlights the Miao people's recognition and appreciation of art across different times.

4.1.7 Educational Value: Teaching Miao Feige helps students understand traditional Chinese culture, fostering a sense of national pride and love for their country. Non-heritage education (NHE) cultivates students' sentiments and qualities and enhances their abilities. NHE inheritors and experts play crucial roles in passing on these skills and disseminating NHE knowledge in schools and society.

4.1.8 Economic Value: As a special cultural element, Miao Feige showcases Miao traditions and provides valuable resources for developing tourism in Guizhou. As a tourism project in southeastern Guizhou, it has generated economic benefits and become an integral part of the region's tourism industry (Xiao, 2013).

4.2 The Social Function of Miao Feige

Miao Feige is a form of musical art that, despite music lacking inherent emotional or semantic expression, has profound physiological and psychological impacts on humans. These impacts enable music to fulfill various functions, such as lyrical, expressive, aesthetic, and educational. People's value orientation towards music significantly influences its function and effectiveness. The transmission process of Feige music carries certain social functions, reflecting the roles it plays in its transmission and performance.

4.2.1 Cognitive Role: Miao Feige has a rich history spanning thousands of years, tracing ancient times. The Miao people's understanding of nature extends beyond the origin of all things, as they also gain deep insights into nature, society, history, and life through music. Music reveals the essence and meaning of society, history, and life, reflecting the depth and breadth of social life through various Hmong songs. Historically, the Hmong people lacked a written language, relying on musical expression and oral traditions to pass down their social history to future generations. This process helps people understand humanity and themselves more deeply (Peng, 2006).

4.2.2 Educational Function: Folklore scholar Zhong Jingwen discusses the educational function of folklore in his work "Introduction to Folklore," highlighting its role in shaping individuals during socialization. Many Miao Feige songs praise the virtues of kindness and bravery, serving an educational purpose. Participating in Miao song activities instills and infects people with a sense of truth, goodness, and beauty, influencing their thoughts and feelings. For example, the song "Casting the Sun and Making the Moon" embodies the optimistic spirit of unity and cooperation among the Miao people. Singing these songs allows the Miao to connect with their unique national spirit and learn about their origins, social customs, ethics, literature, art, and worldview, thereby playing a role in cultural indoctrination (Tang, 2005).

4.2.3 Entertainment Role: Miao Feige regulates daily life through appreciation activities, relieving life's hardships, illness, and fear of death. Music and art activities offer spiritual release and pleasure, giving people physical and mental rest. Miao Feige entertains both people and the gods. For example, during the Hmong drum festival, singers perform Miao songs to communicate with ancestors,

overcoming the fear of the soul by singing, dancing, and offering sacrifices. These activities comfort the deceased's souls, ensuring future generations' protection. Additionally, song masters perform at Miao weddings, creating a festive atmosphere through their songs.

Currently, the dissemination and transmission channels for Miao Feige are relatively complete and align with modern developments. The government and the public actively promote Miao Feige through various means to ensure its transmission within the Miao community and increase its visibility outside the Miao. However, the effectiveness of these efforts is not entirely optimistic. While many are aware of the genre, few deeply understand it. Within the Miao community, the younger generation shows limited interest in inheriting Miao Feige due to contemporary environmental influences. It is challenging to find individuals who love Miao music, have the talent to learn Feige, and can appreciate its cultural significance. The internal inheritance of Feige faces multiple issues, requiring the government, society, and schools to discuss and implement effective barriers to improve the current situation.

Summary

The current status of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs focuses on their classification, performance practices during festivals, dissemination methods, and inheritance value. Miao Feige songs are categorized into five types: Youfang songs, drinking songs, ritual songs, ceremonial songs, and narrative songs, each serving different social functions and occasions. The chapter highlights the importance of Miao Feige in festivals, emphasizing its role in maintaining cultural traditions and social cohesion. Dissemination methods include family-based transmission, folklore activities, teacher training, schooling, and modern media, each playing a crucial role in preserving and promoting these songs. The inheritance value of Miao Feige encompasses social, historical, cultural, spiritual, scientific, aesthetic, educational, and economic aspects, making it a significant cultural heritage. Despite efforts to promote Miao Feige, challenges remain in ensuring its continued relevance and transmission, particularly among the younger generation, necessitating further support from the government, society, and educational institutions.

CHAPTER V

Characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs

This chapter delves into the musical characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in the Qiandongnan region of Guizhou Province, China. The analysis focuses on two key areas: the formation characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige folk songs. The analysis comprehensively examines Miao Feige folk songs' melody, rhythm, harmony, and singing techniques. The specific areas of focus are:

1. Formation characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige folk songs
2. Musical characteristics of Miao Feige folk songs

1. Formation Characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs

Miao Feige exhibits distinctive musical traits that distinguish it from other minority music traditions. These unique characteristics evolved over centuries, intricately linked to the historical, cultural, and social environments of the Miao people. To fully understand the musical elements of Miao Feige, it is essential to examine the various factors that influenced its formation. These factors include the Miao's cultural background, historical traditions, social practices, and the environment in which they lived. The music of Miao Feige is a reflection of these influences, encapsulated in its melodies, rhythms, and harmonies.

Historically, the Miao people have faced numerous migrations and cultural exchanges, significantly shaping their music. Each migration brought new influences and adaptations, enriching the musical tapestry of Miao Feige. The lyrics often reflect the Miao's historical experiences, including their struggles, celebrations, and interactions with other cultures. The music's historical depth provides a rich context that enhances its emotional and narrative power.

Culturally, Miao Feige is deeply embedded in the daily life and rituals of the Miao people. It serves various functions, from storytelling and historical documentation to social bonding and ceremonial purposes. The music often accompanies important events such as festivals, weddings, and religious ceremonies, which are crucial in preserving and transmitting cultural values and traditions. The

themes of Miao Feige's songs frequently revolve around nature, love, labor, and community life, reflecting the Miao's close relationship with their environment and each other.

The geographical environment of the Miao people also significantly influences their music. Living in the mountainous regions of Guizhou, the Miao developed musical styles that resonate with the natural landscapes around them. The acoustic properties of their environment, such as the echoes from the mountains and valleys, have shaped the vocal techniques and instrumental sounds of Miao Feige. The music is designed to carry long distances, allowing communication and storytelling across the vast and rugged terrain.

Socially, Miao Feige plays a vital role in the community. It is a means of education, passing down knowledge, moral values, and social norms from generation to generation. The communal nature of Miao society is reflected in the collaborative and participatory aspects of their music-making. Group performances, call-and-response singing, and communal gatherings for music and dance strengthen social bonds and foster a sense of belonging and identity.

In conclusion, the formation of Miao Feige music is a complex process influenced by historical, cultural, geographical, and social factors. These elements combine to create a vibrant musical tradition that entertains, educates, and unites the Miao people. Understanding these external factors provides a comprehensive foundation for studying the unique musical characteristics of Miao Feige.

1.1 Geographical Factors Influencing the Formation of Miao Feige Characteristics

Miao Feige, known in the Miao language as "Qiayang," meaning "Feige," is a unique form of folk song that originated in the context of labor and production. Initially, it took the form of shouting across the mountains. According to legend, after the Battle of Zhuolu, Chi You led his tribe to the southwest, evacuating over a long period. During this journey, people often shouted to communicate. A notable story involves a girl named Ado, who mimicked bird calls after separating from the group to successfully transmit her distress signals across the mountains, leading to her rescue. Inspired by this, Miao girls began learning these shouting techniques.

Eventually, the Miao people settled in the mountainous regions of Guizhou Province, where the rugged terrain and dense forests shaped their way of life. In these harsh natural conditions, shouting across the mountains became a practical necessity for communication during labor. This need for long-distance communication led to the development of unique vocal techniques. The Miao people, seemingly gifted with good voices, began incorporating simple melodies into their shouts, gradually becoming the distinctive Miao Feige.

Given the initial purpose of conveying information across vast and challenging landscapes, Miao Feige songs are characterized by long, melodious lines with wide tonal ranges, often imitating the upward or downward sliding tones of shouting. These songs belong to the category of mountain songs, which are typically marked by free tempo and high-pitched voices. A notable feature in the singing of Miao Feige is the long trailing accent at the beginning of each song, which can be either elevated or lowered. The transitions between tones are relatively slow, resembling a "slow-motion" effect.

This sliding tone technique makes the singing of Miao Feige resemble riding a smooth slide, contrasting sharply with the more abrupt tone changes found in other singing styles. These vocal characteristics reflect the Miao people's deep connection to their natural environment. The songs' structure and style facilitated effective communication across difficult terrains and became a cultural expression deeply rooted in the Miao people's interaction with their geographical surroundings.

In conclusion, the geographical factors of Guizhou Province played a significant role in shaping the musical characteristics of Miao Feige. The need for effective communication across the mountainous terrain influenced the development of unique vocal techniques that define this traditional form of Miao music. Understanding these geographical influences provides a deeper appreciation of the cultural and environmental context that gave rise to the distinctive features of Miao Feige.

1.2 Cultural Factors Influencing the Formation of the Characteristics of Miao Feige

Miao Feige, deeply rooted in Miao culture, is believed to originate from the aftermath of the ancient battle between Chi You and the Yellow Emperor at Zhuolu. It

holds a significant place in Miao culture, symbolizing unity and friendship while serving as a tool for self-education. Language plays a crucial role in cultural transmission. Miao folk songs, primarily sung in the Miao language, preserve the authenticity of Miao culture while offering a wide variety of tones and intonations for musical expression.

Miao folk songs are performed in various forms, including solo performances, duets, and group choruses. This diversity in performance styles provides ample opportunities for musical expression, allowing the rich cultural narratives of the Miao people to be conveyed in multiple ways. The songs often feature themes of unity, hospitality, and communal ties, reflecting the cultural values of the Miao people.

Large gatherings and small, mixed settlements characterize Miao villages. The Miao people, connected by clan bloodlines, typically settle in relatively flat areas within the mountainous regions of Qiandongnan. When transportation was limited in ancient times, communication between these settlements was infrequent. As a result, the arrival of guests, especially those not seen for a long time, was a cause for grand celebration. The Miao people would express their joy and hospitality by offering food and drink, accompanied by high-pitched, loud, and clear songs.

These welcoming songs, often short and composed of five lines of poetry, embody the high-pitched, loud, warm, and unrestrained characteristics of Miao Feige. Such traits are prominently displayed when sending off friends and are also evident in other types of Feige. These distinct features set Miao Feige apart from the musical traditions of other ethnic groups.

The cultural practice of singing Miao Feige during social gatherings and celebrations underscores the importance of music in Miao society. It serves not only as a form of entertainment but also as a means of reinforcing social bonds and cultural identity. The themes of hospitality and communal unity are central to the Miao Feige, reflecting the Miao people's deep-seated values and traditions.

In conclusion, the cultural factors shaping Miao Feige are deeply intertwined with the Miao people's historical experiences, social structures, and linguistic heritage. The Miao Feige's distinctive characteristics are a testament to the Miao people's ability to preserve and celebrate their cultural identity through music, even amidst historical and geographical isolation challenges. Understanding these cultural

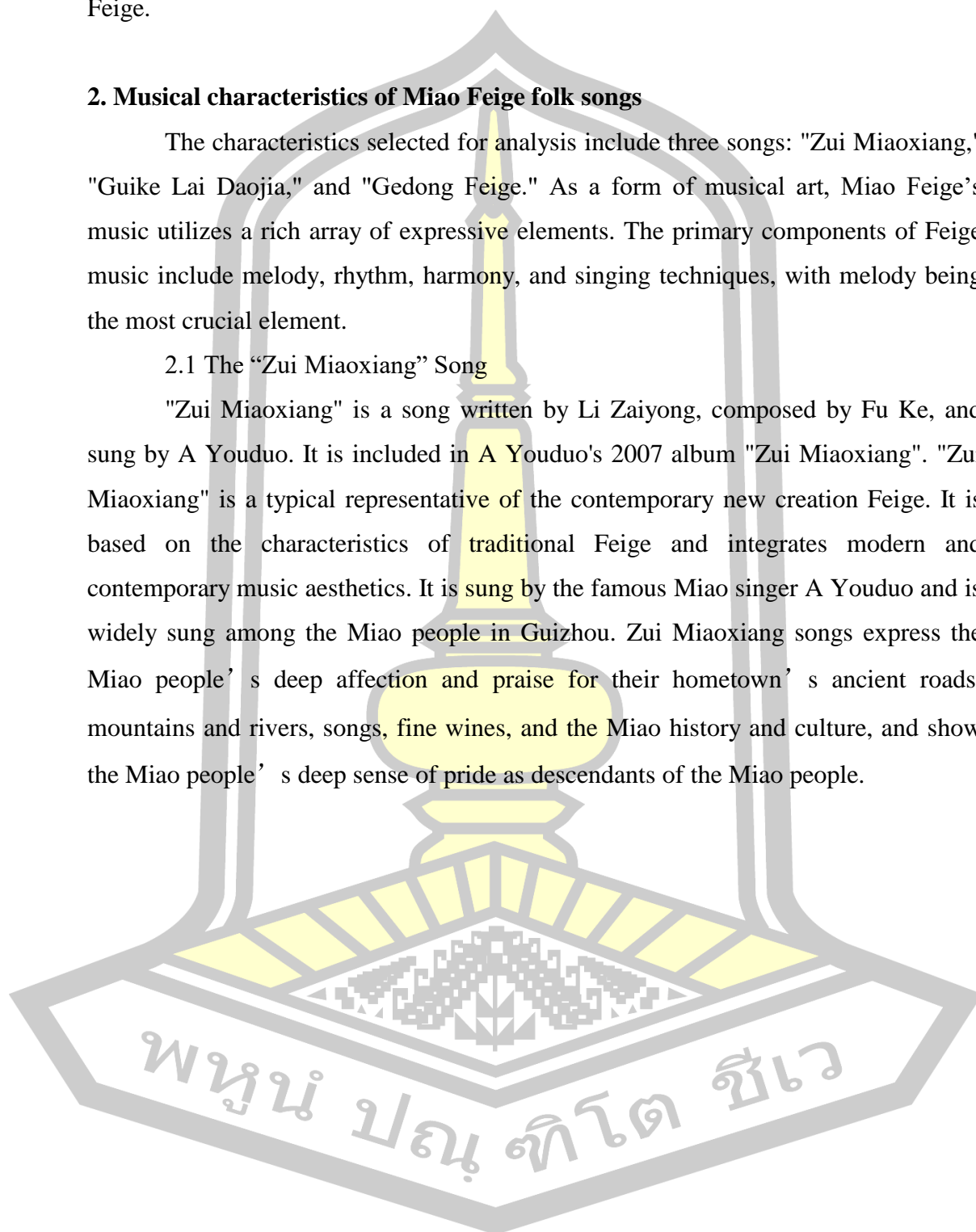
influences provides a deeper appreciation of the vibrant musical tradition of Miao Feige.

2. Musical characteristics of Miao Feige folk songs

The characteristics selected for analysis include three songs: "Zui Miaoxiang," "Guike Lai Daojia," and "Gedong Feige." As a form of musical art, Miao Feige's music utilizes a rich array of expressive elements. The primary components of Feige music include melody, rhythm, harmony, and singing techniques, with melody being the most crucial element.

2.1 The "Zui Miaoxiang" Song

"Zui Miaoxiang" is a song written by Li Zaiyong, composed by Fu Ke, and sung by A Youduo. It is included in A Youduo's 2007 album "Zui Miaoxiang". "Zui Miaoxiang" is a typical representative of the contemporary new creation Feige. It is based on the characteristics of traditional Feige and integrates modern and contemporary music aesthetics. It is sung by the famous Miao singer A Youduo and is widely sung among the Miao people in Guizhou. Zui Miaoxiang songs express the Miao people's deep affection and praise for their hometown's ancient roads, mountains and rivers, songs, fine wines, and the Miao history and culture, and show the Miao people's deep sense of pride as descendants of the Miao people.



Zui Miaoxiang

Composer: Fu Ke

Lyrics: Li Zaiyong

1 2 3 4

Di dong beng ao liu ji

5 6 7 8

Diu zao da bian ni Ou a e

9 10 11 12

Mi jiu tian Mi jiu xiang Jing jiu de fei ge piao shan liang

13 14 15 16

Di dong beng ao liu hi ai Diu zao da bian ni ao

17 18 19 20

man- gu dao qian lichang you-miao xianggu dao paWei-lei gong shanqi shui jiang de s yi er yi er yo

21 22 23 24

gesheng tian lai mi jiu xiang yuang fa de ke ren changyichami ren de fengjing gulao de gushi hao di fang miao xiang

25 26 27 28

Ren ai miao xiang miao xiang ren qing hao fang

29 30 31 32

Di dong beng ao liu yi ai diu zao da bian ni ou



Figure 7. The “Zui Miaoxiang” song, Lyrics: Li Zaiyong, Composer: Fu Ke

Source: Transcription by Chaoqiao Bao, 2024

2.1.1 Melody

Melody is the essence of Miao Feige's music, providing the main thematic material that defines each piece. The melody of this song is composed of C, D, E, G, and A, with C, E, and G being the main ones. The first bar begins with a long G that spans two and a half beats, creating an elongated melodic line. The music begins with a long G note, spanning two and a half beats, forming an elongated melody line. What follows is a brief upward leap, a perfect fourth to C, mimicking the effect of a shout. The melody then drops sharply to E, covering a minor sixth, and finally lands on a four-beat C in the second bar. The third bar is an E-G offset, and the G lasts for three beats. The fourth bar is a G-C slant, lasting three beats, extending the melodic line from the third to the fourth bar.

Vitality to the melody. The seventh bar has a downward sliding E sound, characteristic of Miao Feige, and expresses a sighing emotion. The eighth section ends with the freely unfolding G sound, which embodies Miao Feige's expressive and free-spirited nature. The eleventh measure contains a rare E^b that lasts four beats, which sharply contrasts the traditional Chinese pentatonic scale (C, D, E, G, a). This flat semitone is atypical in Chinese musical tradition and creates a sense of dissonance and tension.

The appearance of the E^b in the eleventh bar introduces melodic instability, a distinguishing feature of Miao Feige's music. This long semitone creates tension and conflict in the melody, which D^b resolves. This unique feature is highlighted by the frequent use of the keys E^b to D throughout the score. This method of using dissonance or semitones to deepen harmony and resolve contradictions is a striking aesthetic path in Miao Feige's music. It is prevalent in the musical traditions of many ethnic minorities in China. Although not common in traditional Chinese music, this technique adds uniqueness and emotional depth to the music of "Zui Miaoxiang" and Miao Feige.

2.1.2 Rhythm

The rhythm of "Zui Miaoxiang" is mainly long notes, creating a spacious and free feeling in the music. This rhythmic flexibility reflects Miao Fei's natural language patterns and body movements, making the performance more realistic and expressive. The rhythmic structure is relatively simple and lacks complex textures, allowing the melody to unfold organically. The use of long notes helps convey a sense of distance as if calling from the other side of the mountain, which is the traditional practice of Miao Feige. This

simplicity and freedom in rhythm also allows performers to personalize their expressions, adjusting rhythm and phrases to suit moods and circumstances.

2.1.3 Harmony

In "Zui Miaoxiang," the harmonies are characterized by simple intervals, creating a resonant and immersive sound. Harmony supports the melody, and parallel intervals and bass enrich the musical texture. This song uses a five-note scale (C, D, E, G, a), with C, E, and G as the main keys. The harmonies highlight these tones, emphasizing the E^b to create a distinctive timbre. Parallel intervals often reflect the melody, providing a harmonious background that enhances the expressiveness of the piece. This approach allows the songs to evoke deep emotional responses, reflecting the Miao Feige people's connection to their homeland. Using sustained notes and subtle harmonic shifts creates a feeling of yearning and awe, capturing the Miao Feige people's deep affection for their homeland.

2.1.4 Singing techniques

"Zui Miaoxiang" uses various singing techniques to express deep affection and praise for the hometown of Miao Feige. The song begins with a long, sustained note that requires control and power in the singer's voice. The melody then transitions into an upward and downward slide, mimicking the effect of a shout traditionally used to communicate across mountains. This technique adds to the style of the play and connects the performance to the historical customs of Miao Feige. Intervals, primarily thirds and seconds, allow smooth transitions between notes, further decorated with vocal embellishments such as trills and turns. These embellishments add emotional depth and highlight the singer's technical prowess. Additionally, the song features extended phrases that require breath control and endurance, which contributes to the expressive and free-flowing nature of the song.

2.2 The "Guike Lai Daojia" Song

"Guike Lai Daojia" is a typical Feige song, often used to say goodbye to friends, and embodies the hospitality spirit of the Miao people. The song's background is steeped in the heritage of the Hmong people, who have a long history of expressing their emotions and social bonds through music. Calling for companions across mountainous terrain influenced the melodic structure of Feige songs, giving them a sense of connection to the natural environment.

Guike Lai Daojia

Medium speed, slightly slower, slightly freer

Qiandongnan.Leishan

1 2 3 4 5
 Gui ke lai dao jia (na e)
 6 7 8 9 10
 Dan ban Zhen Xiao sha (e)
 11 12 13 14 15
 Dan ban zhen Xiao sha
 16 17 18 19 20
 21 22 23 24
 Kui wu mei jiu dai Zui ben wu hua shuo
 25 26 27 28 29
 Dai man xin mo duo (li) Dai man xin mo duo (Wa E!)
 30 31 32 33 34 35
 Ou hou hou



Figure 8. The “Guike Lai Daojia” song,

Source: Transcription by Chaoqiao Bao, 2024

2.2.1 Melody

The song is rooted in the ascending F scale and is played in a mix of four and three beats, with a tempo slightly slower than mid-tempo. The melody mainly uses the pentatonic scale C-D-E-G-A, creating a harmonious and culturally meaningful sound.

The song begins with the backward pitches of C sharp and F sharp, a feature that appears frequently throughout the song. This frequent use of oblique tones, especially at the beginning of phrases, suggests a structural pattern in the melody. The first two scales ascend from the dominant chord and descend to the tonic f sharp, and the third scale introduces an unusual upward slope in the pentatonic mode, from A sharp to B sharp, then B sharp, and finally C sharp. This upward movement creates a sense of melodic instability that disappears when the melody descends to C sharp, followed by a significant leap to A sharp flat.

This falling tone is common in Feige and reflects the historical custom of Miao ancestors calling their companions across the mountains. Miao Feige often imitates these calls and adds portamento. The seventh bar features a chromatic melodic direction that blends harmoniously with the overall structure rather than disrupting the melody.

In melodic direction, phrases often move downward to convey emotion. Sustained upward movements are rare; when they occur, they are usually followed by a slow, continuous decline. The musical intervals are mainly thirds, supplemented by seconds, which adds to the unique melodic fluency and emotional depth of the song. This melodic approach emphasizes the Hmong's connection to their natural environment and cultural practices, making the song a vivid expression of their spirit of community and hospitality.

2.2.2 Rhythm

The beat of "Guike Lai Daojia" is a mix of four and three beats, with a tempo slightly slower than mid-tempo. This combination adds rhythmic complexity and creates a dynamic, engaging musical experience. The frequent use of backward-sloping tones at the beginning of phrases suggests structural patterns in the melody, providing stability within a flexible rhythm. Calls to mountain companions influence the rhythmic structure, incorporating a connection to the natural environment. The flexibility of the rhythm allows the performers to express the collective and hospitable spirit of the Miao Feige people, making the songs a vivid expression of their cultural identity.

2.2.3 Harmony

The harmony of "Guike Lai Daojia" is based on the F-sharp scale, mixed with pentatonic tones (C, D, E, G, A) to create a harmonious sound that emphasizes the warm and welcoming nature of the song. The incorporation of frequently used backward pitches and drones adds harmonic richness, underpins the melody and enhances its emotional impact. The harmonies follow the traditional Miao practice of using parallel intervals, creating a sense of continuity and connection throughout the song. This harmonic structure reflects the cultural customs of Miao Feige, making the song a vivid expression of their community spirit. The song's harmonies enhance the feeling of warmth and friendship, making it an integral part of Miao Feige's tradition of hospitality.

2.2.4 Singing techniques

The singing technique of "Guike Lai Daojia" reflects the hospitality and collective spirit of the Miao Feige people. The song begins with a backward-sloping note, creating a welcoming and inviting atmosphere. The frequently used call-response pattern allows for a dynamic interaction between the vocals and chorus, enhancing the collective feel of the performance. The melody often rises and then falls, requiring the singer to be able to smoothly navigate a wide vocal range. Portamento is widely used to imitate the natural calls used by Miao Feige when communicating in the mountains, adding authenticity and cultural resonance to the performance. Intervals of thirds and seconds dominate, providing a harmoniously flowing melodic line. The song's rhythm alternates between four and three beats, allowing the singer to express emotion more authentically and adding to the song's dynamic quality.

2.3 The "Gedong Feige" song

"Gedong Feige" is a free and romantic piece of music that embodies the Miao people's love for life. The song captures the spirit and emotion of the Miao culture, reflecting their appreciation of nature and joyful attitude toward life.

The background of "Gedong Feige" is deeply rooted in the Miao people's connection with the natural environment. Historically, the Miao people living in the mountainous areas of Guizhou often used music to communicate over long distances. Like many other Feige, this song may have originated as a form of communication and expression, evolving into a cultural staple celebrating life and nature. The piece reflects the echoing calls of the mountains, evoking a sense of freedom and vast landscapes.

Gedong Feige

Composer: Liu Lihong
Lyrics: Liu Lihong & Zhang Xiaomei

Freely 1 2 3 4

hai ou Ai Ya Lai Ban bu
Chen huakai Ye Mao

5 6 7 8

9 Hai Dao You Ai 12

13 Hai Ya lai Niang Nan
Chen Shi Guang you 16

Xiu You Yang lai niang nan Hai

17 Wang 18 Guole hua Kai ji 20

A Ai you Shoubian de yi liu hai yi liu e liu
hui xiu de yi zhang yi zhang you yizhang 24

21 22 23 24

Shou liang de yi yong Shou bian de yi liu Shou bian de yi yong de yiyong e yong
huiwang chen nian qin 25 26 27 28

nianggang a de hou nianggang a de hou nianggang dao bao xi Shou bian de yi liu

29 Yi hou zenme yang 30 shuiye bu zhi dao 31 32

33 Shou bian de yi liu Shou niang de yi yong niang gang a de hou niang gang dao bao xi 35

A Ai You



Figure 9. The “Gedong Feige” song, Lyrics: Liu Lihong & Zhang Xiaomei,

Composer: Liu Lihong

Source: Transcription by Chaoqiao Bao, 2024

2.3.1 Melody

It can be seen from the music score that the range of this piece is very high, and the highest note is G flat. The first half of the song (measures 1-18) is dominated by long notes, which fill the whole song with a sense of distance and

depth. This melodic structure creates the image of being in a mountainous terrain and hearing a long call in the distance. The second half shifts to a lighter and faster tempo, adding a dynamic contrast to the piece.

The melody structure of "Gedong Feige" is simple but profound, mainly composed of three notes: C, D, and g. This minimalist melody line approach enhances the song's emotional impact, making it both accessible and deeply resonant. The intervals in the melody are mainly fourths, and there are additional sub-intervals, such as E^b rising to a flat (2-5), d flat falling to a flat (1-5), a flat falling to E^b (5 -2), and E^b to D^b (2-1). These intervals create a balanced and harmonious sound characteristic of the Miao Feige musical tradition.

Additionally, the piece has many slanted notes contributing to the smooth melodic line. These sloping notes add to the sweet sound quality of the song, making it pleasant to the ears and reflecting the musical aesthetics of the Miao Feige people. This melodic technique demonstrates the technical skills involved in Miao Feige's music and highlights the culture's emphasis on harmony and beauty.

2.3.2 Rhythm

The rhythm of "Gedong Feige" is very free and flexible, especially in the first part, which is dominated by long notes. This creates a vast, call-like quality typical of Miao Feige, evoking the image of a distant, long call across the mountains. Long notes imbue the work with depth and distance, heightening its emotional impact. In the second verse, the tempo shifts to a lighter, faster tempo, adding dynamic contrast to the piece. Rhythmic patterns remain straightforward, with frequent sloping tones adding to the smooth sound quality. This simple rhythm, coupled with free changes in rhythm and phrases, allows performers to convey a wide range of emotions, reflecting the Miao Feige people's love for life and the natural environment.

2.3.3 Harmony

"Gedong Feige" shows a free and romantic harmonic texture, using the high range of D and G flat. The harmony in this piece is created through long notes and simple intervals, mainly C, D, and G. This minimalist harmony enhances the song's emotional impact and creates a sense of distance. And a sense of depth. The use of tilted notes and bass adds a pleasant sound quality and makes the harmonies flow smoothly. This harmonious structure reflects Miao Feige's appreciation of nature

and joyful attitude towards life, creating a rich tapestry of sounds that evoke memories and celebrates. The harmonious interplay of sustained and moving tones creates a vast soundscape that evokes the vastness and beauty of Miao Feige's natural environment.

2.3.4 Singing techniques

"Gedong Feige" is characterized by its free and romantic singing style, which embodies the Miao Feige people's love for life and appreciation of nature. The song has a high range, peaking at G-flat, showcasing the singer's vocal abilities, which require precision and control. The song's first half features long notes that create a sense of distance and depth, akin to hearing a distant call in a mountainous landscape. This technique requires singers to maintain a steady tone and pitch for an extended period, demonstrating their technical skills and control of their breathing. In the second half, the tempo becomes lighter and faster, requiring agility and flexibility in the singer's voice. The melodic structure is simple yet profound, incorporating many sloping notes contributing to a smooth, flowing vocal line. These slanted notes add to the sweet sound quality of the song, making it pleasant to the ears and reflecting the musical aesthetics of the Miao Feige people. The use of portamento and other vocal embellishments further enhances the emotional expressiveness of the song and demonstrates the singer's ability to convey a wide range of emotions.

In summary, the musical composition characteristics of Miao Feige can be analyzed. From the perspective of melody, the melody characteristics of the three Miao Feige songs, "Zui Miaoxiang," "Guike Lai Daojia," and "Gedong Feige," each highlight unique aspects of the Miao musical tradition. "Zui Miaoxiang" employs a melody composed of C, D, E, G, and A, with a predominance of C, E, and G, creating a relatively narrow melodic range. It features long, fluid melodic lines with upward leaps and sharp descents, incorporating glissando to enhance emotional expression. "Guike Lai Daojia" reflects the Miao people's hospitality with its ascending F scale and a mix of quadruple and triple beats. The melody primarily uses the pentatonic scale tones C, D, E, G, and A, with frequent tilted tones and intervals of thirds and seconds, creating a harmonious and culturally rich sound. "Gedong Feige" captures the Miao people's love of life with a high range that peaks at G-flat in the key of D-flat, using long-duration notes in the first half to evoke a sense of distance and depth

and a lighter, faster tempo in the second half. The melody primarily uses C, D, and G tones, with intervals of fourths and seconds and numerous leaning notes, contributing to a smooth, flowing, and euphonious melodic line. Generally speaking, Melodies in Miao Feige are typically long and fluid and incorporate wide intervals, reflecting the historical practice of singing across mountains to communicate. These melodies are highly expressive, designed to evoke a range of emotions, and convey the stories, traditions, and cultural values of the Miao people. The use of ornamentation, such as glissando (sliding between notes), enhances the emotional depth and complexity of the melodies.

From a rhythm perspective, rhythm is the structural backbone of the melody in Miao Feige's music. It provides the framework that drives the flow and pacing of the musical piece. The rhythm in Feige songs is often flexible and free-flowing, mirroring natural speech patterns and the physical movements of the Miao people. This rhythmic flexibility allows performers to connect deeply with the music and express their emotions more authentically. The interplay between steady rhythms and improvisational elements creates a dynamic and engaging musical experience.

The rhythm characteristics of the three Miao Feige songs, "Zui Miaoxiang," "Guike Lai Daojia," and "Gedong Feige," showcase the unique flexibility, simplicity, and emotive qualities inherent in Miao Feige music. The rhythmic characteristics of these songs illustrate the free-flowing and expressive nature of Miao Feige's music. The rhythms are not confined by strict patterns, allowing for a dynamic and engaging musical experience that resonates with the cultural and emotional heritage of the Miao people. The interplay between steady rhythms and improvisational elements in these songs highlights the distinctive aesthetic of Miao Feige music, emphasizing its ability to convey deep emotions and connect performers with their cultural roots.

From the perspective of harmony, harmony in Miao Feige music involves the combination of different musical sounds to create a rich, layered effect. While traditional Miao Feige relies less on Western harmonic structures, it often employs drones or parallel intervals, producing a unique harmonic texture. This texture enhances the atmospheric and emotional qualities of the music, adding depth and

resonance. The harmony in Feige music supports the melody, enriching its overall impact and providing a fuller, more immersive sound.

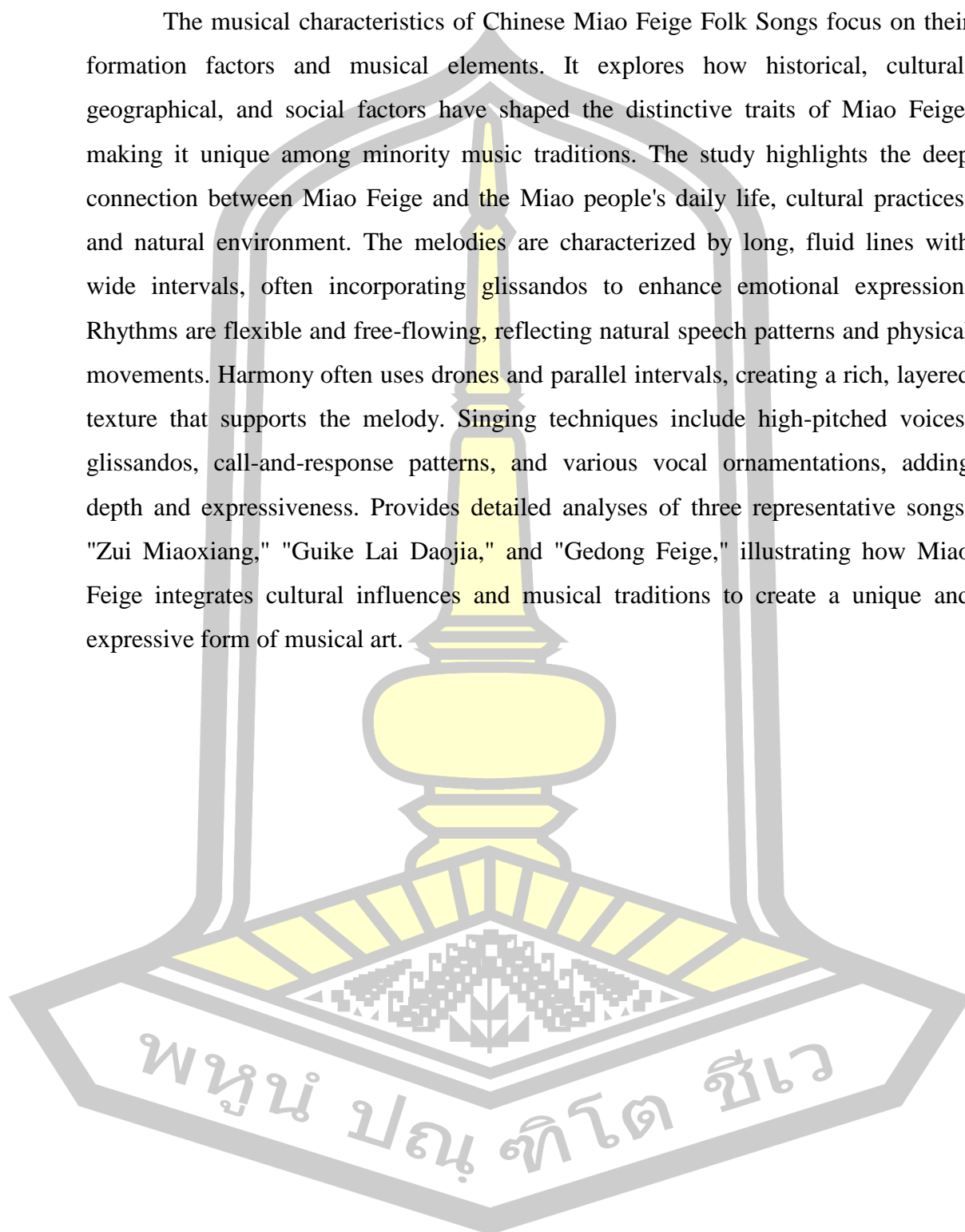
The harmony in these three Miao Feige songs is characterized by the use of simple yet effective harmonic techniques that enhance the expressiveness of the melodies. The emphasis on parallel intervals, drones, and the distinctive use of the falling mi tone creates a unique harmonic texture deeply rooted in Miao cultural and musical traditions. This approach to harmony not only supports the melodies but also adds depth and resonance, making the music of Miao Feige a rich and immersive experience that reflects the Miao people's history, culture, and identity. The harmonic characteristics of these songs illustrate how Miao Feige integrates cultural influences and musical traditions to create a unique and expressive form of musical art.

From the perspective of singing skills, singing techniques are vital for expressing the artistic language of Feige music. These techniques include high-pitched, clear voices, glissando (sliding between notes), and various vocal ornamentations that enhance the expressiveness of the performance. Singing in Feige often involves call-and-response patterns, solo performances, and group choruses, allowing for dynamic interaction and emotional depth. Different forms of singing convey a range of emotional content, from joyous celebration to poignant reflection. The diversity of singing techniques in Feige music showcases the adaptability and creativity of Miao performers.

The singing techniques used in "Zui Miaoxiang," "Guike Lai Daojia," and "Gedong Feige" demonstrate the adaptability and creativity of Miao Feige performers. These techniques include high-pitched, clear voices, glissandos, call-and-response patterns, and various vocal ornamentations that add depth and expressiveness to the performances. Each song employs these techniques to convey different emotional content, from the heartfelt praise of "Zui Miaoxiang," the communal warmth of "Guike Lai Daojia," to the romantic and joyous expression in "Gedong Feige." These diverse singing techniques reflect the rich cultural heritage of the Miao people and their unique approach to vocal music, creating a captivating and emotionally resonant musical experience.

Summary

The musical characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs focus on their formation factors and musical elements. It explores how historical, cultural, geographical, and social factors have shaped the distinctive traits of Miao Feige, making it unique among minority music traditions. The study highlights the deep connection between Miao Feige and the Miao people's daily life, cultural practices, and natural environment. The melodies are characterized by long, fluid lines with wide intervals, often incorporating glissandos to enhance emotional expression. Rhythms are flexible and free-flowing, reflecting natural speech patterns and physical movements. Harmony often uses drones and parallel intervals, creating a rich, layered texture that supports the melody. Singing techniques include high-pitched voices, glissandos, call-and-response patterns, and various vocal ornamentations, adding depth and expressiveness. Provides detailed analyses of three representative songs, "Zui Miaoxiang," "Guike Lai Daojia," and "Gedong Feige," illustrating how Miao Feige integrates cultural influences and musical traditions to create a unique and expressive form of musical art.



CHAPTER VI

Conclusions, Discussions, and Suggestions

1. Conclusion

The current status of Miao Feige folk songs reflects a rich cultural heritage deeply woven into the social fabric of the Miao people. These songs are categorized into love, drinking, ritual, ceremonial, and narrative songs, each serving distinct social functions. Love songs facilitate the expression of affection among young Miao individuals while drinking songs enhance social bonding during festivals. Ritual and ceremonial songs are integral to Miao ethnic ceremonies, and narrative songs help preserve historical and cultural stories through oral traditions. The performance practices of Miao Feige during festivals, such as the Miao Sister Festival, underscore their cultural significance, where songs act as a medium for social interaction and cultural transmission. The Youfang Duige, a duet singing tradition during these festivals, highlights the communal and improvisational nature of Miao Feige, fostering social connections. The dissemination of Miao Feige in Guizhou Province is multifaceted, including family-based transmission, folklore activities, teacher-training systems, schooling, and modern media. Family-based transmission remains central, with elders passing songs to younger generations, ensuring cultural continuity. However, despite these efforts, the preservation of Miao Feige faces challenges, particularly the younger generation's diminishing interest in these traditions. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts from the government, society, and educational institutions to create engaging and accessible platforms that foster a deeper appreciation of Miao Feige's cultural significance, ensuring its continued transmission to future generations.

The characteristics of Chinese Miao Feige folk songs offer a deep understanding of their unique musical elements and the external factors that have shaped their formation. The mountainous terrain of Guizhou has played a significant role in influencing the musical styles of Miao Feige, where the need for long-distance communication across rugged landscapes led to the development of distinctive vocal techniques. These techniques, characterized by long, melodious lines and wide tonal

ranges, are central to Miao Feige, allowing sounds to carry over vast distances. The acoustic properties of the natural landscape, such as echoes from mountains and valleys, have also contributed to the shaping of vocal and instrumental sounds. Socially, Miao Feige serves as a vital tool for education, cultural transmission, and social cohesion within the Miao community. The communal nature of Miao music-making, seen in group performances, call-and-response singing, and gatherings for music and dance, reflects and reinforces Miao society's collective spirit and values, fostering a sense of belonging and identity. Musically, Miao Feige is distinguished by its melody, rhythm, harmony, and singing techniques. The melody, a core element, features long, fluid lines with wide intervals and ornamentation, as exemplified in songs like "Zui Miaoxiang," "Guike Lai Daojia," and "Gedong Feige." The rhythm is typically flexible and free flowing, allowing performers to connect deeply with the music and express their emotions authentically, creating a dynamic musical experience. Harmony is often achieved through drones or parallel intervals, adding a unique harmonic texture that enhances the atmospheric and emotional qualities of the music. Singing techniques, including high-pitched voices, glissando, and vocal ornamentations, further enrich the performances, providing dynamic interaction and emotional depth. The comprehensive analysis of Miao Feige underscores its vibrant musical tradition, deeply rooted in the historical, cultural, and social contexts of the Miao people. This traditional music entertains and educates and unites the Miao community, preserving their cultural heritage for future generations. The study of Miao Feige reveals the resilience and creativity of the Miao people, demonstrating their ability to maintain and celebrate their cultural identity through music despite historical and geographical challenges. Understanding these unique characteristics and external influences offers valuable insights into the enduring significance of Miao Feige within the Miao community.

2. Discussion

The study of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Qiandongnan Guizhou, China, provides a rich and intricate exploration of the cultural, historical, and social dimensions that shape this unique musical tradition. This research has highlighted several key aspects of Miao Feige, including its classification, performance practices,

dissemination methods, and inheritance value through extensive data gathered from on-site interviews, observations, and secondary literature.

The findings of this study align with several established theoretical principles in ethnomusicology and cultural anthropology. The importance of geographical and cultural factors in shaping musical traditions, as noted by scholars such as Chu (2020) and Cui (2013), is evident in the characteristics of Miao Feige. The unique vocal techniques and melodies of Miao Feige, influenced by the mountainous terrain of Guizhou, reflect the theory that environmental contexts significantly impact musical forms (Mo, 2017).

Additionally, the study supports the theory that music serves as a crucial vehicle for cultural transmission and social cohesion. The performance practices of Miao Feige during festivals, as detailed in the research, underscore its role in reinforcing community bonds and cultural identity (Dong, 2015). This aligns with the views of cultural theorists who argue that music is a vital part of the social fabric, facilitating intergenerational communication and cultural continuity (Peng, 2006; Guan, 2006).

While the study's findings are largely consistent with theoretical principles, some challenges and inconsistencies were noted. For instance, the effectiveness of modern media transmission in preserving traditional music forms remains contentious. Fu (2019) highlights the potential of modern media to promote cultural heritage. Yet, this study found that while modern media has increased the visibility of Miao Feige, it has not significantly enhanced deep cultural understanding or interest among younger generations. This points to a gap between modern media's potential and actual impact on cultural preservation (Qi, 2021).

Moreover, the declining interest among the younger Miao population in inheriting Feige traditions challenges the theory that cultural transmission through family and community practices is sufficient to maintain cultural heritage. This finding suggests the need for more structured and formal educational approaches to supplement traditional methods (Luo, 2022; Tang, 2009).

This study's findings enrich the literature on Miao Feige and ethnic minority music in China. By providing a detailed analysis of the musical components and performance practices of Miao Feige, this research adds depth to previous studies that

have primarily focused on broader cultural aspects (Huang, 2016; Li, 2012). The classification of Miao Feige into Youfang songs, drinking songs, ritual songs, ceremonial songs, and narrative songs offers a nuanced understanding of its diverse functions and characteristics (Dong, 2015).

Furthermore, the documentation of specific songs such as "Zui Miaoxiang," "Guike Lai Daojia," and "Gedong Feige" provides concrete examples that illustrate the theoretical discussions in the literature. These songs exemplify the melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic features of Miao Feige, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of its musical structure (Li, 2017; Xiao, 2013).

The findings of this study have several implications for future research and practice. Firstly, there is a need for further research into the impact of modern media on traditional music forms, particularly how it can be leveraged to enhance cultural understanding and interest among younger generations. Additionally, exploring more effective educational strategies that integrate traditional and formal methods could provide insights into how to preserve better and transmit Miao Feige (Huang, 2002; Yang, 2019). Practically, this study underscores the importance of supporting community-based initiatives and recordings as part of preservation strategies. These methods have effectively maintained the authenticity and vitality of Miao Feige, as evidenced by the continued performance practices during festivals (Chu, 2020; Hao, 2020).

In conclusion, this study has comprehensively analyzed the current status, characteristics, and social functions of Chinese Miao Feige Folk Songs in Qiandongnan Guizhou. It highlights the significant role of geographical, cultural, and social factors in shaping this unique musical tradition. It underscores the need for innovative approaches to preserve and promote it in the modern context. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of Miao Feige and offer valuable insights for future research and cultural preservation efforts.

3. Suggestions

3.1 Suggestions for Applying the Results of the Study

3.1.1 Integration of Miao Feige into Educational Curricula: Miao Feige should be integrated into educational curricula to preserve and transmit its cultural

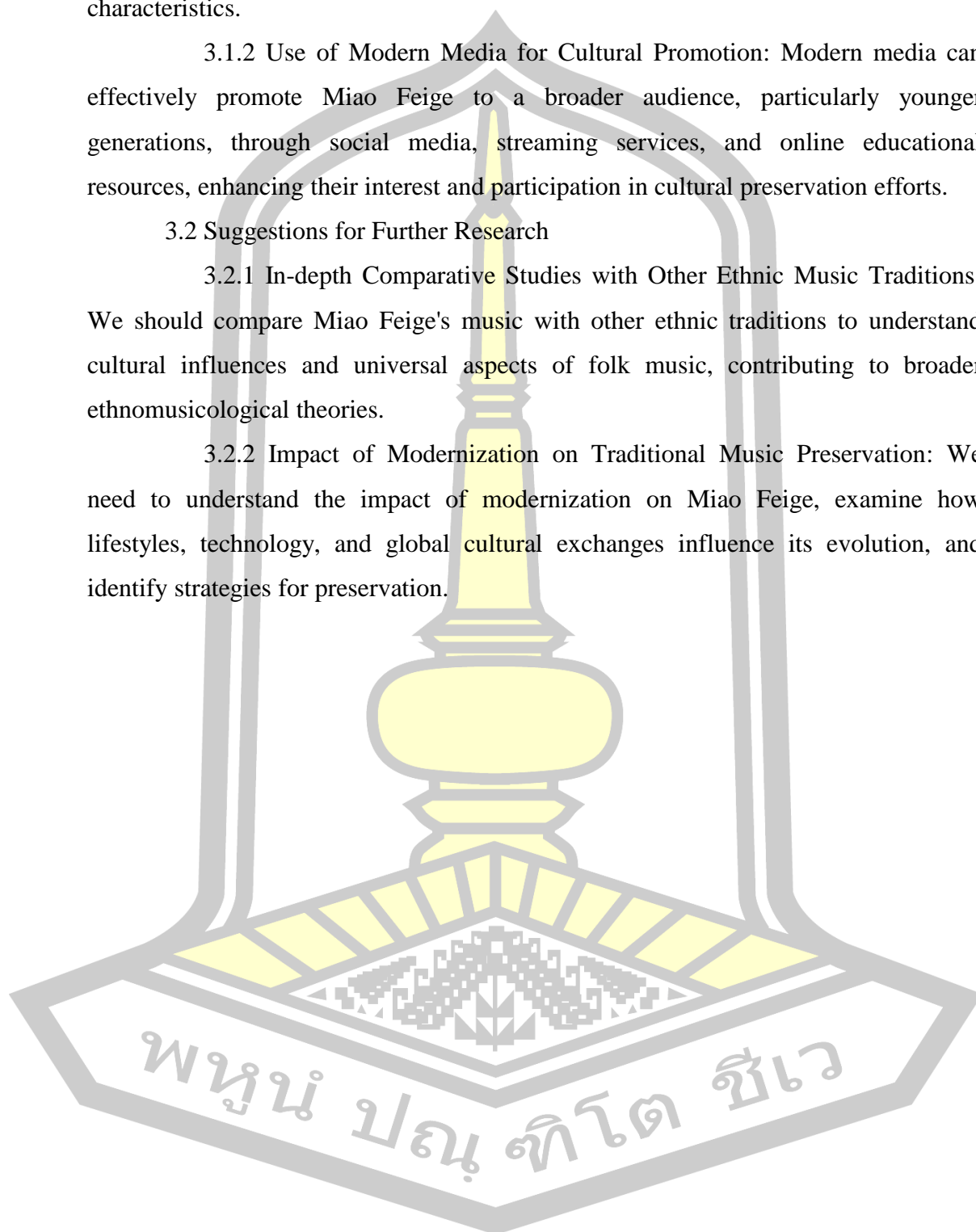
heritage, fostering a deeper understanding of its history, significance, and musical characteristics.

3.1.2 Use of Modern Media for Cultural Promotion: Modern media can effectively promote Miao Feige to a broader audience, particularly younger generations, through social media, streaming services, and online educational resources, enhancing their interest and participation in cultural preservation efforts.

3.2 Suggestions for Further Research

3.2.1 In-depth Comparative Studies with Other Ethnic Music Traditions: We should compare Miao Feige's music with other ethnic traditions to understand cultural influences and universal aspects of folk music, contributing to broader ethnomusicological theories.

3.2.2 Impact of Modernization on Traditional Music Preservation: We need to understand the impact of modernization on Miao Feige, examine how lifestyles, technology, and global cultural exchanges influence its evolution, and identify strategies for preservation.

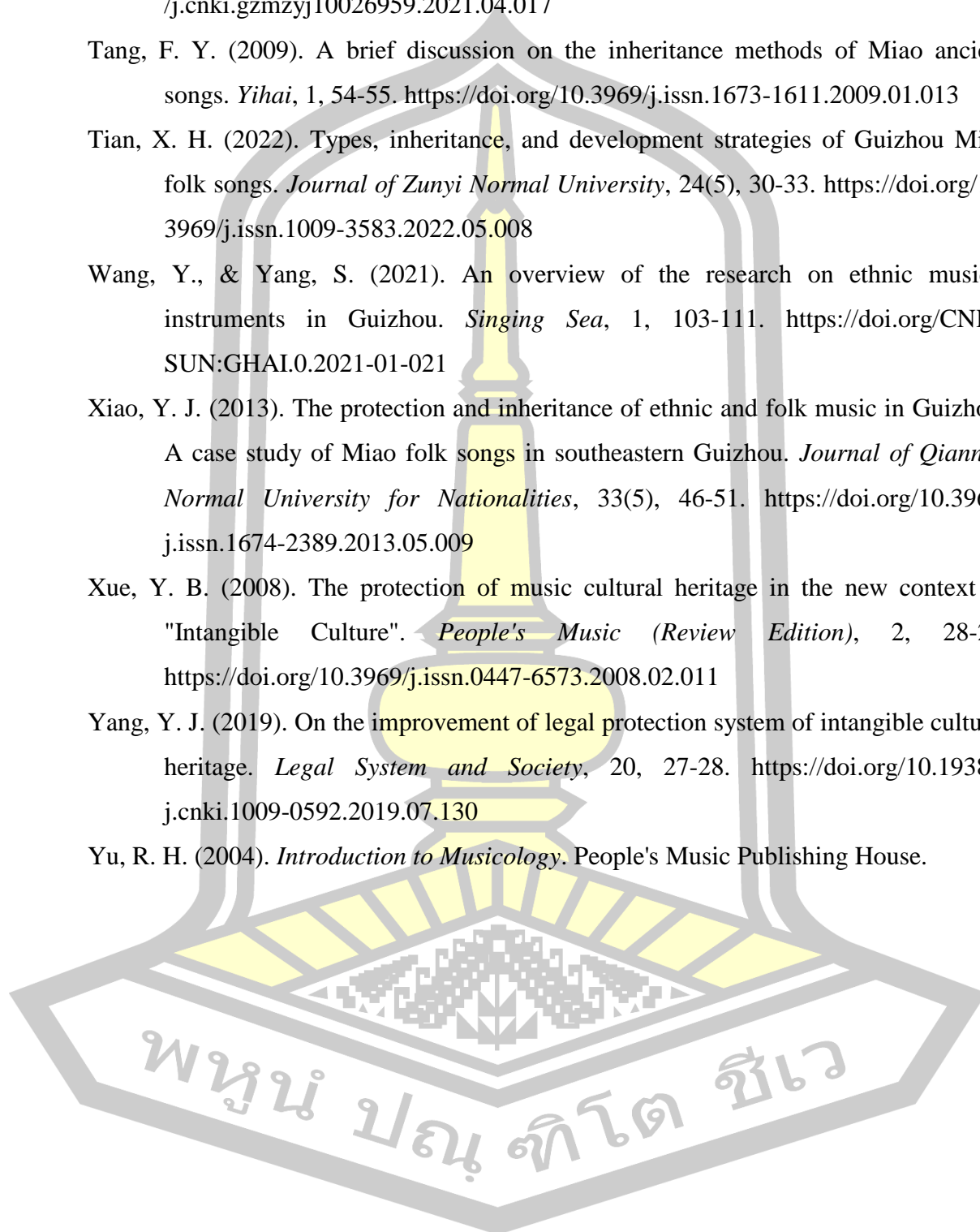


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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1



Figure 10. On site interview with informant Liu Ming



Figure 11. Teacher Liu Ming is explaining to me the current situation of Feige in the Qiandongnan Guizhou region



Figure 12. Teacher Zhang Xiaomei, the inheritor of intangible cultural heritage, is explaining to me the current situation of the dissemination of local Miao Feige



Figure 13. Teacher Zhang Xiaomei is explaining to me the singing techniques of Miao Feige and teaching me how to sing

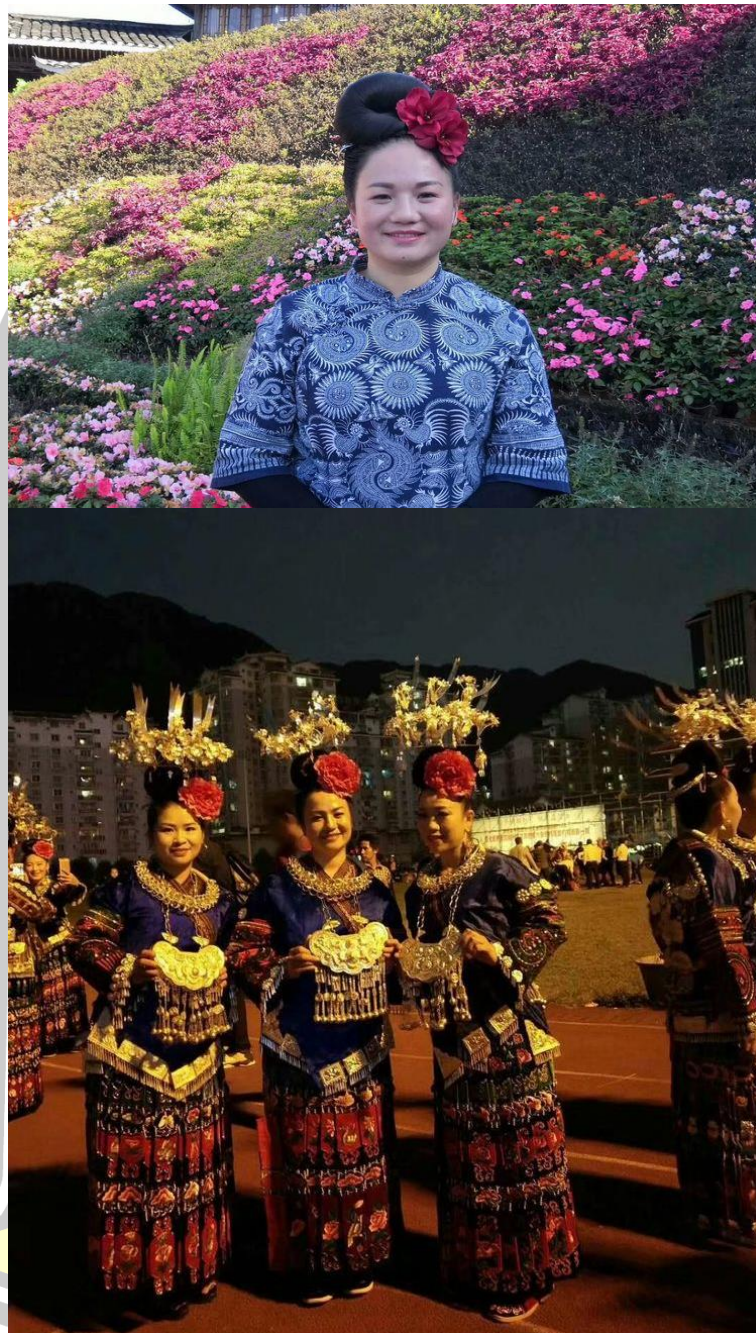


Figure 14. Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor, Yang Xingli



Figure 15. Teacher Zhang Xiaomei is teaching her apprentices how to sing Feige



Figure 16. Local villagers are singing wine songs



Figure 17. The author conducted on-site investigations and explained the situation of Miao Feige being spread through apprenticeship programs



Figure 18. The inheritor of intangible cultural heritage performed Miao Feige on local television at the scene

贵客来到家

黔东南·雷山

中速稍慢 稍自由

贵客来到家（哪 呢），

打扮真 潇洒（呢）。

打扮真 潇洒。

客从千里来。

愧无美酒待， 嘴笨无话说，

怠慢心莫多（哩）， 怠慢心莫多（哇 呢）！

欧 吼 吼！

Figure 20. "Guoke Lai Daojia "



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 米酒香 敬酒的飞歌飘山梁

Figure 21. "Zui Miaoxiang"

BIOGRAPHY

NAME	Chaoqiao Bao
DATE OF BIRTH	24/09/1991
PLACE OF BIRTH	ChongQing
ADDRESS	Building 2, Xingya Shabin International, Shapingba District, Chongqing
POSITION	Student
PLACE OF WORK	Star Rhyme Music Center
EDUCATION	2010-2014 Bachelor's degree from Xianyang Normal University 2022-2024 (M.M.) Mahasarakham University in Thailand

