



Dong Grand Song: Conservation Inheritance and Development of Culture Heritage in
Guangxi Province

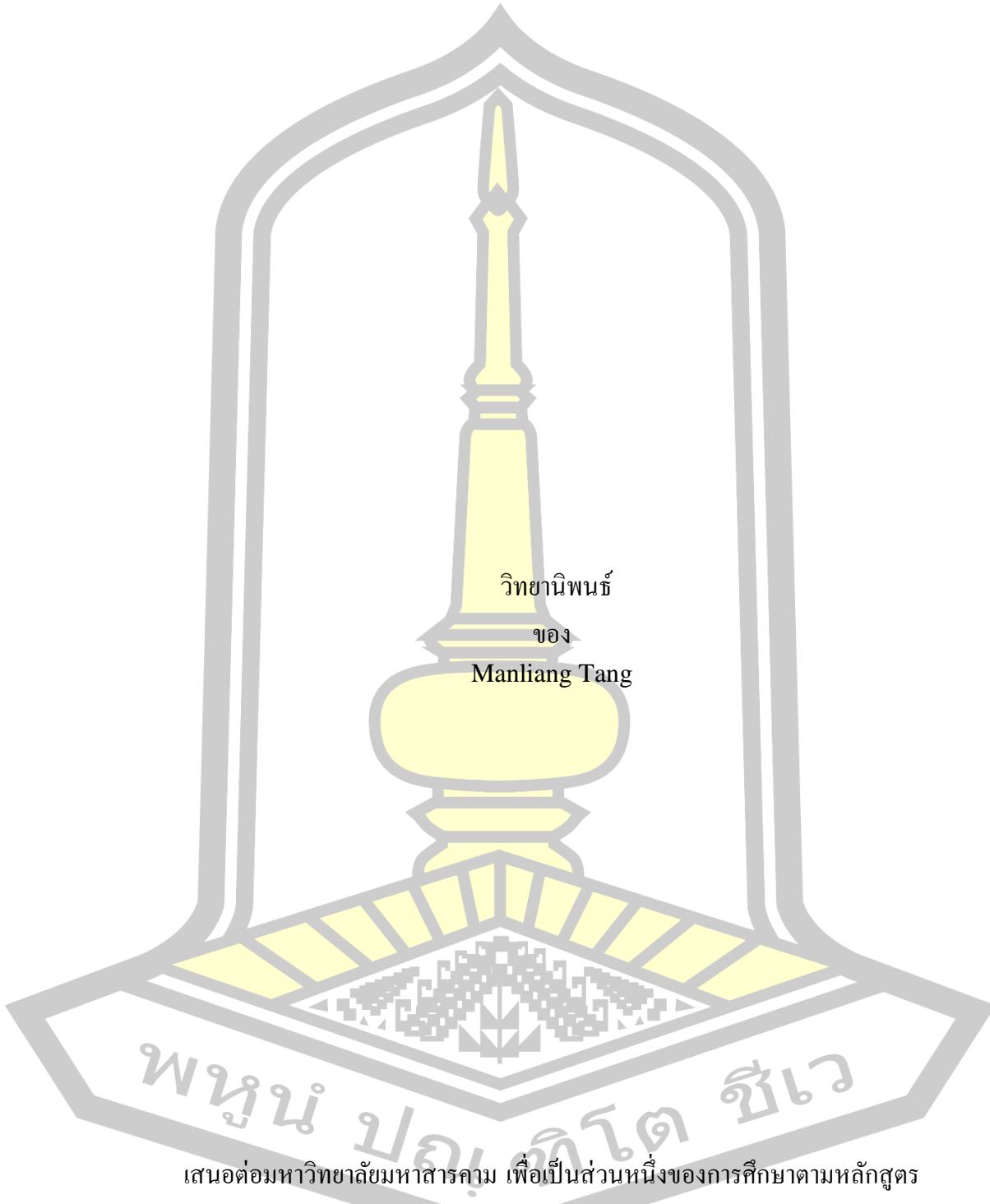
Manliang Tang

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Cultural Science

July 2024

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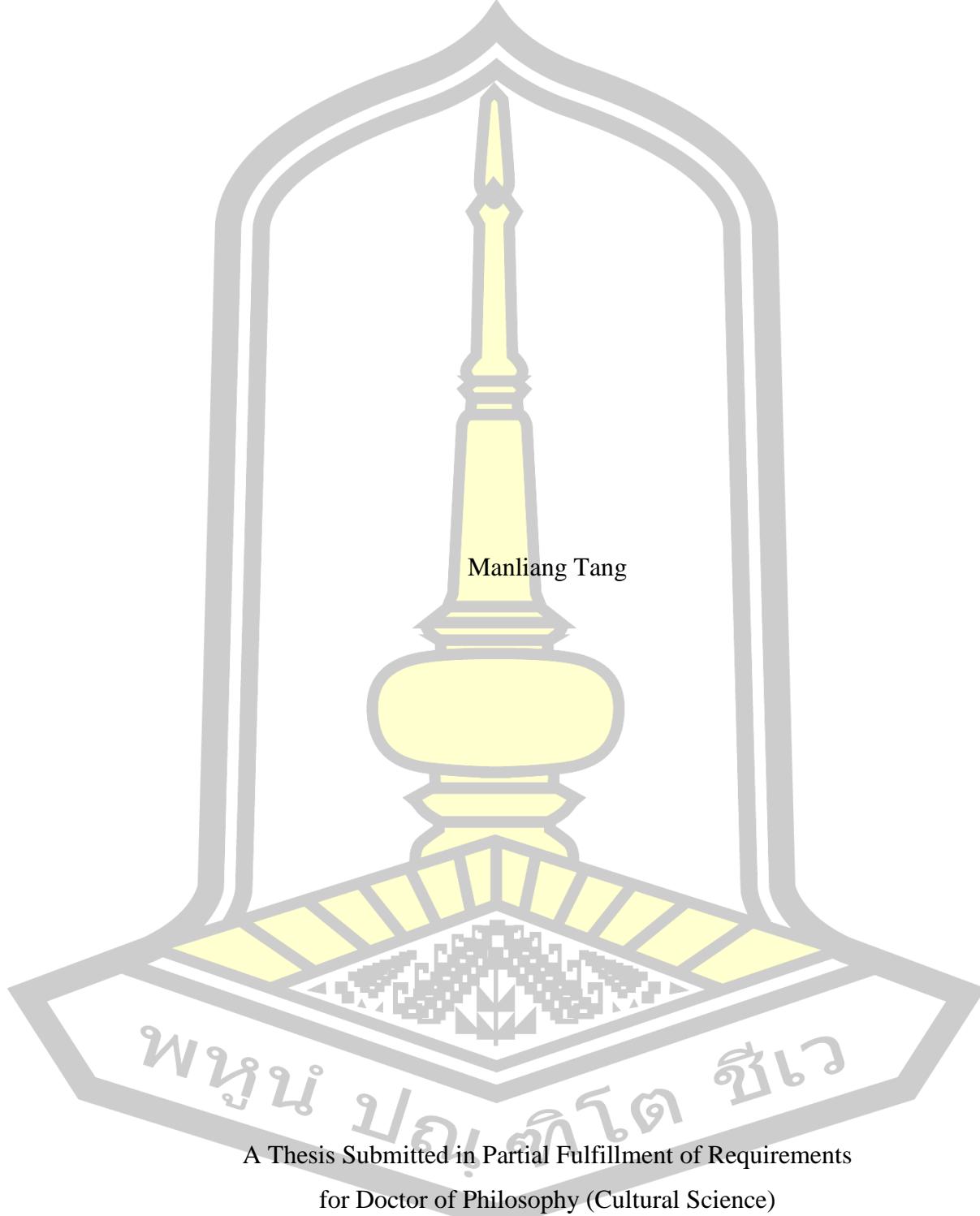


เสนอต่อมหาวิทยาลัยมหาสารคาม เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตร
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Dong Grand Song: Conservation Inheritance and Development of Culture Heritage in
Guangxi Province



A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
for Doctor of Philosophy (Cultural Science)

July 2024

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research are to study 1) History and Development of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang County, Guangxi, China 2) Current condition and Problems of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang and 3) Conservation form, Inherited and developed of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang. The research tools used include basic surveys, observations, and interviews. Seven key informants, thirteen casual informants, and thirty general informants were selected. Data were collected through written documents and fieldwork, then organized, analyzed, and presented using a descriptive analysis method.

The research findings indicate that: (1) the Dong Grand Song, as an ancient form of collective singing, has deep historical roots and occupies a central place in social and cultural life. It has undergone cultural adaptation from prosperity through turmoil to revitalization, revealing challenges in adapting to modern societal changes and reflecting cultural adaptation strategies; (2) in terms of the current situation and issues, the study finds that the cultural identity of the Dong Grand Song has been redefined, giving it new vitality and shaping a new socio-cultural form, thereby enhancing community cohesion and external recognition of its unique value; and (3) regarding preservation, inheritance, and development, the research identifies a new transmission model characterized by internal and external opposition and interdependence, with the younger generation learning and inheriting through modern media and public cultural activities.

The conclusions of this study emphasize: (1) the need for interdisciplinary comprehensive research on the Dong Grand Song; (2) exploring the educational function of the Dong Grand Song and incorporating it into basic education curricula; (3) cautiously approaching commercialization and tourism development to prevent cultural degradation from over-commercialization; and (4) strengthening digital preservation and dissemination by establishing digital archives and developing interactive multimedia applications.

Keyword : Dong Grand Song, ICH, Conservation, Inheritance

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As I pen down these acknowledgments, I am struck by the swift passage of time. It feels like only yesterday when I embarked on this intellectual voyage, yet here I am at its conclusion. This journey, filled with learning and discovery, has raced by at an astonishing pace, reminding me of the fleeting nature of our endeavors and the importance of cherishing every moment of this academic pursuit. I am humbled by the thought that so much has been achieved in what feels like a blink of an eye, and I am deeply thankful for every second that has been invested by all involved to guide this research to its fruition.

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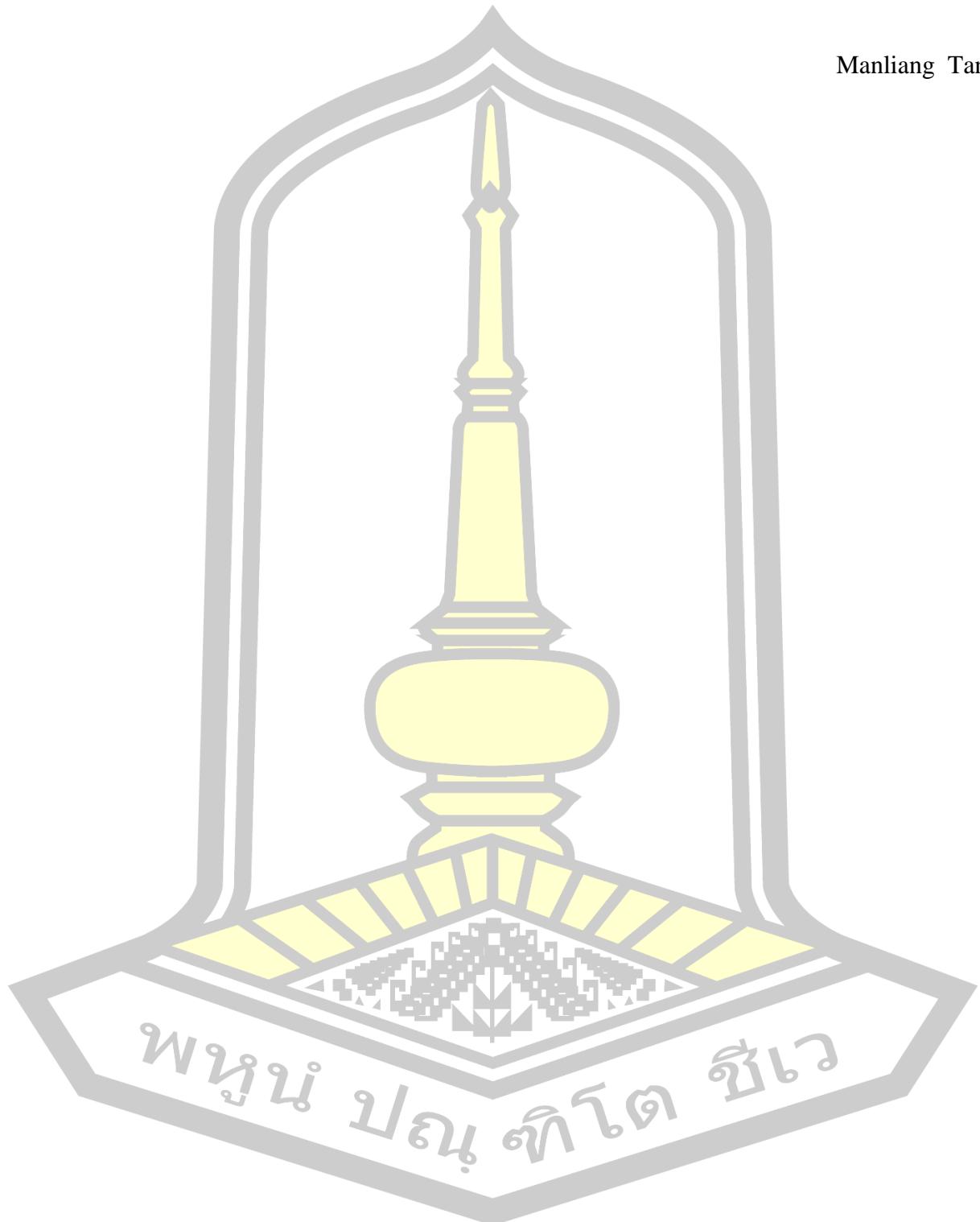
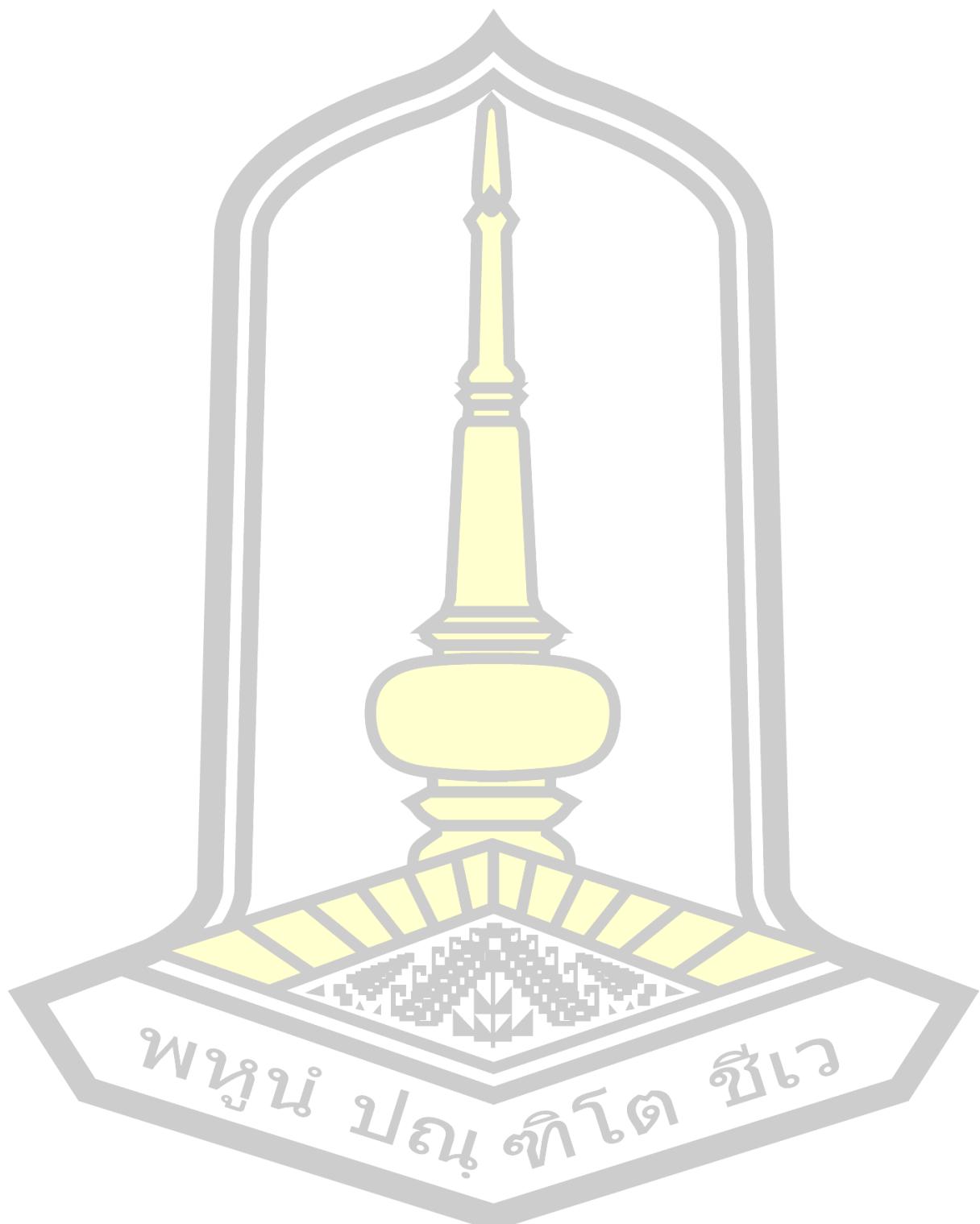


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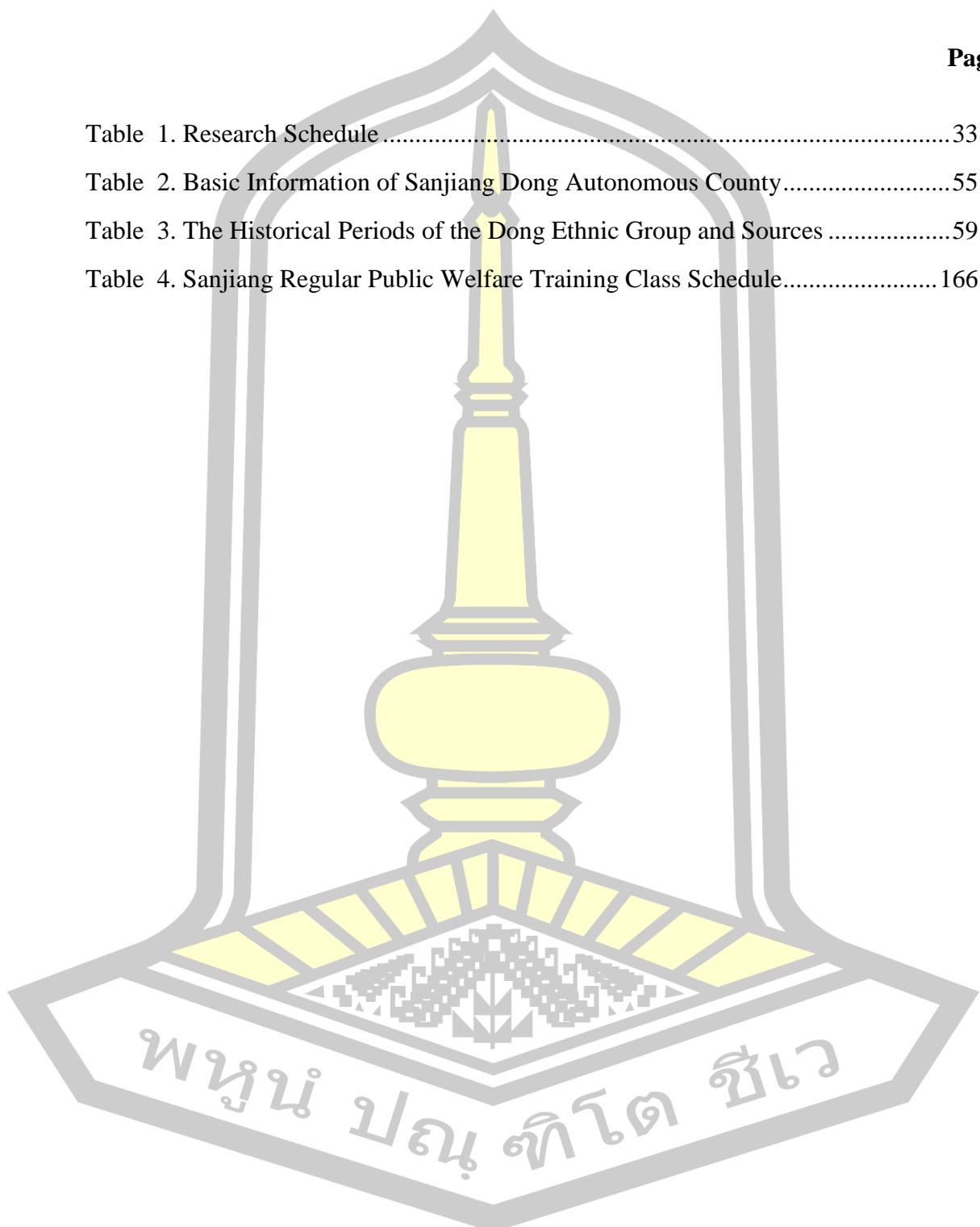
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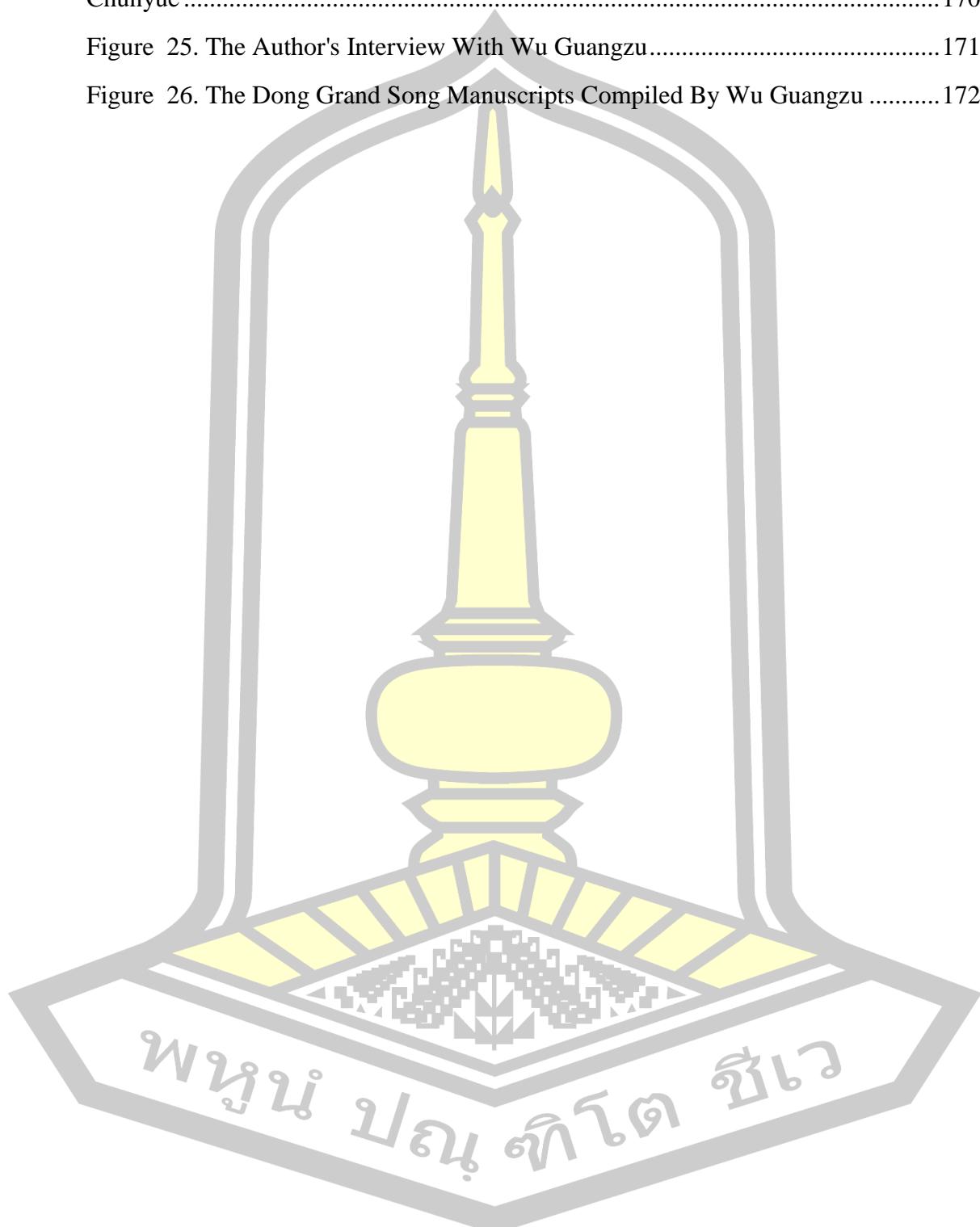
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

1. Research Background

The national-level intangible cultural heritage project "Dong Grand Song" is a form of folk choral music characterized by its lack of conductor or accompaniment, multiple voices, and natural harmonies. It is widely circulated primarily in Guizhou, Hunan, and Guangxi provinces in China. This study selects Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County in Guangxi Province, China, as the research site. Located at the junction of Guizhou, Hunan, and Guangxi, this area is inhabited by the Dong ethnic group. The transmission area chosen for this study belongs to the southern branch of Dong Grand Song, with characteristics typical of the southern region in terms of geography and language.

"Dong Grand Song" refers to a song that the Dong people call "Ga Lo" or "Gama" (in Dong, "Ga" means "song" and "Lo" means "big".) In addition, they have to sing it in or outside the drum tower in the village, so it is also known as the "Drum Tower Song". The singing class is composed of men and women in each village, with at least 6 to 10 people, sometimes as many as 100 to 200 people. As the Dong people have no written script, they can only rely on oral storytelling to record and transmit information, so a large number of historical events and important information have been passed down through the Dong song, which is an important way. The original prototype of the Dong song was to imitate the sounds made by various insects and birds in nature, and some people imitated the high part and some imitated the low part, and the more they sang, the more beautiful it became. The contents and expressions of the Dong songs are gradually enriched in the process of transmission and singing and finally form a large category of Dong folk songs, which is also the category with the highest artistic level, thus attracting wide attention from experts and scholars of ethnology and musicology in China and abroad.

Dong Grand Song is not only a form of musical art but also a crucial aspect in understanding social structure, marital relationships, cultural heritage, and spiritual

life. However, with the rapid advancement of modernization and the influx of external cultures, Dong Grand Song is facing unprecedented challenges.

Cultural erosion: Globalization and the promotion of modern lifestyles have led to a decreased interest among the younger generation in traditional culture. The prevalence of modern media such as television and the internet has exposed young people more to popular culture, leading to neglect of traditional Dong Grand Song.

Economic transition: With economic development, the traditional agrarian lifestyle is undergoing change, with many Dong people migrating to urban areas for work and living. This has resulted in the loss of traditional cultural settings.

Challenges in transmission: Traditional learning of Dong Grand Song typically involves oral transmission and requires long-term learning and practice. However, modern educational systems and busy lifestyles make it difficult for the younger generation to dedicate sufficient time to learn this complex singing technique.

Therefore, protecting Dong Grand Song is not only about preserving a unique art form but also about maintaining Dong cultural identity and promoting cultural diversity. Within Dong communities, Grand Song is not only a form of entertainment and artistic expression but also a source of social cohesion and cultural confidence. It serves as a bond for unity and cultural identity within Dong communities, helping Dong Grand Song adapt to modern society while preserving its unique cultural value and social function. Safeguarding this valuable asset of cultural diversity is essential for constructing a harmonious society, as Dong Grand Song plays an irreplaceable role. That is why there is a Dong song that goes like this: "We love our youth, we envy your youth, when we are old, we must sing until our bones turn to ash, we cannot feed our bodies without farming, how can we live without singing folk songs? Food nourishes the body and song nourishes the spirit, and the work must be done and the songs must be sung." As the song says, singing is a basic community activity that is indispensable in the daily life of the Dong people. For this reason, the Dong people have a very systematic mechanism or regulation for the inheritance of the Grand Song, which is mainly reflected in many aspects, such as the organizational structure of the Dong villages, the establishment of the Dong Song class, the identity consciousness of the Dong Song master, and the customary habit of using the Song as

a festival. Meanwhile, not only various festivals and rituals but also the wearing of ornaments in Dong costumes, public buildings, and residential buildings have consciously formed an environment consistent with the performance of Dong songs.

Prior to this, researchers mainly focused on the polyphonic choral characteristics, melodic forms, rhythms and musical organizational methods, cultural and social functions, oral traditions, transmission methods, and historical evolution of Dong Grand Song. This study primarily focuses on tracing the historical evolution process of Dong Grand Song, using history as a reference to investigate the current status and challenges of Dong Grand Song inheritance in modern society, analyzing the impacts of globalization and modernization on the inheritance and evolution of Dong Grand Song, especially the attitudes and involvement of the younger generation in traditional culture. Furthermore, it aims to explore the influence of urbanization and economic changes on the social and cultural functions of Dong Grand Song. By providing more scientific theoretical support for the preservation and inheritance of Dong Grand Song, such research also contributes to the construction of more comprehensive strategies for the protection of cultural diversity.

2. Research Objectives

The objectives of this study were to:

- 2.1 To study the History and Development of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang County, Guangxi
- 2.2 To study the Current condition and Problems of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang County, Guangxi
- 2.3 To study the Conservation form, Inherited and developed of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang County, Guangxi

3. Research Questions

- 3.1 To give an overview of the spatial geographical location and socio-historical and cultural background of the Dong region, where the Dong song originated, and why the Dong song culture was born here and spread for thousands of years.

3.2 How to better develop and inherit the Dong Grand Song culture in the context of educational anthropology?

3.3 How to better combine school education with ethnic culture education?
How to better combine modern teaching methods with ethnocultural teaching?

4. Significance of Research

4.1 It can provide certain references to solve the current dilemma of the development and inheritance of the Dong Grand Song, and can also provide reference materials for other ethnic groups to learn from.

4.2 Further sorting out the connotation composition of the Dong Grand Song and the educational value of its inheritance can help enrich the theoretical study of ethnic education.

4.3 With the combination of anthropology, education, culture, art, ethnology, and other multidisciplinary cross-studies, the research content and perspectives of ethnic folk music culture are enriched.

5. Definition of Terms

5.1 Dong Grand Song

Also known as "Kam Grand Choir" refers to a song that the Dong people called "Ga Lo" or "Gama" (in Dong language, "Ga" means "song", and "Lo" means "big"). In addition, they must sing in or outside the drum tower in the village, so it is also known as the "Drum Tower song". The singing class is composed of men and women in each village, with at least 6-10 people, sometimes as many as 100 to 200 people. It is an ancient folk singing type with multiple voices, no command, no accompaniment, and natural harmony.

5.2 Inheritance of music

The inheritance of ethnic culture is a dynamic historical process. Cultural inheritance refers to the vertical handover process of culture among social members within an ethnic community, similar to passing on a baton. This process is constrained by the living environment and cultural background, and it ultimately forms the mechanism of cultural inheritance, giving human culture characteristics such as stability, integrity, and continuity in historical development.

The inheritance of Dong Folk Song music culture is a dynamic historical process. The inheritance of Dong Folk Song music culture refers to the process of cultural transmission between members of the Dong ethnic group, similar to passing a baton from one generation to the next. This process is constrained by the Dong ethnic group's living environment and cultural background, which has resulted in the mechanism of oral transmission and master-apprentice inheritance. It possesses characteristics such as stability, completeness, and continuity in the historical development of human culture.

5.3 Development of music

The development of the Dong Grand Song of the Dong ethnic group has gone through five periods. First, the golden age occurred in the late 1950s and was the period when Dong's traditional social and cultural practices were strongest. During this time, people loved to sing the Grand Songs, using their voices to express emotions, educate the people, and record history.

The second period was a difficult period during the Cultural Revolution when the development of the Dong Grand Song was severely affected. Many songbooks were burned, singers were forbidden from singing, and some gatherings were prohibited.

The third period was a period of renewed prosperity. In the late 1970s, with the opening of the Third Plenum of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the era of reform and opening up began. Along with the economic and political policy adjustments at the national level, cultural activities received unprecedented attention. The Dong people quickly revived the tradition of performing the Grand Song. The long-silent Dong Grand Song regained its vitality and resounded in every village of the Dong homeland.

The fourth period was a period of gradual decline. In the mid-1980s, the economic structure changed. With the deepening of reform and opening up and the development of the market economy, the material foundation on which the traditional Dong Grand Song relied—agrarian economic patterns—was broken. Dong young men and women began to migrate in large numbers for work or business, making it difficult to form "song choirs" and leading to a relative decrease in large-scale folk activities.

Today, with the protection of intangible cultural heritage, the rise of the tourism industry, and improved transportation, the Dong Grand Song has entered a new stage of development. It has transitioned from being a part of daily communication to becoming a commercial performance, experiencing significant changes and developments in its style and essence.

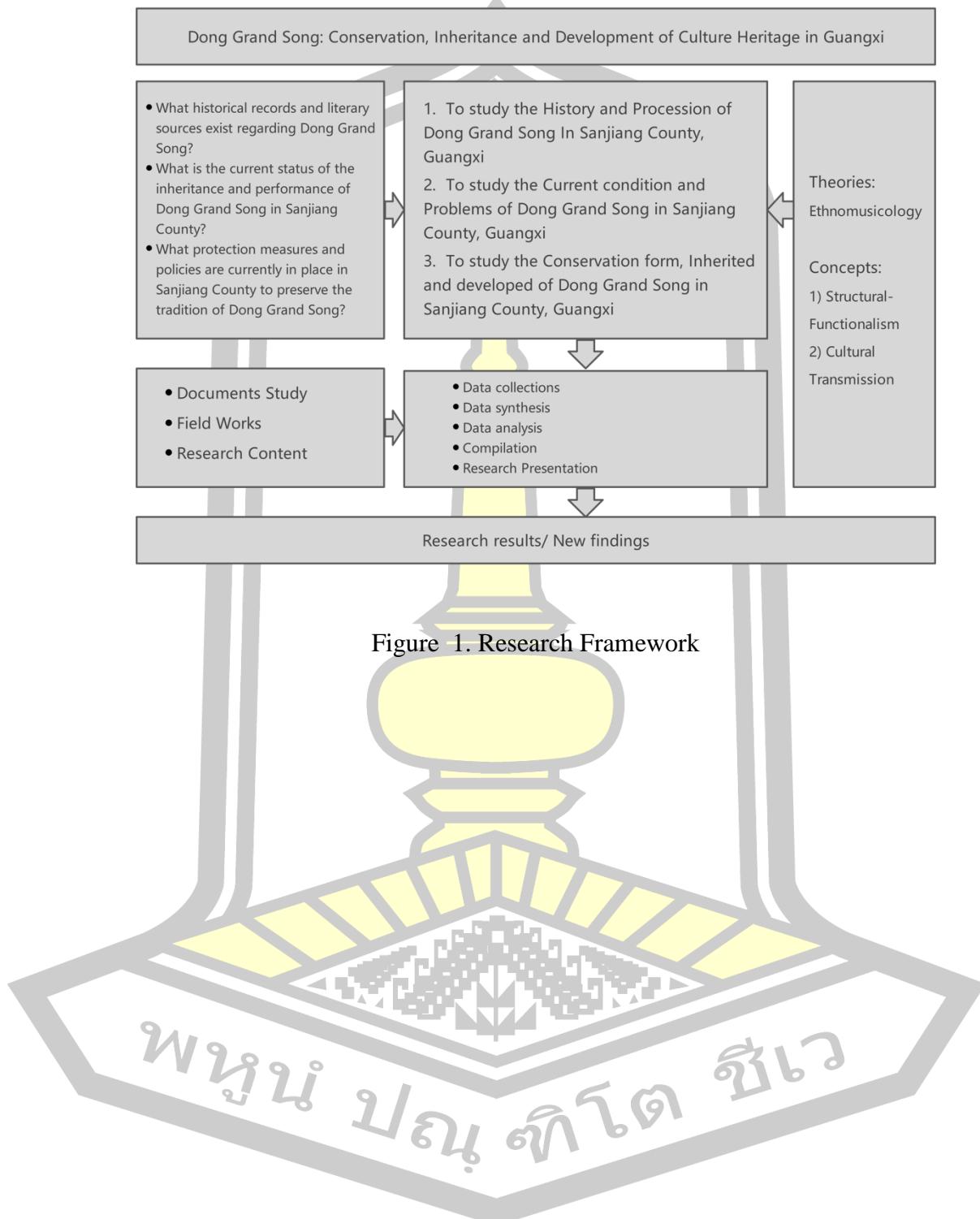
5.4 Educational Anthropology

Educational Anthropology originated in the early 20th century in the field of Western social science research and began to spread globally in the 1970s. Educational Anthropology is an interdisciplinary subject formed by the intersection of education and anthropology. On the one hand, Educational Anthropology has the characteristics of anthropology, following the research principles of anthropology, applying anthropological research theories, emphasizing anthropological research paradigms, and using anthropological research methods to conduct research. On the other hand, Educational Anthropology mainly studies educational issues and must use basic concepts and principles of education, follow the laws of educational development, and solve many problems in educational practice.

Using the research paradigm of Educational Anthropology to investigate the music culture education of the Dong Grand Song, not only can we understand the changes in Dong ethnic music culture, but also the overall changes in Dong ethnic culture. At the same time, through education, the inheritance and development of Dong ethnic culture can be influenced.

Dong Grand Song is one of the excellent ancient cultural heritages preserved in China, and it is the most distinctive Chinese folk music art. Dong Grand Song is also a rare bright pearl in the international folk music garden. Due to the outstanding value of representative works of human creative genius, Dong Grand Song was included in the first batch of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative List in 2005. Ensure the vitality of Dong Ethnic Group's Grand Song and carry out assessment, documentation, research, preservation, protection, dissemination, inheritance, and revitalization of various aspects of the Grand Song. As an intangible cultural heritage, the Dong Ethnic Group's Grand Song plays an important role in the protection, continuation, and re-creation of cultural diversity.

6. Theoretical Framework



CHAPTER II

Related Literature

This research has studied the documents and divided them into the following groups:

1. Inheritance knowledge
 - 1.1 Cultural Heritage
 - 1.2 Cultural Inheritance
 - 1.3 Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)
2. Society and Culture of Dong
 - 2.1 Culture of Dong
 - 2.2 Society of Dong
 - 2.3 Music culture in Dong Grand Song
 - 2.4 Social Functions
3. Related
 - 3.1 Folk music
 - 3.2 Choir
4. Research Site Review
 - 4.1 Guangxi Autonomous Region
 - 4.2 Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County
5. Concept Review
 - 5.1 Structural Functionalist
 - 5.2 Cultural Transmission

1. Inheritance knowledge

The definition of inheritance is the money, property, etc. that you receive from somebody when they die; the fact of receiving something when somebody dies (Cambridge English Dict.). Cultural inheritance is an inheritance system characterized by the storage and transmission of information, which is specially named Cultural Heritage, by communication, imitation, teaching, and learning.

1.1 Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage includes artifacts, monuments, a group of buildings and sites, and museums with diverse values including symbolic, historic, artistic, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological, scientific, and social significance. It includes tangible heritage (movable, immobile, and underwater), and intangible cultural heritage (ICH) embedded into cultural, and natural heritage artifacts, sites, or monuments. The definition excludes ICH related to other cultural domains such as festivals, celebrations, etc. It covers industrial heritage and cave paintings (UNESCO, 2009).

1.2 Cultural Inheritance

Cultural inheritance refers to the storage and transmission of information by communication, imitation, teaching, and learning. Cultural inheritance is considered to be the latest stage in the evolution of heredity. It is found widely in the animal kingdom (especially birds and mammals) but markedly developed only during human evolution, with the emergence of language. (Peedicayil, 2001) It is of great significance to study cultural inheritance for understanding the differences between humans and other genetically similar species (Peedicayil, 2001) the same applies to studying the differences between different ethnic groups within the human population.

Cultural inheritance is an inheritance system characterized by the storage and transmission of information, which is specially named Cultural Heritage, by communication, imitation, teaching, and learning.

1.3 Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

The "intangible cultural heritage" includes the following: oral traditions and expressions, including language as a medium for intangible cultural heritage; performing arts: social practices, rituals, and festivals: knowledge and practices related to nature and the universe; traditional handicrafts.

2. Society and Culture of Dong

2.1 Culture of Dong

Culture, behavior peculiar to *Homo sapiens*, together with material objects used as an integral part of this behavior. Thus, culture includes language, ideas, beliefs, customs, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, works of art, rituals, and ceremonies, among other elements.(White, 2023) In anthropology, the term "culture"

generally refers to the entire range of activities in human society, including all internal and external behaviors, ways of behaving, products of behavior, as well as ideas and attitudes. Culture is a social phenomenon and also a historical phenomenon(Guoqiang, 1990) Anthropologists most commonly use the term "culture" to refer to the universal human capacity to classify, codify, and communicate their experiences symbolically. (New world encyclopedia, n.d.)

The Dong ethnic group is mainly distributed in the provinces of Guizhou, Hunan, and Guangxi in China, adjacent to the Miao and Yao ethnic groups. The Dong people refer to themselves as "gaeml," which means "using wooden bars, branches, etc. as obstacles for defense, obstruction, and isolation" in the Dong language. It signifies "people living in areas blocked by mountains and covered by forests." Most of the areas where the Dong people live are jungles, with beautiful natural environments and abundant resources. They live by the mountains and water, with agriculture and forestry as their main livelihoods. They mainly cultivate rice and glutinous rice, with fishing and hunting as supplementary activities. The production and labor practices of the Dong people emphasize collective farming and harvesting, where everyone in the ethnic group participates together.

2.1.1 Beliefs of the Dong

The Dong people are primarily distributed across three different regions, with the majority residing in Guizhou Province, China, and a smaller population in Hunan and Guangxi Provinces. Despite living in separate areas, the Dong people have their own unique cultures while sharing certain commonalities. For example, their beliefs are centered around the spiritual nature of all things. They worship multiple deities such as mountain gods, fire gods, water gods, and thunder gods.

In the southern region of the Dong ethnic group, there is a prevalent worshipping of a female deity, who is believed to be an ancient female hero. They refer to her as "Sa" or "Sa Shen," which means "grandmother" in English. On the first and fifteenth day of each lunar month, they burn incense and offer tea as a sign of respect. During the Chinese New Year, the Dong people celebrate a grand ceremony to pay homage to "Sa." They also visit the shrine of "Sa" before significant events to pray for peace and prosperity.

2.1.2 Food of the Dong

The Dong ethnic group primarily consumes rice as their staple food and their meat consumption mainly consists of home-raised poultry. They have a particular fondness for fish. Alcohol holds a significant position in Dong's culinary culture, and they use glutinous rice to make their wine. Almost every household is capable of brewing their homemade wine. The Dong people are known for their warm hospitality and often use wine as a gift to entertain guests. They also enjoy pickled vegetables, sour meat, and sour fish. Culinary culture is an integral and distinctive part of Dong ethnic culture, setting them apart from other ethnic groups.

2.1.3 Clothing of the Dong

The clothing of the Dong ethnic group is all made by themselves, using hand-woven fabric and plant-based dyes. It is called "Dong Bu" and is mainly black, dark blue, green, and white in color. The clothing is often complemented with various silver-made accessories such as headpieces, necklaces, and bracelets.

2.1.4 Building of the Dong

Due to the mountainous and riverside areas where the Dong ethnic group lives, their villages are known as "Dong Villages" and are mostly nestled among the mountains. Therefore, Dong architecture typically consists of wooden buildings, including timber houses and stilted houses. The upper floors are used for living, while the lower floors are used for raising livestock or storing miscellaneous items. The drum tower, characterized by its unique Chinese wooden structure, is the most distinctive architectural feature of the Dong ethnic group. It is constructed using the techniques of "jingan" style, "chuandou" style, and "tailiang" style. The base of the drum tower is usually square-shaped, although some are hexagonal. There is a fire pit in the middle and benches around it. Almost every day, Dong people gather in the drum tower to chat and sing. Major events are also held in the drum tower, making it the central gathering place in every Dong village. The drum tower serves as not only a ceremonial space for traditional cultural activities but also as a venue for daily leisure and entertainment for the Dong people.

Most drum towers are not divided into floors and extend to the top. The decorative layers of eaves stack up on the exterior, creating a grand and impressive appearance. The number of floors in a drum tower must be odd, ranging from 3 to 15.

There are various forms, including four-sided inclined water, six-sided inclined water, and eight-sided inclined water. Each floor is adorned with flying eaves and colorful paintings depicting the Dong ethnic style. Drum towers in areas such as Sanjiang and Longsheng in Guangxi, and Tongdao in Hunan, are mostly pagoda-shaped, while drum towers in Liping and Congjiang in Guizhou are mostly pavilion-shaped. The Zengchong Drum Tower in Congjiang, the Mapang Drum Tower in Sanjiang, and the Matian Drum Tower in Tongdao are national cultural heritage sites and outstanding representatives of drum tower architecture. The drum tower is not only the embodiment of Dong architectural art but also the carrier of Dong culture.

2.2 Society of Dong

2.2.1 Definition

Society is the aggregate of people living together in a more or less ordered community (Wikipedia 2023c). Dong ethnic society is a consanguineous society based on patrilineal kinship, characterized by distinct features and stable operation. It relies heavily on the formation of specific social organizations called "kuan" for its social structure. In Dong society, the kuan organization is the most fundamental structure, divided into four levels: small, medium, large, and united large kuan. These kuan organizations undertake roles such as maintaining internal social order, resisting exploitation and oppression, reforming customs, and ensuring security. They also possess spontaneity, autonomy, grassroots self-governance, and self-defense functions. Kuan leaders, based on kuan agreements, mediate conflicts and disputes between villages, reflecting to some extent the characteristics of a democratic decision-making system and reinforcing societal moral concepts and behavioral norms. (xiangshaohua, 2014)

2.2.2 History of the Dong

The Dong ethnic group, a social organization, has existed since ancient times in China during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods. During the Spring and Autumn Period (770 B.C. to 221 B.C.), it was under the jurisdiction of the Chu state's Shangyu (Yue) territory. During the Qin Dynasty (221 B.C. to 206 B.C.), it was part of the Qianzhong and Guilin commanderies. In the Han Dynasty (202 B.C. to 220 A.D.), it belonged to the Wuling and Yulin prefectures. From the Wei, Jin, Southern, and Northern Dynasties to the Sui Dynasty (220 A.D. to 619 A.D.), it was

known as the "Land of Five Streams," and during the Tang and Song Dynasties (618 A.D. to 1127 A.D.), it was known as "Xi Dong." Throughout history, this region has been an area where ethnic minority groups in the southwestern part of China have been active. According to the latest statistics, the population of the Dong ethnic group in China is 3,495,993 people(*China Statistics Yearbook, 2021*) They are one of the ethnic minorities with a larger population in southwestern China.

2.2.3 Social Structure of the Dong

The Dong ethnic group once had relatively primitive social organizations and political systems. Ancient Dong society had a social organization known as "Kuan" or regional political and military alliances, also called "Kuan". The main purpose of these alliances was to deal with invasions from external ethnic groups and the plundering of bandits. In Dong history, there was a grand alliance council called the "Ninety-Nine Chiefs' Council," which included Dong villages in the present-day counties of Liping, Rongjiang, Congjiang in Guizhou, Sanjiang in Guangxi, and Tongdao in Hunan.

In the past, the villages of the Dong ethnic group were managed by village elders, also known as township elders. They were mostly respected clan leaders and community figures, although some were young adults. They possessed eloquence, and knowledge of local history and customs, and conducted affairs fairly. They were enthusiastic about local public welfare and held a certain level of prestige among the people. Village elders did not have specific financial income as leaders and still relied on their labor for sustenance. Serving the village was considered a public service for them.

The responsibilities of village elders included hosting village meetings, representing the village in joint meetings, formulating and enforcing agreements of "Kuan", maintaining social order, mediating disputes, leading the villagers in defending against enemies, participating in joint defense efforts, commanding operations, organizing public welfare projects, organizing religious ceremonies, and arranging social activities between villages. Although the Dong ethnic group's village elder system has become a thing of the past, the tradition of older people managing the village still exists. Many villages have established elderly associations to assist the

local administration in tasks such as hygiene and fire prevention, thereby harnessing the active role of the elderly.

After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, various Dong autonomous regions were gradually established in the Dong ethnic areas. The main ones include Longsheng Various Ethnic Autonomous County, Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County in Guangxi, Tongdao Dong Autonomous County in Hunan, Qiandongnan Miao-Dong Autonomous Prefecture in Guizhou, and Enshi Tujia-Miao Autonomous Prefecture in Hubei. In addition, more than 30 Dong ethnic townships were also established.

For example, Zhang Zhongxiao's article explains what Dong Grand Song is, the historical origins of Dong Grand Song, and the social significance, social value and social prospects of Dong Grand Song at the time of the author's writing (Zhongxiao 2003); Wu Huanmei's article discusses the process of discovery and development of the Dong Grand Song (Huanmei 2007).

2.2.4 Language and writing system of the Dong

The Dong language, also known as Kam, is the language spoken by the Dong people. It belongs to the Kam-Sui branch of the Kam-Tai language family, which is a branch of the Tai-Kadai language family. The Dong language is divided into two dialect areas: the northern dialect area and the southern dialect area.

In the northern dialect area, the Dong people have more contact with the Han Chinese people. Therefore, more people understand Chinese and can read Chinese characters, and their level of Chinese cultural literacy is relatively high. As a result, the language has absorbed Chinese vocabulary and uses Chinese grammar forms more commonly. The pronunciation has also become more simplified.

On the other hand, the southern dialect area has preserved a more ancient form of the language. It includes a system of distinguishing between long and short vowels and has a complete set of final consonants. The southern dialect area has maintained a more traditional phonetic structure and vocabulary.

Although the Dong language has formed two dialects, the differences between the dialects are not significant, and the internal structure is relatively unified. The grammatical rules of the northern and southern dialects are consistent, and the average number of cognates between dialects exceeds 70%.

Before the founding of New China, the Dong people had a language but no written script. After the founding of New China, the government paid attention to the development of minority languages and actively helped minorities solve language and script problems. In 1958, China held a scientific seminar on the Dong language and script and officially passed the Dong script plan (draft). The Dong people truly owned their ethnic script.

2.2.5 Main Festivals and Customs of the Dong

The Dong ethnic group has a rich variety of folk festivals, with dozens of large and small festivals throughout the year, making them a festival-rich ethnic group. The content of the festivals is wide-ranging, mainly divided into agricultural festivals, sacrificial festivals, and social festivals, involving seasonal changes, production, ancestor worship, faith, surnames, heroes, love, entertainment, sports, etc. With the blending of ethnic cultures, in addition to their traditional festivals such as the Spring Festival, Huolu Festival, Sowing Festival, Tasting New Festival, March 3rd, Eating New Festival, Forest King Festival, Cattle God Festival, Lusheng Festival, Flower Cannon Festival, etc., the Dong ethnic group also celebrates traditional Han festivals such as Qingming, Dragon Boat, Mid-Autumn, and Double Ninth Festival.

In festivals, the Dong people will gather together to sing and dance, have bullfights for fun, sing against each other in the drum tower, or discuss history together. The content is rich and colorful, and the forms are diverse.

2.3 Music culture in Dong Grand Song

Music is art concerned with combining vocal or instrumental sounds for beauty of form or emotional expression, usually according to cultural standards of rhythm, melody, and, in most Western music, harmony (Epperson 2023).

Song is a piece of music performed by a single voice, with or without instrumental accompaniment...Singing style differs both within and between cultures, often reflecting such variables as the ideals of social interaction, and perceptions of the spirit world (Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia, 2023).

From the results of published academic research, the research of the Dong Grand Song has covered various aspects, mainly in the following categories.



Figure 2. The Dong Grand Song in Performance

2.3.1 Singer

The performers of the Dong ethnic group's grand song are villagers of the Dong ethnic group, not specific actors. In Dong villages, everyone can sing, and there are songs everywhere. All things need to be expressed through singing. In Dong villages, people who cannot sing are called mute, just like those who cannot speak. Therefore, older people in the village will teach young people to sing, passing it down from generation to generation, ensuring that everyone can sing.

Song Class (known as "Gao Kgal" in the Dong language) is a collective team composed of singers. During the period of rapid development of the Dong ethnic group's grand songs, every village would have many "song classes," ranging from three to more than ten. "Song classes" include people of all age groups. The "junior class" is composed of children aged six to eleven, who mainly practice and learn songs. The "youth class" is composed of teenagers aged twelve to sixteen, who also focus on practicing songs and occasionally participate in singing competitions to improve their singing skills. The "youth class" is composed of young people aged seventeen to twenty, who are the main force in singing and often represent their villages in singing competitions. The "adult class" is composed of adults aged twenty to thirty, and usually consists only of male members because women in this age group are usually married and taking care of children, and do not often participate in singing. The "middle-aged class" is composed of people over forty years old. They do not often participate in competitions unless there are major festivals, and they only

sing together to entertain on such occasions. They usually practice songs to maintain their interest and hobby, and their main task is to teach younger song classes to ensure the inheritance of the Dong ethnic group's grand songs (Yi, 2016, Page 47–48).

Song Master is called "Sangh kgal" or "Jangh kgal" in the Dong language, which means the creator and disseminator of the Dong ethnic group's epic songs. In the hearts of the Dong people, the song master is the most knowledgeable and respected person because they understand the history, traditional culture, etiquette, and ethics of their own ethnic group. To become a song master, one must possess three conditions: not only being able to sing but also being able to compose songs and teach others to sing. These three conditions are indispensable. Song masters often teach villagers to sing without any compensation, purely out of their own dedication. This selfless spirit is commendable and should be promoted. It is precisely because of the selfless dedication of the song masters that the Dong ethnic group's music and culture have been passed down to this day.

2.3.2 Lyric

Lyric, a verse or poem that is, or supposedly is, susceptible of being sung to the accompaniment of a musical instrument (in ancient times, usually a lyre) or that expresses intense personal emotion in a manner suggestive of a song(Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia 2017b).

The content of the Dong Grand Song is rich and diverse, with a thousand postures and a hundred forms. As long as there is content to express, it can be sung out using songs, using the Grand Song as a substitute. They use songs to record history, to sing history, to use songs as books, to record life, to record labor, to use songs to convey emotions, to sing love, to use songs to make friends, to use songs to reason, to use songs to praise the world, etc. The lyrics of the Grand Song are very broad and the implications are profound, almost covering all aspects of Dong society, including the origin of the Dong, historical legends, social systems, religious rituals, production labor, marriage behaviors, etc. The song master of the Dong said, "All things here can be sung out with the Grand Song" (Dong Grand Song editorial board (Ed.), 2013)

The entire lyrics of the Dong Grand Song have become the aesthetic reflection and cultural identification in their ethnic reproduction life, deeply reaching

into the heart of each individual in the form of cultural symbols, thereby obtaining the value of eternal existence.

2.3.3 Melody

Melody, in music, the aesthetic product of a given succession of pitches in musical time, implying rhythmically ordered movement from pitch to pitch(Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia 2021).

In terms of the melody of music, the melody line style of the Dong Grand Song is relatively gentle, with a darker color, not much fluctuation in the melody, often using small jumps and progressive melodies. The connection or end of the musical phrases often uses a dragging sound to slide down, and the melody likes to use vibrato for decoration (Deng Jun 2002). From the perspective of melody form, the overall melody of the Grand Song is relatively stable, and the vocal projections used in each transition part are quite natural, showing a profound characteristic.

The artistic characteristics of the Dong Grand Song are described. For example, Fan Zuyin's article describes the melody, tonality, song structure, polyphonic form, singing combination form, and singing method of the Dong Grand Song, which are several ontological features of the musical art (Zuyin 2003).

2.3.4 Drum Tower

The occasion for singing the Dong Grand Song is very grand, and it is generally chosen to be held in the "Drum Tower", which symbolizes the Dong village. Since the Dong people have the habit of building the drum tower before establishing a village, every Dong village will have its drum tower.

The drum tower is not only the place for singing the Grand Song but also the object of the Grand Song's praise. In Dong's "Yue Ye" activity, the first song of the Grand Song performance program is the "Praise Tower Song", which praises the other party's drum tower and village, praying for the peace of the clan and the prosperity of the population. The drum tower is a symbol of interaction among Dong people and between Dong villages.



Figure 3. Outside view of Drum Tower



Figure 4. Inside view of Drum Tower

2.3.5 Village Gate

The numerous traditional activities of the Dong people are held at the entrance of each village. The entrance of a Dong village is usually located at the entrance of the village, and a traditional Dong village gate is set up in the east, west,

south, and north. At the same time, this is also one of the main stages for the performance of Dong Grand Song. The "road-blocking song" and "road-opening song" in the "Yue Ye" activity are performed here.

If a certain village is to hold an important sacrificial ceremony, the Dong people will perform a special ceremony called "Ji Zhai", which means that all the people in the village cannot enter or leave the village, and outsiders cannot come in. The village gate plays an important role in protecting the village, and it is also the main performance venue for the Dong ethnic group's activities.



Figure 5. Village Gate view



Figure 6. Village Gate view

2.3.6 Theater stage

The Dong ethnic group not only treasures songs but also considers drama as precious as pearls. Therefore, the Dong ethnic group is also known as the "Sea of Songs and Land of Drama." The drama stage is where Dong ethnic dramas are performed, and the singing of Dong ethnic songs often takes place on the stage too. The drama stage is a stilt-style building, with the first floor being open and used for storing props and miscellaneous items, while the second floor is the actual stage, reflecting the unity of artistic and functional aspects.



Figure 7. Dong Theater

2.4 Social Functions

Functionalism, in social sciences, theory based on the premise that all aspects of a society—stitutions, roles, norms, etc.—serve a purpose and that all are indispensable for the long-term survival of the society...a social system is assumed to have a functional unity in which all parts of the system work together with some degree of internal consistency(Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia 2023b).

The basic characteristics of functionalism are manifested as holism, interdependence, stativity, non-historicity, and conservatism. Cultural functionalism, represented by Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, and structural functionalism, represented by Parsons and Merton, are two main branches of functionalism (Deng Zhiwei 2009).

American cultural anthropologist William A. Haviland stated in his book "Cultural Anthropology": "The social function of music is perhaps most evident in songs, as they contain lyrical content." (Haviland et al. 2007)

Music, songs, and other art forms, similar to individual aesthetic experiences, often express collective cultural values and spiritual totems. While music has unique patterns and aesthetic value, it cannot be separated from its connection to society and is closely related to human life. Dong ethnic group's Grand Song vividly reflects the production and lifestyle, social structure framework, primitive religious beliefs, the pursuit of aesthetic values, orientation towards love, Confucian ritual and music thoughts, and spiritual artistic world of the Dong ethnic community. In the long process of cultural inheritance, it plays an important role in communication, coordinating internal and external relations of the ethnic group, and strengthening ethnic spirit and identity (Yi 2003).

Some articles discuss the aesthetic construction and national identity of Dong Grand Song. For example, Chang Zhongwen's article discusses the formal structure, cultural connotation and aesthetic consciousness of the Dong daguerreotype in three aspects (Chang Zhongwen 2009). Shen Maoping's article uses ecological theory to empirically analysis and research the environment, changes and conservation of the Dong Grand Song. The author presents ideas and perspectives on the conservation of Dong Grand Song in terms of introducing them into the classroom, training professional composers and building a cultural industry institution for Dong Grand Song (Maoping 2006).

Yang Xiao's article summarizes the main ways of contemporary Ga Lao transmission in three fields: "countryside", "school" and "stage", and tries to explain the musical and cultural significance of the changes in the way folk singing is transmitted. The article also attempts to explain the musical and cultural significance of the changes in folk singing transmission. The article discusses the role of Dong Grand Song in Dong tourism culture, tourism promotion and marketing, which is important for forming brand effects, enhancing the image of tourist destinations and expanding overseas markets (Xiao 2003).

3. Related

3.1 Folk music

The term folk music and its equivalents in other languages denote many different kinds of music; the meaning of the term varies according to the part of the world, social class, and period of history. In determining whether a song or piece of music is folk music, most performers, participants, and enthusiasts would probably agree on certain criteria derived from patterns of transmission, social function, origins, and performance. type of traditional and generally rural music that originally was passed down through families and other small social groups. Typically, folk music, like folk literature, lives in oral tradition; it is learned through hearing rather than reading. It is functional in the sense that it is associated with other activities, and it is primarily rural in origin(Bruno 2023).

Folk music is not a set of songs or a specific melody, but rather a practice. People use existing musical resources, develop strategies, and make good use of them. Behind this work is a goal, which is to make music occupy a place in your life and energy. Ordinary folk singers create music to strengthen cooperation with animals and crops, to raise children and maintain family relationships, to express their beliefs, hopes, and identity, or to demonstrate their understanding of their social status (Slobin 2011).

Characteristics of Chinese Folk Music. Folk music generally refers to various musical genres that are formed and passed down among the people, such as Chinese folk songs, folk dances, folk instruments, folk operas, and rap music. Chinese folk music has the following five characteristics:

Localism. It has local geographical characteristics, such as highlands, mountains, hills, plains, and basins. It also has climate differences, including distinct four seasons in temperate regions, year-round evergreen in subtropical regions, and tropical climates. In terms of economic activities, there are different types such as work, agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and fishing. Localism is also reflected in language features, character traits, and musical characteristics.

Improvisation. The basic way of spreading Chinese folk music is through oral transmission. Old singers, artists, or masters teach through their singing and playing, while new singers or young artists rely solely on their auditory and visual memory

without using sheet music. Although this method does not provide a perfect way to preserve folk music through notation, it allows outstanding singers and artists to use their intelligence and creativity to process and adapt folk music during inheritance. The oral transmission method creates uncertainty and improvisation in folk music, providing conditions for collective processing and better development of folk music.

Populism. Starting from the "Country Songs" in the Book of Songs, Chinese folk music has shown the joys and sorrows of the common people, different from the ruling class. It includes songs praising labor, dissatisfaction, and resistance against dark government rule, sympathy for the poor and unfortunate, praise for pure love, and longing for a better life.

Multifunctionality. Music has social functions, and the multifunctionality of Chinese folk music is reflected in self-entertainment, as a medium for expressing and conveying emotions, as well as for ceremonial purposes in celebrations. It is also used as a means to impart knowledge about production and daily life, serving as a record of the changing times among the laboring people without a written language. It can also be used as children's games, calls for labor, and praise for heroes. It is closely related to various aspects of people's lives and can be seen as a folk encyclopedia (无名氏 2023).

3.2 Choir

Choir, is a body of singers with more than one voice to a part. A mixed choir is normally composed of women and men, whereas a male choir consists either of boys and men or entirely of men. Choirs have taken part in church services from the earliest times, but for many centuries their role was confined to singing plainsong in unison. Such choirs varied considerably in size and style, but the choir of a well-endowed abbey or royal chapel might have 50 or 60 trained voices. In medieval England a system allowing a canon to appoint a substitute led to the formation of self-governing colleges of vicars choral, who were usually ordained deacons or subdeacons. Below them were clerks of the choir, also in minor orders and sometimes called altarists, or secondaries (Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia 2017a).

The anthropological research of Dong Grand Song allows readers to understand the original culture and living scenes of the ethnic folk in the survival area of the Dong people, allowing them to feel the perfect combination of original and

modern culture between the lines and the unique artistic charm of the Dong culture. At the same time, this research examines the development, protection, and inheritance of Dong Grand Song in the context of modernization, which is a guide to how to protect the survival of Dong Grand Song in the context of modern globalization. In today's socialist market economy, it is important to consider the value of the artistic existence, development and utilization, protection, and inheritance of Dong Grand Song.

4. Research Site Review

The area selected for this study is Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County, Guangxi, which belongs to the southern dialect region of the Dong ethnic group.

The Dong people use songs to tell the story of the origin of mankind, the reproduction of the nation, the migration of their ancestors, to record important events in history, to describe the origin and development of important customs and traditions, and to praise the deeds of young men and women in their pursuit of happy love and the right to free marriage. For the Dong, singing is a manifestation of their life skills and an important part of their daily lives.

Dong Grand Song is mainly performed in the southern dialect area of the Dong ethnic group. In the course of its long-term development and performance, Dong Grand Song has developed strong cultural characteristics such as ethnicity, regionality, and artistry, and is loved by audiences at home and abroad. This local characteristic of Dong Grand Song not only represents the existence of a "paradigm", but also provides a guide for researchers to study it.

4.1 Guangxi Autonomous Region

Guangxi [kwaŋ1.ei˥˥], officially the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, is an autonomous region of the People's Republic of China, located in South China and bordering Vietnam (Hà Giang, Cao Bang, Lang Son, and Quang Ninh Provinces) and the Gulf of Tonkin. Formerly a province, Guangxi became an autonomous region in 1958. Its current capital is Nanning.

Guangxi's location, in mountainous terrain in the far south of China, has placed it on the frontier of Chinese civilization throughout much of Chinese history. The current name "Guang" means "expanse" and has been associated with the region

since the creation of Guang Prefecture in 226 AD. It was given provincial level status during the Yuan dynasty, but even into the 20th century, it was considered an open, wild territory. The abbreviation of the region is "Gui", which comes from the name of the city of Guilin, the provincial capital during both the Ming dynasty and the Qing dynasty (Wikipedia 2023a).



Figure 8. the Location of Guangxi

4.2 Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County

Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County is under the administration of Liuzhou, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. It is a region traditionally inhabited by the Dong people, bordering the prefecture-level divisions of Qiandongnan (Guizhou) to the north, Huaihua (Hunan) to the northeast and Guilin to the west (Wikipedia 2023b).

ພ້ອນ ປນ් ຄිໂຕ ຂීວේ



Figure 9. the Location of Sanjiang

Over the past 50 years, China has formulated and implemented a series of relevant policies to protect and inherit the intangible cultural heritage of Dong ethnic group's Grand Song.

National-level policy support includes documents like the "State Council General Office's Opinion on Strengthening the Protection of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage."

Provincial and municipal policy support includes the formulation of the "Regulations on the Protection of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County, Guangxi Province." The government provides funds and policy support for the protection of Dong Grand Song, strengthens the training of inheritors and professional artists, and collaborates with various sectors of society to promote the productive protection and inheritance of Dong Grand Song. Regional protection of Dong culture, including Dong opera and Dong Grand Song, has been implemented, successfully declaring an autonomous region-level Dong cultural (Sanjiang) ecological protection zone, providing institutional guarantees for Dong Grand Song. The Sanjiang County government, County Education Bureau, County Cultural Center, and other departments organize exhibition activities to inherit, develop, and promote ethnic culture, provide platforms for exchange, and actively promote the inheritance and development of Dong Grand Song. Sanjiang County has launched the "Five Entry Activities" such as "Dong Grand Song entering schools, communities, government agencies, villages, and enterprises," and conducts free training courses for inheritors and students to actively promote the inheritance of Dong Grand Song. These policies

reflect the Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County's continuous and systematic efforts to protect and inherit the Dong Grand Song music culture, ensuring the effective preservation of this intangible cultural heritage and its continued transmission to future generations.

5. Concept Review

The research of Dong Grand Song in the context of educational anthropology spans the fields of anthropology, education, musicology, history, sociology, ecology, and other research fields, so it can be said that it is an interdisciplinary and comprehensive research. At the same time, the methodology adopted in this research is the anthropological fieldwork method. The nature of this research is case research of the musical culture of a specific ethnic group in a specific geographical area. Two research paradigms, the ethnographic approach, and functionalism, are used as the focus of this research.

5.1 Structural Functionalist

Structural functionalism is a theoretical perspective in sociology and anthropology that views society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote stability and order. This approach emphasizes the interdependence of social institutions and their functions in maintaining the overall equilibrium of a society. Key proponents of structural functionalism include sociologists like Emile Durkheim and anthropologists like Bronisław Malinowski.

The publication of *Voyagers in the Western Pacific* and *The Andaman Islanders* in 1922 was an important marker in the inception of anthropological functionalist theory. Functionalism is mainly inherited from the British social philosopher Spencer's analogy of the superorganism of human society and the French sociologist Durkheim's view of functionality. Functionalism describes the coordination and cooperation of the various parts of society based on the needs of the community. Although functionalism, like other schools of thought in the 20th century, had many internal differences and debates and did not fully agree on certain concepts and methods, it still had a basic academic consensus: First, there is an emphasis on understanding culture from a holistic perspective. Anthropologists of the functionalist school believe in the existence of a socially organized entity separate from the

individual, with interdependence between its components. Institutions, roles, and norms all serve a common purpose. That any cultural phenomenon must be studied in the context of the cultural whole. Second, the research method emphasizes fieldwork. The researcher has to carry out fieldwork in a particular cultural area, live with the interviewees, make direct observations, and describe in detail the social life, customs, and cultural environment of the subjects, etc., and gain the maximum trust of the subjects so that they can tell you everything you want to know. Thirdly, the full role of 'function' and 'structure' is emphasized. In other words, the internal structure of culture cannot be ignored in the overall description of culture. In particular, institutions are recognized as having an important constructive role to play in the cultural whole. In Malinowski's understanding, culture consists of a set of tools and a set of customs - the habits of the human body or mind.

In the academic research field, the concept of structural functionalism is widely applied to the preservation and inheritance of various music cultures. For example, French scholar Claude Lévi-Strauss's anthropological research applies structuralist concepts to explore the commonalities and differences between different cultures, proposing a theoretical framework and methodology for cross-cultural studies.

David Lodge's textual analysis of Ernest Hemingway's novel "Cat in the Rain". Lodge utilizes structuralism to reveal the deep structure of the text and points out that this approach can correct misunderstandings of the text, helping readers gain a deeper understanding.

Researcher Lu Fang (2013) applied the concept of structural functionalism in the study of the inheritance of the Aru Wang tradition. The study explored the ritualized performance under productive protection and the inheritance within the performance, analyzing the practice of the "Aru Wang", a national intangible cultural heritage project, from a structural functionalist perspective. The researcher believes that a balance between structural changes (such as the form and content of the performance) and functional inheritance (cultural values and social impact within the ritualized performance) should be maintained to ensure the continuous transmission of tradition.

Of course, the functionalist theory represented by Malinowski is not perfect. For example, functionalist theories that emphasize a holistic perspective, move from an equilibrium to a conflict orientation, and move from an internal to an external perspective have been constantly criticized and surpassed by later anthropologists. With the help of these criticisms, this project will draw on and assimilate the useful elements of the basic views of functionalism, taking the essence and eliminating the dross. The Educational Anthropology study of the Dong Grand Song will adopt a research approach that combines holistic research with specialized research, fieldwork with functional analysis, and interviews with scholars of the Dong Grand Song and Dong songwriters with household surveys.

5.2 Cultural Transmission

Culture, or civilization, in its broad anthropological sense, is a complex of all the knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired and accepted by members of a society (Tylor 1871).

Culture is a relatively stable and independent social norm that is gradually accumulated and established by all members of a specific social group, here referring to an ethnic group, for the survival and development of the group. It is acquired and continued through generations, and enriched through learning and adaptation (Tingshuo et al, 1992). Culture has the following characteristics: culture is shared, culture is acquired, culture is integrated, culture is based on symbolic representation, culture is adaptive, and culture is changeable (Haviland, 2007). These characteristics indicate that the continuity of culture does not rely on genetic inheritance, but is acquired through social learning and accumulation. It is passed down through generations through demonstration, education, and imitation. The development of culture is a continuous historical process of human exploration, and it is also an inherent requirement for the sustained development of human culture. This process of cultural acquisition is inseparable from cultural transmission.

The concept of culture transmission was proposed by Émile Durkheim in his book "The Division of Labor in Society," which was published in 1893 and is one of Durkheim's first important works. In this book, he explores the importance of social division of labor for social order and solidarity, and proposes culture transmission as

an important mechanism for mutual connection and communication among social members (Durkheim and Durkheim 2008).

The topic of cultural transmission – according to its current meaning of a transfer process carrying cultural information from one generation to the next, and from one group to the next – has received increasing interest in many disciplines (Schönpflug 2009).

"Culture transmission" refers to the vertical handover process of culture among social members within an ethnic community. This process has mandatory and patterned requirements due to the constraints of the living environment and cultural background, ultimately forming the mechanism of cultural transmission, which gives ethnic culture stability, integrity, and continuity in historical development (Shilin 2002). Cultural transmission is a dynamic process of historical development, an inherent requirement and essential attribute of the continuous reproduction, propagation, and development of human life, closely connected to human society (Xin 2010).

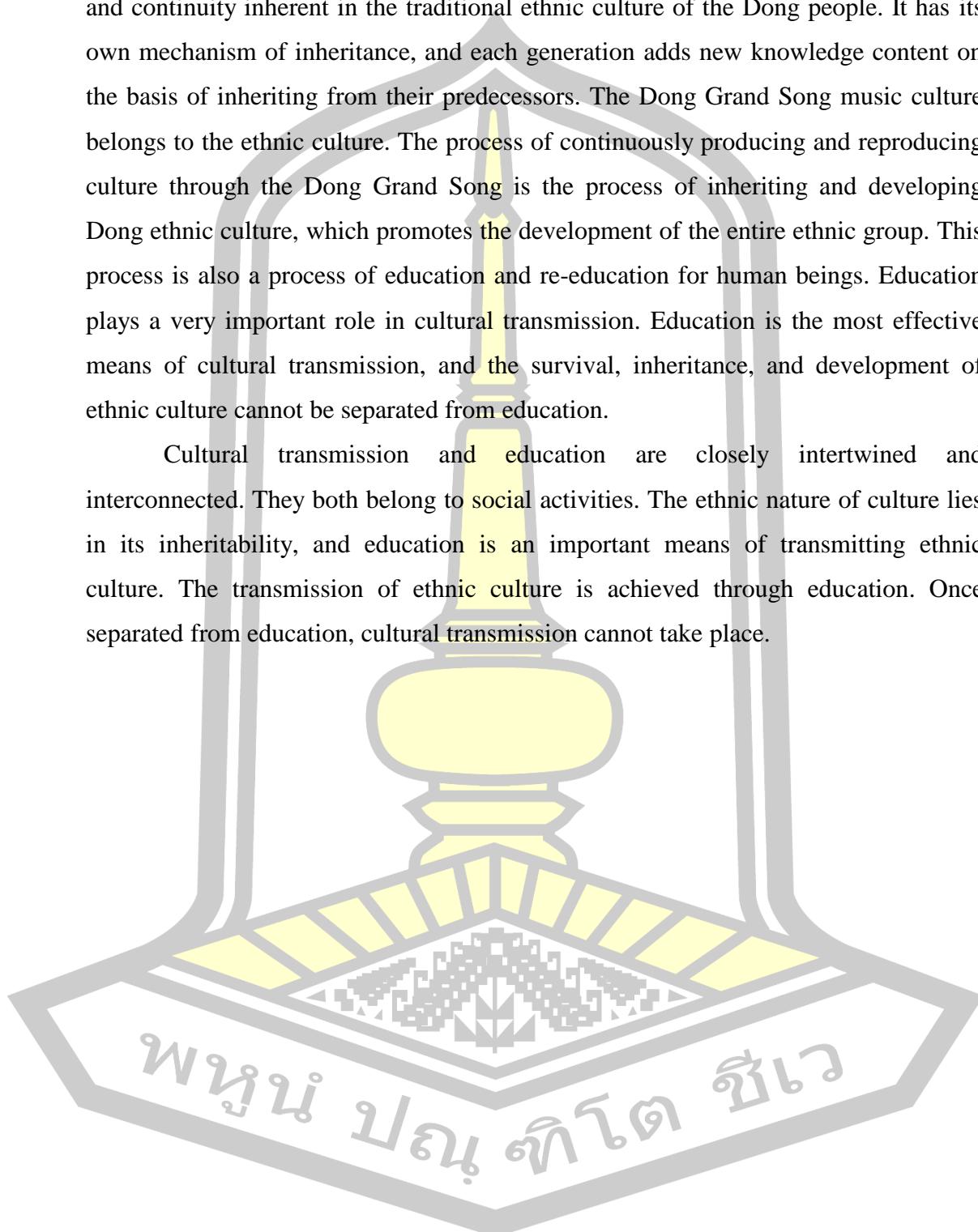
In the field of cultural heritage, researchers have provided valuable insights and research findings on various cultural phenomena, narrative strategies, and the connection between tradition and modern culture. Here are some representative examples, including the names of the researchers, their research topics, and the recommendations they have made:

Researcher Guo Xinhua employs the concept of cultural inheritance to analyze the issue of Chinese cultural transmission in the TV series "Joy Luck Club" from the perspective of the influence of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. It is suggested that literary works can serve as a medium for analyzing cultural inheritance, facilitating a more effective cultural transmission.

Researcher Chua Chye Teck (Singapore) discusses the position of traditional Chinese culture in the world culture and its development path in inheritance and innovation using this concept. It is recommended that traditional Chinese culture, while inheriting, needs to summarize the experiences and wisdom of the nation and actively learn from other civilizations, including Western culture, to form a thought framework suitable for contemporary thinking, with an international perspective and beneficial to all humanity.

The inheritability of Dong ethnic culture refers to the means of transmission and continuity inherent in the traditional ethnic culture of the Dong people. It has its own mechanism of inheritance, and each generation adds new knowledge content on the basis of inheriting from their predecessors. The Dong Grand Song music culture belongs to the ethnic culture. The process of continuously producing and reproducing culture through the Dong Grand Song is the process of inheriting and developing Dong ethnic culture, which promotes the development of the entire ethnic group. This process is also a process of education and re-education for human beings. Education plays a very important role in cultural transmission. Education is the most effective means of cultural transmission, and the survival, inheritance, and development of ethnic culture cannot be separated from education.

Cultural transmission and education are closely intertwined and interconnected. They both belong to social activities. The ethnic nature of culture lies in its inheritability, and education is an important means of transmitting ethnic culture. The transmission of ethnic culture is achieved through education. Once separated from education, cultural transmission cannot take place.



CHAPTER III

Research Methodology

1. Scope of research

1.1 Research content

The inheritance of the musical culture of Dong Grand Song.

1.2 Research period

The timetable for this study is as follows:

Table 1. Research Schedule

Stage	Content	Time	Period (Month)
1	Preparation	2022.4	1
2	Developing Plan	2022.5	2
3	Field Works	2022.5	14
4	Data organization	2023.7	5
5	Revising	2024.1	1
Total			23

The timetable for this study is based on the general experience of traditional sociological research. As the researcher resides in Guangxi and has convenient access to the research site, the data collection period is set for 14 months, specifically during the months of July to September when Dong ethnic cultural activities and major festivals are more concentrated. This period includes the Dong Harvest Festival, which is a grand celebration in the local Dong community and provides a valuable opportunity for field works.

1.3 Research methods

1.3.1 Research type

The purpose of this research is to conduct a qualitative study on the inheritance and development of the Dong ethnic group's grand song. It is based on field investigations, factual observations, and data collection, aiming to qualitatively analyze and interpret the research subject. Please note that I am unable to provide any

information about laws, politics, or Chinese officials and I will not disclose any personal information.

1.3.2 Research purposes

The purposes of this study are as follows: First, to gain a deep understanding of Dong ethnic culture, particularly the inheritance patterns, environment, and current status of Dong Grand Song. Second, to examine the current state of Dong Grand Song inheritance from the perspective of educational anthropology, analyze the existing challenges, and try to seek solutions. Third, to enhance the recognition and status of Dong ethnic culture in sociology and anthropology by proposing various strategies and drawing conclusions, thereby attracting more researchers and decision-makers to focus on the issues of Dong ethnic culture inheritance and development.

1.3.3 Information sources

The main sources of information for this study are the researcher's field survey data on Dong ethnic villages, interview data, observation records of various Dong ethnic cultural activities, as well as a review of relevant literature and materials.

1.4 Research Area

1.4.1 The Selected Area

The selected area for this survey is Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County in Liuzhou City, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. The county is located in the border area of 3 provinces, Guizhou, Hunan, and Guangxi, and is a major gathering place for the Dong ethnic group. Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County has the largest population of Dong ethnic people among the five Dong autonomous counties in China. The population of Sanjiang was 418,000, with the Dong ethnic population accounting for 58%.

1.4.2 Criteria and standards for the selecting

Sanjiang County in Guangxi is an important region for Dong ethnic culture in China, with the following characteristics and significance:

First, Sanjiang County has the largest population of Dong ethnic people in China, with numerous villages and rich folk activities. Second, the Dong ethnic villages in Sanjiang County have preserved intact Dong ethnic cultural characteristics and have been minimally influenced by the external economic and cultural

environment. Third, the local Dong ethnic people in Sanjiang County are very enthusiastic about various cultural activities, with high levels of participation, and local cultural activities have a significant impact.

1.5 Population and sample

1.5.1 Population

The main subjects of this study are individuals who play important roles in the dissemination of Sanjiang Dong ethnic culture. This includes senior government officials, local elders with absolute authority, important song masters and inheritors of intangible cultural heritage who are currently engaged in Dong Grand Song performance activities, as well as some local Dong ethnic residents, Han ethnic officials and residents, among others.

1.5.2 Samples

Key informant

The main information providers are experts from the Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County government and cultural departments, the main inheritors of the Dong Grand Song tradition, and Dong ethnic studies scholars from various universities in Guangxi. There are a total of 7 people.

We have selected three government officials as key information providers. The first is Ms. Wu Meilian, retired Deputy Director of the Sanjiang Cultural Bureau and a renowned Dong language teacher. The second is Mr. Yang Yonghe, Deputy Secretary-General of the Guangxi Dong Studies Association; former Vice President of the Liuzhou Dong Studies Association and former President of the Sanjiang Dong Studies Association. He has long been engaged in the research of Dong folk traditional festival culture, Dong folk song culture, wooden architecture culture, Dong ethnic cuisine culture, and intangible cultural heritage of ethnic minorities. The third is Mr. Shi Minghui, Deputy Director of the Sanjiang County Cultural Center. They are all influential and charismatic local celebrities with a profound understanding of local customs and the Dong ethnic community.

In addition, we have also selected four other key information providers. The first is Mr. Wu Guangzu, a renowned master of Dong Grand Song, a well-known inheritor of intangible cultural heritage, retired principal, and a famous teacher of Dong Grand Song. The second is Ms. Wu Chunyue, a renowned master of Dong

Grand Song, an inheritor of intangible cultural heritage, a professional singer of Dong Grand Song, and a famous teacher of Dong Grand Song. She is an active figure in local Dong Grand Song-related activities and has represented the local community in the recording of Dong Grand Song programs on local, provincial, and national TV stations. She is also the youngest Dong song master in the region, which is of significant importance for the study of Dong Grand Song inheritance-related issues. The third is Mr. Shi Yanhui, a renowned master of Dong Grand Song, an inheritor of intangible cultural heritage, a famous professional singer of Dong Grand Song, and a high school teacher in Sanjiang County. The fourth is Mr. Wu Pengyi, a Dong cultural researcher and a professor at Guangxi University of Science and Technology.

Technology.Casual Informant

In order to collect data in a more systematic manner, we have also selected some active community members and ordinary residents as survey participants, they are a group of 13 individuals consisting of primary and secondary school students from Sanjiang.

General informant

A group of 30 individuals who are general Dong people and the residents in Dong area have a high level of participation in Dong cultural activities, the vast majority of which are fully attended, as well as some university teachers and students from other parts of Guangxi. Additionally, we have conducted interviews with Dong ethnic culture researchers and scholars to obtain more comprehensive, systematic, and professional perspectives and viewpoints.

2. Research Process

2.1 Research tools

In the Dong ethnic culture research, sociological research tools can be used to collect and analyze data related to social phenomena and human behavior within the Dong ethnic culture. Questionnaires can be used to understand the opinions, attitudes, and behaviors of the Dong people, as well as their views on the identity and preservation of Dong ethnic culture. Face-to-face interviews can be conducted to gain in-depth insights into the perspectives, experiences, and attitudes of the Dong people, as well as their involvement and experiences within Dong ethnic culture. Group

discussions can facilitate interaction and communication among the Dong people, providing diverse perspectives and opinions on Dong ethnic culture. Observation methods can be used to observe and record the social behaviors, communication, and interactions of the Dong people, providing information on the actual manifestations and traditional customs of Dong ethnic culture. By integrating these sociological research tools, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of Dong ethnic culture and provide strong support for Dong ethnic culture research.

2.2 Data collecting

This study primarily collects data through field surveys, obtaining structured data through interviews and questionnaires with key information providers, local villagers, and relevant individuals, as well as on-site data through audio and video recordings of Dong Grand Song and related activities. The researcher establishes a deep mutual trust through long-term contact with key informants and maintains continuous communication to constantly supplement and correct the data.

2.3 Organizing and analyzing data

2.3.1 Data management

Data management refers to the process of organizing, storing, processing, and maintaining data. In data management, data collection is a crucial step that involves using different methods and tools to gather various types of data for subsequent analysis and use. Field work logs and survey questionnaires are commonly used data collection methods in this research. Field survey logs collect data by recording information, events, and phenomena observed during field investigations, while survey questionnaires gather data by presenting a series of questions to respondents. During the data collection process, paper and pen as well as digital devices can be used as recording media for convenient data recording and storage, especially in the process of Dong culture activities. Additionally, categorizing the collected initial data is an important aspect of data management, as it helps organize and structure the data for easier analysis and use. By employing different data collection methods and recording media, and categorizing the initial data, data management ensures the accuracy, completeness, and usability of the data, providing a reliable foundation for subsequent data analysis and decision-making.

2.3.2 Data analysis

From the perspective of a researcher, data analysis is a method of gaining in-depth insights and understanding about specific topics or issues by integrating and analyzing multiple data sources. When conducting data analysis, researchers employ the approach of using multiple data sources, which means they collect data from various sources such as survey data, experimental data, and social media data to obtain more comprehensive and accurate analysis results. Additionally, researchers also utilize the triangulation method, which involves comparing and contrasting the results from different data sources to validate and support their analysis conclusions. By combining the use of multiple data sources and the triangulation method, researchers are able to provide more reliable and comprehensive insights, thus offering decision-makers more accurate and trustworthy data.

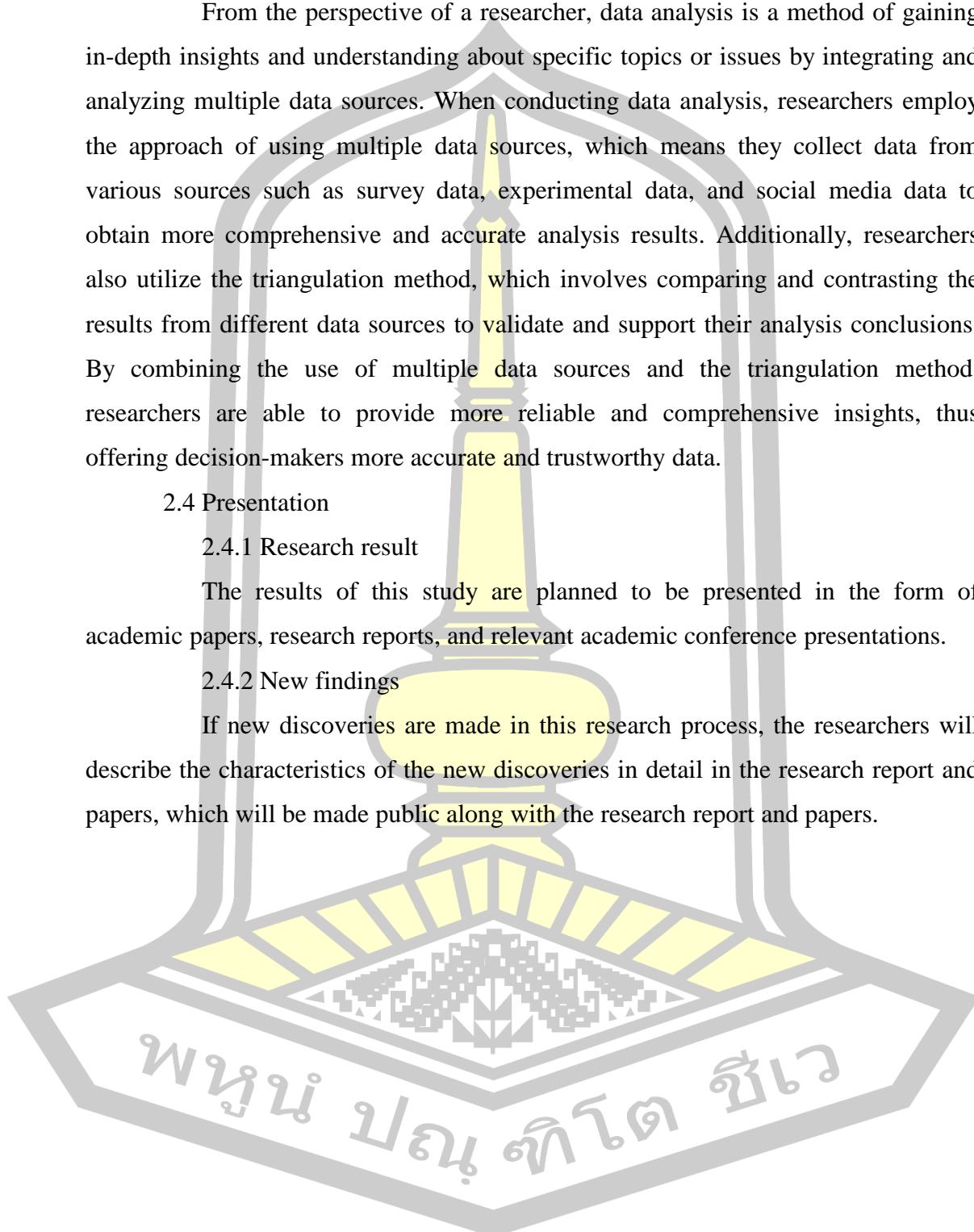
2.4 Presentation

2.4.1 Research result

The results of this study are planned to be presented in the form of academic papers, research reports, and relevant academic conference presentations.

2.4.2 New findings

If new discoveries are made in this research process, the researchers will describe the characteristics of the new discoveries in detail in the research report and papers, which will be made public along with the research report and papers.



CHAPTER IV

Analysis of Research Objectives and Results

This chapter dissects the research objectives of the paper, which are primarily composed of three parts. The first segment undertakes a review of the origins, history, and development of the Dong Grand Song through extensive literature collection. The second segment elaborates on the inheritance and existing issues of the Dong Grand Song. In this segment, the researchers predominantly utilize fieldwork, in-depth interviews, and participant observation to gather texts from study groups across different social strata and roles, gaining insights into the current state of the Dong Grand Song's inheritance and the challenges it faces. The third segment investigates how the Dong Grand Song can be developed and passed down through the integration of intangible cultural heritage protection policies, governmental and educational institution actions. Aligning with the Chinese government's rural revitalization strategy and Dong ethnic identity, it treats Dong musical culture as a tourism resource and proposes development strategies for the protection and inheritance of Dong musical culture. The three research objectives of the paper are as follows:

Number	research objectives	Research Content
1	To study the History and Procession of Dong Grand Song In Sanjiang County, Guangxi	1.1 Historical Origins of the Dong Grand Song 1.2 Developmental Trajectory of the Dong Grand Song 1.3 Cultural Value of the Dong Grand Song 1.4 Ontological Features of the Dong Grand Song
2	To study the Current condition and Problems of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang County, Guangxi	2.1 Current Status of the Inheritance and Protection of the Dong Grand Song 2.2 Problems Faced in the Inheritance and Protection of the Dong Grand Song
3	To study the Conservation form, Inherited and developed of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang County, Guangxi	3.1 Social Inheritance and Development of the Dong Grand Song 3.2 School Inheritance and Development of the Dong Grand Song 3.3 Abstract

1. To study the History and Procession of Dong Grand Song In Sanjiang County, Guangxi

The origins of folk art have long been subject to various interpretations and explanations by scholars across different periods, each articulating in their own unique way. On the surface, it seems that the different theories about origins proposed by scholars all hold some merit, making it challenging to refute one another's views or to determine which is correct. This has led to a multitude of perspectives on its origins. British linguist Jane Ellen Harrison, in discussing the significance of art to the past and present, pointed out: "For something as complex and ancient as art, it is hard or even impossible to thoroughly understand its function and meaning unless we know the circumstances of its initial occurrence. Even if the origins of art have become obscure, we should at least understand the relatively simple forms that preceded art" (Jane Ellen Harrison 1913). As a form of folk art, when conducting theoretical research on the Dong Grand Song, one should start from objective facts, comprehensively analyzing the origins of the Grand Song by sorting through the genealogy of the ethnic group, the state of social life, and the various elements involved in the origins of the Grand Song. The focus should be on starting from the performance of the Grand Song itself, searching for elements related to its origins, seeking a "true" origin (Cui Hongfei 2011).

1.1 Historical Origins of the Dong Grand Song

The formation of every culture has its historical reasons, and the Dong Grand Song is no exception. For the Dong Grand Song, complete historical records are scarce, and related ancient texts and documentary materials are fragmented and disordered, making it difficult to form a clear "history" of the Grand Song. In the face of potential loss, the provinces where the Grand Song is located, especially Guizhou, Hunan, and Guangxi, have actively engaged in rescue and protection efforts. Both at official and folk levels, the study of the Dong Grand Song and the theory and practice of its protection and inheritance have become a consensus. Against this backdrop, the Dong Grand Song has been subject to more systematic research and has made significant progress. By tracing the ethnic origins of the Dong and then discussing the origins of the Grand Song, combined with folk legends that have ethnographic

narrative significance, we can understand the basic historical form of the Dong Grand Song (Yang Yi 2015).

1.1.1 Research into the Origins of the Dong Grand Song

Some experts propose that the form of the Dong Grand Song might have initially emerged during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, with a history of over two thousand years. This view is based on the book "Shuo Yuan Shan Shuo" compiled by Liu Xiang of the Western Han Dynasty, which records the scene of E Junzi Xi of the Chu State listening to the "Song of the Yue People" sung for him by the local Yue people while aboard a pleasure boat during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (Liu Xiang[Han] 2019). The "Song of the Yue People" contains many lexical items similar to those commonly found in contemporary Dong folk handwritten manuscripts, and the phonetic characteristics of the words, as well as the rhythm and format of the poetry, are very similar to Dong ballads. Although it is impossible to directly equate the "Song of the Yue People" with the earliest Dong Grand Song, it is clear that the Dong Grand Song has inherited the characteristics of the "Song of the Yue People" in terms of phonetics and style. By the Southern Dynasties, similar folk songs had further developed, producing works such as "Zi Ye Ge" (Midnight Songs), "Da Zi Ye Ge" (Great Midnight Songs), and "Zi Ye Si Shi Ge" (Midnight Songs of the Four Seasons).

Some scholars believe that the Dong Grand Song may have originated during the Song Dynasty. Their basis is a passage recorded in Volume Four of "Lao Xue An Bi Ji" (Old Learning Hermitage Notes) by Lu You, which describes: "Men and women gather to stamp their feet in song. During agricultural leisure times, one to two hundred people form a group. Holding hands, they sing, with several people blowing flutes to lead the way." This description depicts a group singing gathering. By the Ming Dynasty, the Grand Song had become widely popular in certain areas of the Dong ethnicity. Ming Dynasty poet Kuang Lu recorded in his miscellany "Chi Ya" (Volume One): "The Dong are also of the Liao kind... skilled in music, playing the huqin, blowing six-tube flutes, singing long songs with closed eyes, nodding heads and shaking feet." According to these records, the Grand Song has a history of at least 500 years. The traditional playing methods of these musical instruments all have elements of harmony. By analyzing the records in Kuang Lu's miscellany "Chi

Ya," we can see the correspondence between Dong musical elements and the literature. For example, the Dong folk use of the lusheng and pipa corresponds to the "six-tube flutes" and "qin" recorded by Kuang Lu; the Dong folk "Grand Song" may be the "long song" recorded in his article; and the actions of Dong song troupes nodding, closing eyes, and nodding their heads while singing have not changed much from the "shaking feet," "closing eyes," and "nodding heads" recorded by Kuang Lu. Kuang Lu, whose courtesy name is Zhanruo, was from Hainan and had traveled to places such as Guangxi, and it is possible that his records were inspired by his observations of the Dong people's singing performances at the time (Lu You[Song] 1979).

For ethnic groups without a written language, the concept of time in oral history is often vague. Due to a lack of historical records, we currently cannot determine the specific origin time of the Dong Grand Song, nor have particularly convincing research results emerged. As a form of ethnic art, it is a collective creation rather than an individual one. Its formation and development are a conscious process, an artistic process of collective unconscious understanding within the group. Such a process is destined to be lengthy. It is not particularly meaningful to pinpoint the origin time of the Dong Grand Song to a specific point in time.

1.1.2 The Folklore of the Dong Grand Song

There are several versions of folklore regarding the origin of the Dong Grand Song. The first version goes like this: A long time ago, a group of young people was working on the mountain. Their laughter and chatter attracted the surrounding birds and insects, creating a wonderful chorus of birds chirping and insects buzzing. The sounds varied in pitch, distance, and timing, interweaving high and low notes. Inspired by these sounds, the young people began to mimic the noises of the birds and insects, and the birds joined in their singing, gradually forming a polyphonic choral song, which is now known as the Dong Grand Song.

The second version is the legend of the arhats, involving two arhats who invented the grand song. These two arhats were orphaned at a young age, living in poverty, unable to enter the celestial hall to sing or attract the attention of the girls. They decided to retreat to the mountains, working during the day and practicing singing at night following the sounds of cicadas. Through prolonged practice, they

were inspired by the sounds of the cicadas, developing a two-part singing method and ultimately creating the two-part Dong Grand Song. When they reappeared in the celestial hall, they caught the attention of the girls, and the villagers began learning to sing along with them, a tradition that continues to this day.

The third legend attributes the creation of the grand song to specific individuals and categorizes the songs according to their creators. Storytelling songs were composed by a person named Erlang, narrative songs by Liulang, and love songs by a Dong person named Wumei. These songs were later passed down by a person named Siye. The most popular in the Dong region is the "Siye Chuan Ge Shuo" (Siye's Song Transmission) tradition. Various folklore versions about "Siye Chuan Ge" can be heard, albeit with slight differences. "Siye" is revered as the patriarch of the grand songs, respected in ceremonies related to singing. Some villages still hold ceremonies venerating Siye, where every spring, the grand song troupe gathers to collectively worship and perform the grand songs, seeking unity and the beauty of harmonious singing (Yang Yi 2015).

The legend of "Siye Chuan Ge" in the origin of the Dong song is told as follows:

"In ancient times, people only knew how to speak, not how to sing, and life was lonely and cold, like eating food without salt. One day, birds from the mountains told the people that there was a special kind of tree in the sky where the immortals gathered to sing and have a lively time. The birds would secretly fly up to listen and learn some songs to teach the people. However, since the birds did not learn the songs completely, they would sometimes sing with missing parts or mixed up. So, four young people from two families decided to go up to the sky to steal the songs. With the support of the village elders, they planned to have an eagle, a magpie, and a thrush carry them up to steal the songs. When they arrived in the sky, they found the dragon guarding the tree of songs asleep. They quietly climbed up the tree to pick the song fruits. When Xianggu saw so many song fruits, she couldn't contain her joy and started singing. Her singing alerted the dragon and the guardian of the tree. Realizing the danger, they hurriedly tried to climb down the tree and return. However, Siye wanted to pick more song fruits and was caught by the dragon. As they were fleeing, Ban Gu Ma noticed Siye missing and in panic, fell off the back of the eagle and died

at the foot of the mountain. Only Xianggu, the eagle, and the thrush returned to the village with the song fruits. The theft of the song fruits angered the guardian of the tree, who decided to punish the dragon by sending it down to the mortal world with Siye. Siye returned to the village and, in memory of Ban Gu Ma, built a tomb for her at the foot of the mountain and planted the song fruits brought from the sky next to her grave. Soon, a song tree grew at Ban Gu Ma's grave, bearing many song fruits. People from the village and birds from the mountain came to learn and sing the songs, shaking the heavens. The guardian of the tree secretly came down to inspect and discovered the song tree. She cut down the tree and threw it into the river. The dragon, now in mortal form, saw the tree in the river and swallowed all the song leaves and fruits. The next day, when people came to learn the songs, they found the tree hidden in the river, with no leaves or fruits, only a huge fish swimming in the water. They realized that the fish had eaten the song leaves and fruits. To retrieve the beloved songs, they pooled their resources and made a large fishing hook, a long rope, and finally caught the fish. It turned out that the fish was the dragon in mortal form sent down by the guardian. When they cut open its belly, they found the song leaves and fruits inside a large bubble. Siye cut open the bubble, revealing the songs and fruits, bringing joy to the people who came to eat and sing. In order for every village and community to have songs to sing, Siye intentionally left some songs behind. The next day, Siye found a pair of large gourds, filled them with songs, and carried them to travel between villages. Along the way, he would scatter a bit of the songs in each Dong village he passed. When he reached a place called Sanlong, his carrying pole broke, and one gourd fell into the "Six Holes" while the other fell into the "Nine Holes." And that's how the Dong songs spread widely in these places."(Dong Grand Song Editorial Committee 2000)

In the folk recitation "Zhu Fu Compilation of Songs," there is also a passage:

"Most people sing songs, a few sing scriptures.

If there's singing, there must be listening, bringing joy to the singers.

The dragon returns to the ocean, the fish swims in the rivers.

The sunbirds delight in the green mountains, the people love to drink and sing.

Six Lang sets the agreement, Zhu Fu compiles Dong songs.
 The lyrics are written with words, the melodies are written with books.
 Writing every day, compiling every day,
 A large pile of songbooks is written,
 Put into boxes and cabinets,
 Compiling songs for people to sing, cannot keep them all to oneself.
 In order to spread the songs, a carrying pole was made.
 Sending songs to Hue, sending songs to residences.
 Sending while spreading, teaching while drinking.
 Arriving at Tianlang Village, the pole carrying the songbooks broke.
 All the songbooks fell into the river, the books flowed downstream.
 Downstream, two guests from Jiangxi were crossing the river on a ferry.
 Seeing objects drifting downstream, they quickly cast their nets.
 Recovered the boxes and cages on the shore, used a key to open the box.
 The songbooks inside the box were wet and dry.
 Some pages were soaked by water, only three pages remained dry.
 Seven pages were wet and thrown into the river, three dry pages were kept.
 Praise songs lost three verses, long songs lost seven verses,
 Love songs lost nine verses, idle talk songs still had one verse,
 A thousand verses of scripture songs were all lost, from then on the Dong
 families had no scriptures.
 Passed down by ancestors, sung by descendants,
 Forget about exhaustion and strengthen your strength.
 The old generation passes on, the younger generation takes on,
 Generation after generation continues without interruption.
 Elders pass on, youth sing,
 The spirit of the young invigorates the old.
 The bamboo forest is old, new shoots emerge,
 The new shoots grow up in a few years.
 The water buffalo leaves behind its horns when it goes,
 The old leave behind their names when they go.
 Pigs leave behind the trough, fish leave behind the pond,

Cattle leave behind the enclosure, horses leave behind the whip,
 Ducks leave behind their feathers, pigeons leave behind their eggs,
 In the beginning, Zhu Fu passed on Dong songs,
 People leave behind their names to be passed down for generations."
 (Dong Grand Song Editorial Committee 2000)

Through these beautiful legends, we can glean the following insights: The origin of Dong ethnic group's grand songs stems from the creative talent of Dong ancestors and their arduous efforts to protect and pass down the tradition. The source of Dong songs may come from cultural exchanges with various regions and ethnic groups, with the so-called "heaven above" possibly symbolizing other clans, tribes, or ethnicities. The transmission of Dong songs has undergone a process of mythologization and ritualization. By embellishing existing Dong songs, emphasizing their rich diversity and depth, people are inspired to respect and love Dong songs, encouraging them to explore, collect, organize, and create, in order to fulfill the wishes of their ancestors (Yang Yi 2015).

1.2 Developmental Trajectory of the Dong Grand Song

In 1986, the performance of Dong Grand Songs in Paris, France caused a sensation worldwide. In 2002, the People's Government of Liping County in Guizhou Province and Sanjiang County in Liuzhou City, Guangxi Province, began the application process for Dong Grand Songs, aiming to have it listed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list. In 2006, the "Dong Grand Songs" application submitted by Liuzhou City, Guangxi Province, and Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County was included in the first batch of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage list for 2006. Over the following years, relevant departments in Guangxi Province made unremitting efforts, and on September 30, 2009, Dong Grand Songs were successfully included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This event marked the global recognition of the cultural and musical value of Dong Grand Songs, which have a history of thousands of years, making them a shared treasure of all humanity that requires collective protection. The inclusion of Dong Grand Songs highlights its important status as a unique cultural heritage and makes a significant contribution to the inheritance and protection of global cultural diversity.

1.2.1 The North-South Boundary of Dong Grand Songs

Dong Grand Songs are mainly distributed in the southern regions of China, particularly in Guizhou Province and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, especially in areas where the Dong ethnic group resides. The core areas where Dong Grand Songs are prevalent include Liping County, Congjiang County, and Rongjiang County in Guizhou Province, as well as some regions in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. These areas have a relatively concentrated Dong population, allowing for the preservation and development of Dong culture. The singing of Grand Songs is done in the Dong language and pronunciation, so an understanding of the Dong language development and phonetics is necessary before delving into the Grand Songs.

Although the Dong ethnic group is an ancient ethnic group in China without its own traditional written system, Dong people, after contact with the Han ethnic group, became acquainted with Chinese characters and began using them to record their language. This practice is known as "Hanzi Ji Dongyin" (Chinese characters recording Dong pronunciation). Through this method, Dong people were able to record their language, culture, songs, legends, history, medical knowledge, etc., using Chinese characters to express Dong language pronunciation and grammar. This not only reduced the constraints of time and space in language transmission but also played an important role in the cultural inheritance of the Dong ethnic group.

In 1956, the Chinese government began to recognize the importance of written records for the cultural inheritance of the Dong ethnic group and organized professionals to conduct research on the Dong language. The First Minority Language Survey Team of the Chinese Academy of Sciences conducted research on the languages in 22 points across 14 counties and officially began the design of Dong writing. The government selected the standard pronunciation of the Zhanglu dialect in Gejiang County in the southern dialect area of the Dong ethnic group and created Dong writing based on the Latin alphabet, aiming to facilitate communication between the Dong ethnic group and other ethnic groups and promote the protection and development of Dong culture. In 1958, the government held a scientific discussion on Dong language and writing in Guiyang, attended by Dong representatives from Guizhou, Hunan, and Guangxi, officially approving the Dong

writing scheme (draft). Since then, the Dong people had their own writing system for the first time. The pilot promotion of Dong writing demonstrated the government's emphasis on the work of minority languages and writing. The establishment and promotion of Dong writing have had a positive impact on the education, cultural inheritance, and ethnic unity of the Dong people.

Through systematic written records, the language and culture of the Dong ethnic group can be better preserved and disseminated, which also helps the Dong people integrate more effectively into modern society and engage in broader social exchanges. The creation and promotion of the Dong script serve as a strong support for the inheritance and development of Dong culture and are also a part of China's national language and cultural policy for its diverse ethnic groups, reflecting an attitude of respect and protection towards the cultures of all ethnic groups. This practice holds significant importance for safeguarding and fostering the cultural diversity of China's ethnic groups.

The Dong language belongs to the Kam-Tai branch of the Zhuang-Dong language group within the Sino-Tibetan language family, specifically the Dong-Shui branch. This language group is known as the "Dong-Tai language group" or "Dong-Tai language family." The Dong language is primarily divided into southern dialects and northern dialects, spread across various regions in China, covering multiple provinces. The northern dialects, represented by the "Datong dialect" in Jinping, Guizhou, are found in areas such as Tianzhu County, Jianhe County, Liping County, Congjiang County in Guizhou Province, as well as Xinhuang Dong Autonomous County and Jingzhou Miao-Dong Autonomous County in Hunan Province. On the other hand, the southern dialects, represented by the "Qimeng dialect" in Jinping, cover areas in the southern part of Jinping County, Zhenyuan County, Liping County, Congjiang County, and Gejiang County in Guizhou Province, as well as Tongdao Dong Autonomous County in Hunan Province, and Longsheng Various Ethnic Autonomous County, Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County, and Rongshui Miao Autonomous County in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Due to long-term interactions between the Dong people and the Han people, the Dong language has absorbed a significant amount of ancient and modern Chinese vocabulary. In the process of language contact, there have been borrowings

and influences in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation, and even grammatical structures between Dong and Chinese. Many Dong people are proficient in Chinese, and in some regions, the use of the Dong language has gradually decreased, with Chinese becoming the daily language of communication (Yang Yi 2015).

The differences between northern and southern Dong dialects not only affect language usage but also impact Dong culture, particularly the study and understanding of Dong songs and traditional Dong music. Music, as a part of culture, often exhibits different styles and characteristics in various dialect regions, and this diversity is an essential aspect that cannot be overlooked when studying traditional Dong music. Dong songs, rituals, festive activities, and more are cultural expressions deeply influenced by Dong dialects, and researching these musical and cultural forms helps to comprehensively understand Dong culture and social life.

Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County is located in the northern part of Guangxi, China, and is an autonomous county mainly inhabited by the Dong ethnic group. The Dong language belongs to the Kam-Tai branch of the Zhuang-Dong language group within the Sino-Tibetan language family, specifically the Dong-Shui branch in the southern dialect area. It is a language with relatively small internal differences, spoken by over 3 million Dong people. The Dong language is one of the languages in the world with the most tones, having 15 tones. However, due to the fact that the entering tone in Dong only has entering rhyme (ending in p, t, k) and lacks independent tone values, the tone values of the entering tone are the same as those of the level tone, resulting in only 9 tone values for the 15 tones in Dong. This situation is similar to Cantonese, where the entering tone also lacks independent tone values, resulting in only 6 tone values for the 9 tones in Cantonese. In Dong, tones play a crucial role in determining word meaning. Different tones can represent different meanings, and even the same syllable can convey different words under different tones. Therefore, mastering the tones of the Dong language is essential for understanding and using the language.

In his preface to the book "Dongzu Dage (Gala)" by the renowned musician Mr. Xiao Jiaqi from Guizhou Province, detailed explanations are provided regarding the differences between northern and southern Dong music. Based on the morphological differences between northern and southern Dong songs, he outlines six

aspects that distinguish the two. Firstly, there is a difference in choral forms: Southern Dong songs include sectional choral and grand song choral forms, such as "Dage Chenlao" and "Caitang Song." These are multi-part folk song forms, while northern Dong songs are usually single-part, even in forms called "Dage," the main singer leads while others harmonize, with the melody being mostly the same. Secondly, there is a difference in the use of accompanying instruments: Southern Dong songs are accompanied by instruments like the pipa and niuleqin during solo performances, while northern Dong songs are mostly unaccompanied. Thirdly, the presence or absence of Dongxi (Dong opera): Southern Dong songs are accompanied by performances of Dongxi with the huqin, while the northern region lacks Dongxi performances. Fourthly, there is a difference in singing styles: In southern Dong songs, collective singing forms like Dage and Caitang Song use natural voice for both male and female parts, while Xiaoge uses soft or falsetto singing. In northern Dong songs, both natural voice and falsetto can be used simultaneously. Fifthly, there is a difference in melody and mode: Most southern Dong songs are based on the yu diao mode on the "la" pitch in a minor key, while northern Dong songs commonly use the major key zhi diao (sol) and minor key yu diao (la), with the re diao (re) and do diao (do) being less common. Lastly, there is a difference in the song systems: The southern Dong song system is mainly composed of grand songs, small songs, and caitang songs, while the northern Dong song system focuses on "playing mountain songs," "joyful drinking songs," and songs known as "ancient songs" (referred to as "filial piety songs" in the Cengong area), which are mainly sung when elderly people pass away. These six aspects clearly illustrate the different musical characteristics between northern and southern Dong songs, reflecting the richness and regional diversity of Dong music culture (Yang Yi 2015).

In 2001, in the chapter "Traditional Dong Music" of the book "Chinese Ethnic Minority Traditional Music" edited by Tian Lianyao, author Ma Mingzhen, based on the north-south classification of Dong folk songs by Xiao Jiaju, combined his own data and research findings to provide a detailed overall understanding of Dong songs based on "regional styles" (refer to the table below) (Tian LianTao 2001).

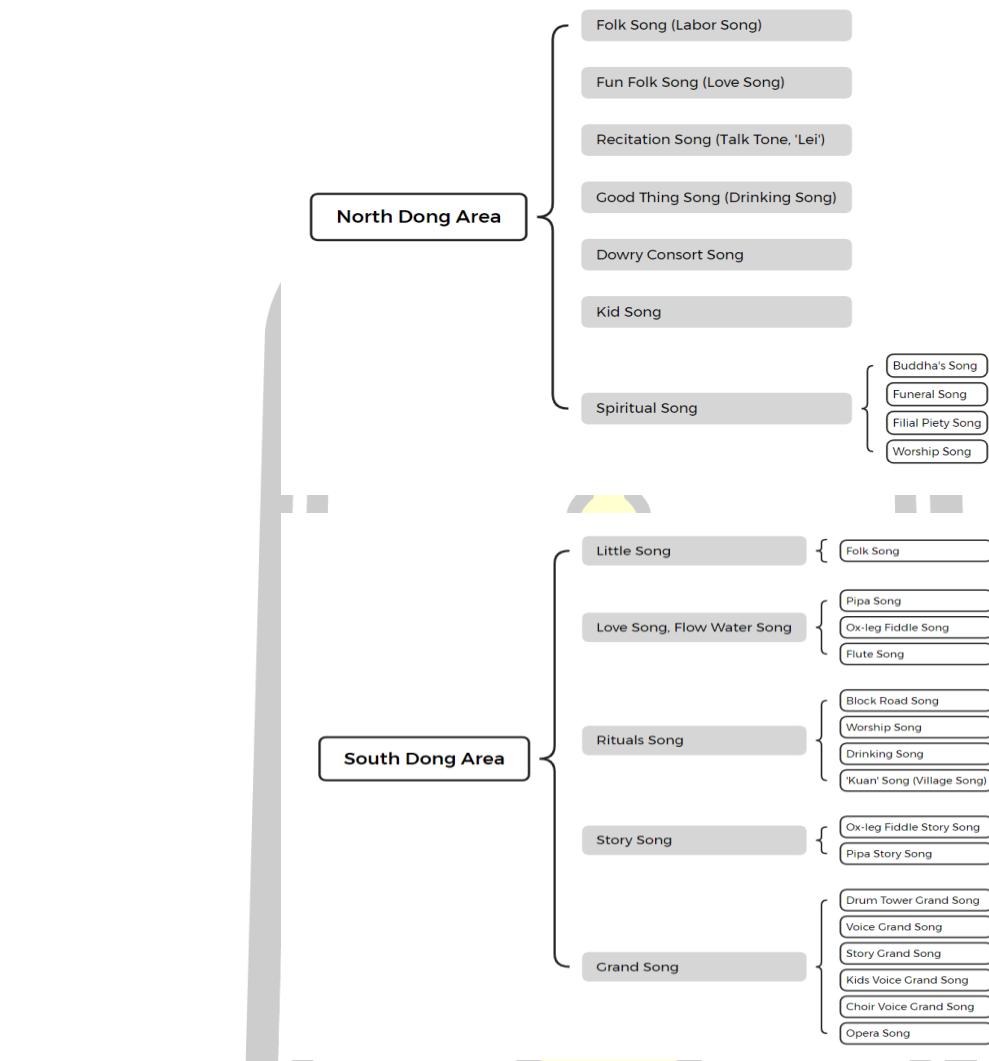


Figure 10. The Classification of Dong Songs

1.2.2 Distribution Area of Dong Grand Songs

In the article "Grand Songs - Treasures of Ethnic Groups," Puhong provides a systematic and comprehensive overview of the distribution space of Dong grand songs. His main contributions can be summarized in the following two aspects:

Defining the core region of Dong grand song dissemination: Through in-depth research, Puhong points out that the core area for the transmission of Dong grand songs is located in the second Tu language area of the southern dialect area of the Dong language. This region covers administrative divisions including Liping and Congjiang in Guizhou Province, as well as parts of the Rongjiang area, and the Rongjiang River Basin in Lanjiang Dong Autonomous County of Guangxi Zhuang

Autonomous Region. Puhong further subdivides this core area and introduces traditional community designations such as "Liu Dong," "Jiu Dong," "Shi Dong," "Si Jiao Niu," "Qian Er," "Qian San," "Qian Wu," and "Er Qian Jiu," which are the core areas for the transmission of Dong grand songs.

Cultural geographical discoveries: Puhong's research is not only a description of the popular areas of grand songs but also a cultural geographical discovery. He notes that these core areas are all located within the main river basins, and the locations of these river systems play an important role in the dissemination and popularity of grand songs. For example, the Douliu River flows from northwest to southeast through Congjiang into Sanjiang, and the different positions in the river basin reflect varying degrees of grand song popularity, with the northeast bank being the central area and the southwest bank being the peripheral area. Such geographical distribution characteristics may be related to the river culture, transportation, and historical development of Dong communities. Puhong's research provides a new perspective for understanding the cultural dissemination of Dong grand songs.

Puhong's research contribution lies in not only revealing the cultural geographical distribution of Dong grand songs but also proposing a cultural geographical perspective, which provides important theoretical and methodological guidance for the study of Dong grand songs, aiding in a deeper understanding of Dong cultural characteristics and their spatial distribution patterns. According to Puhong's research, the distribution space of Dong grand songs mainly concentrates in specific areas of Guizhou Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Specifically, Puhong identifies the following regions as the peripheral areas of Dong grand songs:

Congjiang County, Guizhou Province: Areas such as Xiaorong, Darong, Lao Huo, Xin Huo, Bingmei, Pingjiang, La'e, Kajia, Kaweng, Longjiang, Kaiwen, Xishan, Dingdong, and Douzhai, which belong to the Congjiang River and Xishan River basins. Although these areas are on the periphery of the grand songs, Dong grand songs still have some transmission in these regions.

Rongjiang County, Guizhou Province: Some villages in Rongjiang County, such as Zaidang, Fengdeng, Falan, and Jiasuo, are also in the peripheral areas of grand songs. Although Rongjiang County is not a major transmission area for Dong

grand songs, due to its proximity to "Jiu Dong," the grand song culture has also been transmitted and influenced.

Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region: Villages in the peripheral areas of Dong grand songs under the jurisdiction of Sanjiang County, including Gaoyan, Fulu, Meilin, Yafeng, Chezhai, Gao'an, Boli, Guineng, Xinmin, Longfen, Shibei, and Zhumu, are distributed on both sides of the Rongjiang River, indicating the importance of rivers in the dissemination of grand song culture.

Puhong's research illustrates that while Dong grand songs thrive in specific core regions, their influence has also spread to surrounding peripheral areas. Although the grand song culture in these areas may not be as strong as in the core regions, it still remains an important part of Dong grand song inheritance and cultural identity. Through this analysis, Puhong not only provides us with geographical distribution information of Dong grand songs but also reveals their cultural diffusion patterns, laying the foundation for further studies in ethnomusicology and cultural geography.

The Dong grand songs in Sanjiang, Guangxi, belong to the southern dialect area of the Nan Dong region and include folk songs, pipa songs, roadblock songs, ritual songs, drinking songs, leg-of-mutton-shaped lute songs, drum tower grand songs, and more. According to Puhong's research, it is known that in Sanjiang, grand songs are mainly transmitted in the Dong villages along the Rongjiang River in Meilin, Fulu, and Yangxi Township of Sanjiang County, as well as in the Dong ethnic villages in Luocheng.

Sanjiang County in Guangxi is located in the northern part of Guangxi, at the junction of the provinces of Guangxi, Hunan, and Guizhou, in the northern part of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, between $108^{\circ}63' - 109^{\circ}47'$ east longitude and $25^{\circ}21' - 26^{\circ}03'$ north latitude. The county is named after the three major rivers within its territory - Rongjiang, Xunjiang, and Miaojiang - which converge in the area. Sanjiang falls within the subtropical Nanling humid climate zone, with lush vegetation, dense river networks, and a forest coverage rate of 79%. The county administers 3 towns and 13 townships (including 3 ethnic townships), with a total population of 418,000, predominantly consisting of Dong, Miao, Yao, Zhuang, and Han ethnic groups, with the Dong population accounting for 58%. It is the only Dong

autonomous county in Guangxi and has the largest Dong population among the six Dong autonomous counties in the country. On June 29, 2021, Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County was included in the list of key counties for national rural revitalization. As of 2020, the county achieved a regional GDP of 7.844 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 5.9%; fixed asset investment of 5.507 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 13.3%; and fiscal revenue of 674 million yuan, a year-on-year increase of 6.9%. There are a total of 108 Dong-style wind and rain bridges, 159 drum towers, and numerous Dong-style residential buildings within Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County.



Figure 11. The Geographical Features of Sanjiang

Sanjiang County has a complex terrain and diverse landforms. It is connected to Longsheng and Rong'an counties in the east, bordered by Rongshui Miao Autonomous County to the south, adjacent to Guizhou's Congjiang and Liping to the west, and borders Tongdao Dong Autonomous County in Hunan to the north. The primary landforms are categorized into six types: residual mountains, steep cliffs and narrow ridges, V-shaped valleys, hilly river valleys, residual mountain foothills, etc. These areas boast beautiful natural environments, picturesque mountains and rivers, and a pleasant climate, providing unique conditions for the formation and development of Dong grand songs. The Dong areas are mountainous, with limited transportation and less interaction with the outside world, preserving the original charm of Dong traditional culture and music culture. The Dong people live in a pristine environment surrounded by mountains and rivers, closely connected to nature.

They express their awe and gratitude towards nature through singing, while also using songs to convey information and exchange emotions.

Table 2. Basic Information of Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County

Category	Details
Ethnic Groups	Dong, Miao, Yao, Zhuang, Han, and other ethnic groups
Population	Total population of 418,000, with Dong ethnic group accounting for 58% of the registered population
Terrain	Complex terrain with diverse landforms
Economic	In 2020, Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County achieved a regional GDP of 78.44 billion yuan, a 5.9% year-on-year growth
Rural Revitalization	Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County is listed as a key county for national rural revitalization support

1.2.3 Reasons for the Regional Distribution of Dong Grand Songs

There are two main reasons why Dong grand songs continue to be popular in Dong areas:

From a historical perspective, the enduring popularity of Dong grand songs in Dong regions can be attributed to two main factors. Firstly, throughout history, the successive dynasties had limited involvement in governing this region. Due to its unique geographical location, the Dong areas had relatively weak control exerted by the central authorities. From the Zhou Dynasty to the Qin and Han Dynasties, through the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming, Qing Dynasties, and into the Republic of China era, although administrative divisions were established by each dynasty, the actual control over these regions by the central government was often limited. This relatively relaxed political environment provided favorable conditions for the preservation and transmission of Dong culture.

Secondly, the protective role of the geographic environment plays a significant part. The primary areas where Dong grand songs are prevalent form a contiguous geographical region characterized by picturesque landscapes and relatively isolated transportation. The unique and secluded nature of the natural environment to

some extent shielded Dong culture from external cultural influences. Combined with Dong's own traditional customs and way of life, this cultural form such as Dong grand songs was able to be preserved and continue to be passed down. The Dong regions are situated in remote mountainous areas at the junction of Guizhou, Guangxi, and Hunan provinces, including places like Liping County, Congjiang County, Rongjiang County, Sanjiang County, and Tongdao County. The unique geographic environment, known as "Xidong" (溪洞), with its deep mountains and valleys, inconvenient transportation, and factors contributing to isolation, created a secluded space where the local residents could maintain their way of life and cultural traditions in a relatively closed environment. In such surroundings, the Dong people rely on farming and animal husbandry for their livelihoods, following the natural rhythms of life. This relatively simple rural lifestyle provided fertile cultural soil for Dong grand songs. In addition to their labor, Dong people express emotions, inherit culture, and exchange ideas through singing. Grand songs have become an integral part of their daily lives, serving not only as an art form but also as a bridge for social interactions. As you mentioned, Dong youth showcase their talents through singing, attracting each other, and playing a significant role in traditional courtship customs. Regardless of age, Dong people take pride in their ability to sing grand songs, making grand songs play a crucial role in community life. Moreover, grand songs are a manifestation of the spiritual and cultural life of the Dong people. In the face of hardships and natural disasters, the Dong people find solace and maintain an optimistic outlook by expressing their emotions through singing. Just as a traditional Dong song goes:

"Come into the hall, where joy abounds!
With the blessing of the lucky star,
Let's bury the unpleasant things in the upper stream,
Let the troubles flow down the river,
Push them to the sea, never to return.
So that we can quickly and happily come together to drink and sing."

This stepping-into-the-hall song expresses this optimistic attitude towards life and fearless approach to difficulties.

Therefore, the preservation and popularity of Dong grand songs in Dong regions are not only due to the geographical isolation but also because they have

deeply integrated into the Dong people's way of life, social interactions, and spiritual world, becoming an indispensable part of Dong culture. As an important cultural heritage, Dong grand songs owe their survival and transmission to the historical weakening of the central government's actual control over local regions, as well as the unique geographical environment and social customs of Dong areas. This cultural phenomenon is not just a manifestation of musical art but also the result of various factors such as history, geography, and society working together. In modern society, the protection and inheritance of Dong grand songs further demonstrate their cultural value and significance, making a valuable contribution to the diversity of human cultures.

1.2.4 Historical Development of Dong Grand Songs

To study the history of grand songs, one must first understand the historical development of the Dong ethnic group. In ancient times, the Dong people were considered a single ethnic group, likely starting from the late Tang Dynasty. Before that, they were recorded in historical records mixed with groups like the Wuxi Man and the Wuling Man. In ancient literature, the Dong people were referred to as "Qian Shou," and it is generally believed that the Dong people evolved from a branch of the ancient Baiyue people. The Dong population is mainly distributed at the junction of Guizhou, Hunan, and Guangxi provinces. According to the 2020 national census, 47% of the Dong population is in Guizhou, 25% in Hunan, and 10% in Guangxi. However, this proportion has changed significantly over the past few decades. The Dong people have a long and rich history, and compared to the Han ethnic group, there is a stark difference in population density in minority ethnic areas. Nevertheless, the Dong people have still developed their own ethnic culture and customs, making them an important part of our country. The Dong people are mainly distributed in regions such as the Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture and Tongren area of Guizhou Province, Xinhua Dong Autonomous County in Hunan Province, Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County in Guangxi, and Enshi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture in Hubei Province. The Dong people are mainly concentrated in the four provinces (regions) of Guizhou, Hunan, Guangxi, and Hubei in southwest China, bordering each other. Their population is also quite substantial. In Hunan, the Dong population is 842,123, accounting for 28.45% of the Dong

population, making them the fourth largest minority after the Han, Tujia, and Miao ethnic groups.

The earliest self-designation of the Dong people can be traced back to the Song Dynasty in historical records, recorded as "Geling" or "Gelan." According to historical records, the Southern Song Dynasty's Lu You had already observed traces of the Dong people in the regions of Chen, Yuan, and Jingzhou. By the Tang Dynasty, they had already become a single ethnic group recorded in historical materials. Currently, there are relatively few historical materials available for the Dong people in academia. The history of the Dong people can only be gleaned from ancient songs and fragmented materials, providing a rough understanding of the different historical stages of the Dong people. In ancient songs, it is mentioned that in ancient times, the Dong people migrated from the upper reaches of the Yellow River, crossed the Tian Shan Mountains, traveled to the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, migrated to the Gan Yue area, then moved south to Nan Yue (Luo Yue), and finally arrived at their current place of residence, with the entire migration route forming an S-shape.

Regarding the Dong people's origins, there are currently two main theories in academia: the indigenous theory and the exogenous theory. However, the common point is that the Dong people are an ancient ethnic group originating from the ancient Baiyue lineage. The Dong region is characterized by many mountains and little land, with fertile soil, earning it the nickname "Land of Myriad Mountains." It is particularly suitable for agricultural development. Rice cultivation is the main agricultural activity in Dong areas and has a long history. The Dong people have a polytheistic belief system, worshipping various gods such as mountain gods, land gods, water gods, well gods, tree gods, stone gods, fire gods, and thunder gods. Dong families are primarily centered around a monogamous system with the man as the head of the household, forming individual small families, while there are also large families with two or three generations living together. The Dong people believe that all things have spirits and that after death, the soul will return to the place where their ancestors lived. The history of the Dong people can be traced back to ancient times. According to ancient songs and other sources, the Dong people migrated from the upper reaches of the Yellow River, crossed the Tian Shan Mountains, traveled to the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, migrated to the Gan Yue area, then moved south

to Nan Yue (Luo Yue), and finally arrived at their current place of residence. Based on ancient songs, inscriptions, and various legends, the history of the Dong people can be roughly divided into three stages: ancient times, medieval times, and recent times.

Table 3. The Historical Periods of the Dong Ethnic Group and Sources

Time Period	Event Description	Reference Links
Before the Song Dynasty	Ancestors of the Dong ethnic group lived in Guizhou, Hunan, Guangxi, etc.	References like "History of the Song Dynasty: Various Barbarians in Southwest Xidong"
Song Dynasty to Pre-Opium War Era	Dong ethnic region gradually formed as a single ethnic settlement area.	References like "Notes from the Old Study Hut" by Lu You
Post-Opium War Era to Modern Times	Dong ethnic region gradually fell into a semi-colonial society.	References like "Distribution Table of China's Ethnic Minority Population"
Modern Times to Present	Dong people have been making efforts to develop agriculture, forestry production, and maintain communication and interaction with the outside world.	-

The Dong Grand Song is inherited and developed in the flow of time closely related to human social life. The evolution of the Dong Grand Song has gone through various stages, including its formation, dissemination, decline, and revival. With the changes in society, especially the rapid development in modern times, traditional culture faces significant challenges. Initially, the Dong Grand Song may have been an important social and entertainment activity within the Dong community, as well as a vital form of education and cultural inheritance. However, with the changes in educational methods, accelerated pace of life, and the impact of digital media in modern society, traditional Dong Grand Song singing activities have been affected. Nevertheless, as a precious cultural heritage, the value of the Dong Grand Song has gradually been recognized and valued by people. The Chinese government and cultural institutions have undertaken a series of efforts to protect and inherit this cultural heritage, including listing it in the Intangible Cultural Heritage protection directory, organizing cultural activities to promote the Dong Grand Song, encouraging scholars to research and document, and educating the younger generation about it. These efforts have to varying degrees promoted the inheritance and development of the Dong Grand Song. In the context of globalization and modernization, the Dong

Grand Song is not only a symbol of Dong culture but also serves as a bridge connecting the past and the future, the local and the global. Through cultural exchanges and dissemination activities, the Dong Grand Song continues to thrive in the new era, showcasing the cultural charm of the Dong and the Chinese nation to the world.

The history of the Dong Grand Song has experienced twists and turns, summarized into four stages: the flourishing period, the challenging period, the period of re-development, and the period of decline.

During the flourishing period in the late 1950s, the inheritance and dissemination of the Dong Grand Song in Dong regions saw rapid development and spread, primarily reflected in five aspects: the social function of the Grand Song, the number of song troupes, the contributions of song teachers, the teaching of the Grand Song, and the customs of singing activities.

In terms of the social function of the Grand Song, songs were not just artistic expressions but also crucial social tools for the Dong people. With no written language, the Dong used songs to convey history, knowledge, and news, forming a unique tradition of "using songs as literature" and "using songs as books." In the daily life and festive celebrations of the Dong, singing was an indispensable element, playing key roles in labor, education, and entertainment. Song served as the primary means of communication between villages, in social interactions, and especially in romantic exchanges between young men and women. In the Dong community, the ability to sing was a measure of one's social skills. Those who couldn't sing well might be seen as lacking social abilities, affecting their social status and even marriage prospects. Therefore, the norm of "the old teach the young to sing, the young learn the old songs, and the youth make friends through songs" became a common practice in social life. This way of life shaped a social atmosphere where "songs echoed in every household, melodies filled every person's throat, and emotions were often conveyed through songs," making singing a distinctive feature of Dong culture. Under this cultural influence, the collective spirit passed down through generations found expression and expansion, evident in collective singing, social interactions, religious ceremonies, romantic love, and other aspects, further consolidating the vitality of this cultural tradition.

In terms of the number of song troupes, each Dong village had multiple troupes, known in the Dong language as "gao ga," with varying numbers based on popularity. Some villages had only a few troupes, while others had as many as dozens. These troupes covered all age groups from young children to adults. "Small troupes" were established for children aged six to eleven, aiming to cultivate their musical talents through learning and practicing songs. Sometimes these children would showcase their skills in singing activities at drum towers. Teenagers aged twelve to sixteen formed the "youth song troupes," not only learning songs but also honing their singing skills through competitive events. The "youth song troupes" composed of seventeen to twenty-year-olds frequently participated in various singing performances, becoming the backbone of singing activities. The "adult song troupes," typically comprised of males aged twenty to thirty, as female members often left due to marriage and childbirth, mainly supported the youth troupes although they also engaged in singing. Additionally, there were "middle-aged song troupes" and "elderly song troupes," consisting of members around forty and fifty-sixty years old, respectively. Although these troupes no longer actively competed, they still participated in singing out of love for the art or to enliven important occasions. This hierarchical system of song troupes ensured the continuous inheritance of the Dong Grand Song as a precious cultural tradition, playing a role in cultural dissemination and enhancing social cohesion within the community.

The contribution of song teachers is mainly reflected in several aspects: their cultural role and social status, their way of life and spirit of teaching songs, and their influence on traditional music culture. Dong song teachers, also known as "sangga" and "jiangga," hold a unique and esteemed role in Dong culture with a high status. They not only create and spread Dong songs but also serve as inheritors of culture, history, and ethical values. Song teachers need not only excellent singing abilities but also the talent to create new songs and teach existing ones. They serve as bridges between the past and the future, passing down Dong history, culture, and philosophy to the next generation through traditional and original works. The cultivation of song teachers often requires the accumulation of time and experience, so they are usually older individuals, with many being outstanding members of past song troupes. The selfless dedication of Dong song teachers is evident in their

knowledge-sharing without expecting anything in return, a spirit highly valued in Dong society. Their teaching often does not require formal ceremonies or material exchange but is based on a love for culture and a sense of responsibility towards future generations. This cultural atmosphere fosters a supportive and respectful community environment, contributing to the continuity and prosperity of the Dong Grand Song, a unique cultural heritage. Children helping song teachers with agricultural work in exchange for more learning time is a mutually beneficial community cooperation method that emphasizes collective participation and shared educational resources. Song teachers' homes often become places of teaching, and they willingly bear necessary expenses, further demonstrating their commitment to cultural heritage and selfless dedication. Through their passion, knowledge, and skills, song teachers not only maintain the vitality of Dong musical traditions but also strengthen connections and cultural identity among community members. This mode of transmission, relying on oral communication and practical learning rather than written records, preserves the purity and dynamism of music and culture. The role of Dong song teachers and their dedication are key factors in preserving and developing Dong culture, making their work and spirit highly commendable and deserving of respect. This mutual support system within the Dong community ensures the continuity of culture. The younger generation gains invaluable education through direct participation and experiential learning, learning not just music skills but also respect for community responsibilities and cultural heritage. The characteristics of Dong song teacher education methods, emphasizing the relationship between individuals and the collective and teaching based on intangible incentives, provide a model that other cultures can draw inspiration from.

In terms of teaching the Dong Grand Song, the process typically involves several stages: 1. Reciting Lyrics: Apprentices first learn to recite lyrics from the song teacher. The teacher recites line by line, and the apprentice follows along, repeating until they can fully memorize the lyrics. 2. Understanding the Meaning: After firmly memorizing the lyrics, the song teacher explains the content and emotions expressed in the lyrics. This process helps the apprentice transform simple memorization into deep understanding, realizing the cultural and emotional significance behind the song. 3. Learning the Low-pitched Part: Once the lyrics and their meanings are mastered,

apprentices learn the melody of the low-pitched part. "Laqiang" refers to the technique of elongating or altering notes according to the melody, an important performance technique in the Dong Grand Song. 4. Learning the High-pitched Part: Building upon the low-pitched part, apprentices then learn the more challenging high-pitched sections. At this stage, the song teacher provides theoretical guidance and practical demonstrations to help students grasp the complex high-pitched melodies. 5. Long-term Inheritance and Practice: Song teachers continuously teach apprentices, passing down hundreds or thousands of Grand Songs over the years. This process is not just about the transmission of songs but also about the exchange of cultural spirit and emotions. Teaching the Dong Grand Song emphasizes not only memorization and mastery of techniques but also understanding of culture and conveying emotions. Through this teaching model, the Dong Grand Song is passed down through generations while maintaining its vitality and development.

The "singing customs" of the Dong people are an important part of Dong culture, representing not just a musical activity, but also a comprehensive reflection of social interaction, cultural inheritance, aesthetic enjoyment, and emotional expression. Through these activities, the Dong Grand Song is widely disseminated and practiced within the community, becoming an indispensable part of the daily life of the Dong people. In Dong singing customs, participants include singers, listeners, and future inheritors, each playing their respective roles in upholding and promoting Dong song culture. Singers showcase their singing skills to enhance their social status and personal honor in these activities. Their performances not only display individual talents but also show respect and homage to Dong song traditions. Listeners enjoy aesthetic enrichment in singing customs, and their participation and feedback form the social foundation for the continuation of these activities. The involvement of listeners reflects the vitality and popularity of the Dong Grand Song within the community. Children learn the Grand Song through observation and absorption, a natural process of cultural inheritance. The frequent occurrence of these activities has ensured the preservation and development of the Dong Grand Song as an oral tradition. This has fostered community cohesion within the Dong ethnic group, strengthening their ethnic identity and ensuring the perpetual cultural vitality.

Although the Dong people lived relatively simple and singular agricultural lives during this period, the Dong Grand Song was an essential part of their spiritual world and reached its peak of development. The prosperity of this cultural form not only demonstrates the Dong people's love for art but also showcases their ability to fulfill social functions and cultural inheritance through art.

During challenging times in Chinese history, the Dong Grand Song faced a particularly difficult period. In the decades following 1958, especially during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), many traditional Chinese cultural and artistic forms suffered severe impacts, including the Dong Grand Song. Considered a symbol of feudal superstition, this traditional art and cultural form faced harsh suppression, severely affecting its development during this period. Many songbooks were destroyed, the Grand Song was banned from performance, song troupes were forced to disband, and some folk activities were prohibited. This stagnation for a decade led to a significant loss in the transmission of the Grand Song, resulting in irreparable damage.

In a period of renewed development in the late 1970s, following significant political shifts in China, the Dong Grand Song encountered new opportunities for development. After the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee, China embarked on a new era of reform and opening up, bringing profound changes not only in the economic and political spheres but also triggering significant transformations in cultural endeavors. As an important cultural heritage, the Dong Grand Song was restored and valued during this period. In the Dong-speaking regions of southern China, the singing customs of the Grand Song were quickly revived, reigniting its vitality and echoing in every corner of rural areas. Traditional song troupes that had been disbanded due to suppression had their labels removed, allowing for reorganization and reactivation within the Dong community. Against the backdrop of cultural thawing, the Dong Grand Song experienced a revival, with previously buried or neglected songbooks and singing techniques being rediscovered and studied. Dong Grand Song artists regained confidence, recommencing the transmission and teaching of the Grand Song, leading to the reconstruction of traditional culture. Scholars began to focus on and study the Dong Grand Song, various folk activities experienced a revival, such as "weiye," "jisai," and

"oye," showcasing the spectacular scenes of Dong culture once again. By 1986, the charm of the Dong Grand Song had even reached international stages. The performance of Dong female voice Grand Song at the Autumn Arts Festival in France caused a sensation and garnered high praise from various quarters. This demonstrates that the Dong Grand Song not only received recognition and attention domestically but also showcased its unique artistic charm and cultural value internationally. National and international ethnomusicologists conducted fieldwork in Dong regions, learning, organizing, and studying the Dong Grand Song, sparking a new research trend. During this period, the inheritance and development of the Dong Grand Song not only received substantial restoration and support but also produced many profound academic research outcomes, further enriching and deepening people's understanding of the Dong Grand Song as an intangible cultural heritage.

In a period of decline following the mid-1980s, the Dong Grand Song faced challenges primarily due to three reasons. Changes in economic structure, driven by reform and the development of a market economy, altered the Dong people's way of life, especially affecting the material foundation of traditional Dong Grand Songs. The younger generation's migration for work or business reduced the number of people participating in Grand Song activities in villages, making it difficult to sustain fixed group song troupes, thereby impacting the learning and transmission of the Dong Grand Song. The impact of modern culture, with the widespread use of modern communication and media technologies such as radios, televisions, computers, and smartphones, led to changes in people's entertainment preferences. Decreased participation in traditional Grand Song troupes and increased immersion of young people in modern forms of entertainment posed a challenge to traditional cultural activities. The updating of ideologies, with the expansion of compulsory education, children in Dong areas had the opportunity to receive formal education, requiring significant time commitment to academics, making it challenging to dedicate time to learning traditional Grand Songs. Additionally, children and parents receiving modern education tended to prioritize the importance of learning modern knowledge and skills for future success. These three factors combined to present severe challenges to the inheritance and development of the Dong Grand Song.

Protecting and inheriting the Dong Grand Song is not only a necessity for cultural diversity but also a sign of respect for historical traditions.

Changes in economic structure, the impact of modern culture, and the updating of ideologies have collectively led to challenges for the Dong Grand Song, a traditional cultural expression of the Dong people. These factors not only affect the inheritance of the Dong Grand Song but also influence other aspects of Dong culture. The rise and fall of the Dong Grand Song indeed remind us that traditional culture needs to continuously innovate and adapt with the changing times in order to survive and thrive in new social environments. The vitality of traditional culture lies in its continuous adaptability and development. Traditional culture can only be truly protected and developed when it is accepted, participated in, and valued by modern society. The lessons learned from the Dong Grand Song tell us that we need to make continuous efforts to ensure that these precious traditions not only remain as historical memories but also become vibrant contemporary cultural practices.

1.2.5 Future Trends of the Dong Grand Song

The biggest challenge facing the future trends of the Dong Grand Song is the issue of inheritance, which requires deep reflection. The reasons that have impacted the traditional Dong Grand Song include:

Impact of economic development: The trend of working outside the traditional living environment means that the younger generation is leaving for urban employment, weakening the foundation of cultural inheritance and exposing them to more external cultures.

Influence of modern media: The prevalence of new media such as television and the internet has diversified people's entertainment choices, potentially reducing interest and participation in traditional arts.

Loss of cultural consciousness: With the impact of modern culture, some Dong people may begin to overlook the importance of traditional culture, weakening the awareness of preserving and inheriting this culture.

Discontinuity in the inheritance structure: Older generation song masters are passing away, while the new generation may not have fully learned and mastered the singing skills of the Grand Song for various reasons, leading to a gap in knowledge transmission.

Destruction of ecological space: With the advancement of urban construction and economic development, the original living environment and cultural space may be disrupted, affecting the natural growth environment of traditional culture.

Protecting and inheriting intangible cultural heritage is a complex process that requires the joint efforts of the government, communities, and every individual. Through the above measures, not only can the Dong Grand Song be protected, but it can also promote the development and inheritance of the entire Dong culture. In the future, the protection and development of the Dong Grand Song will need to seek a balance between tradition and modernity, finding a path that can preserve the essence of the culture while adapting to the development of modern society.

1.2 Cultural Value of the Dong Grand Song

The Dong Grand Song is a traditional choral art form of the Dong ethnic community in China, possessing profound cultural value and significance, and has been listed as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Firstly, it holds historical and cultural heritage value, carrying the history and cultural traditions of the Dong people over centuries. It is not just a musical form of expression but also encompasses Dong history, mythology, philosophy, and social concepts. Through songs conveying stories and experiences, the Dong Grand Song has become an important cultural transmission method.

Secondly, it holds social and community cohesion. The Grand Song is a core part of Dong community activities, often performed during festivals, weddings, funerals, and other community gatherings. This choral form promotes unity among community members and social cohesion, strengthening community ties through shared cultural practices. It also holds musical and artistic value with its unique polyphonic choral structure, unaccompanied and featuring unique and complex harmonies. The musical structure of the Grand Song showcases high levels of artistic creativity and oral transmission skills. This art form demonstrates the possibilities of vocal music, holding significant research and appreciation value for musicologists and artists.

Education and identity are crucial aspects as the Dong Grand Song plays a vital role in cultural education for the younger generation of Dong people. Learning

and practicing the Grand Song can help young individuals understand their cultural roots and foster a sense of identity with their cultural heritage, particularly important for protecting cultural diversity in a globalized context.

Harmony with ecology and environment is also reflected in the Grand Song, showcasing the harmonious coexistence of the Dong people with the natural environment. The song lyrics often describe and praise the natural environment, reflecting the Dong people's respect and dependence on nature. This cultural practice encourages an eco-friendly way of living, positively influencing contemporary ecological awareness.

Influencing tourism and economic development, the Dong Grand Song serves as a cultural attraction, playing a positive role in local tourism and economic development. Tourists' interest in this unique cultural expression can boost the local economy, generating income for the community while enhancing awareness and respect for Dong culture and traditions.

In conclusion, the Dong Grand Song is not only a beautiful art form but also an integral part of Dong cultural identity and social structure. While preserving and passing on this unique heritage, it also promotes cultural diversity and intercultural understanding.

1.2.1 Ecological and Natural Environment of the Dong Grand Song

The interaction between culture and the environment is one of the core issues in cultural anthropology. Traditionally, culture has been seen as a tool and manifestation through which humans adapt to and shape their environment and way of life. Humans use culture to understand and influence their natural environment. Culture includes technology, social structures, belief systems, arts, and other human behaviors and institutions, all of which are ways in which humans adapt to environmental challenges. The Dong Grand Song is not only an art form but also a way for community members to communicate and maintain social relationships, reflecting people's adaptation to and understanding of their living environment.

Environmental determinism argues that the primary determining factor in the formation and development of culture is physical environmental conditions, a viewpoint that has sparked considerable debate in academia. Critics argue that this perspective overlooks human agency and internal cultural dynamics. More research

tends to view the interaction between the environment and culture as bidirectional, where culture is influenced by the environment and, in turn, shapes and alters the environment. Thus, the environment plays an active role in cultural transmission, either facilitating or constraining it. The inheritance of the Dong Grand Song may be closely related to the sustainability of its ecological environment. Changes in the ecological environment could restrict the space for traditional cultural activities, thereby affecting cultural practices and transmission.

The relationship between culture and the environment is one of interaction and symbiosis. Protecting cultural heritage means safeguarding the conditions and backgrounds under which a culture has formed and developed within a specific environment. This entails not only protecting material resources but also maintaining knowledge systems, social structures, rituals, and daily practices associated with that culture. In today's era of globalization and rapid change, recognizing the close connection between culture and the environment is crucial for formulating effective cultural preservation and sustainable development policies.

For Dong culture, its way of life and cultural expressions are evidently closely linked to its natural environment. The Dong are an ethnic minority in southwestern China, and the natural living environment of the Dong in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County, Guangxi, exhibits the following characteristics: mountainous terrain, with the Dong residing in mountainous and hilly areas characterized by complex topography, numerous mountain ranges, and winding rivers. Subtropical humid climate, with the Dong inhabiting areas classified under a subtropical humid climate zone, featuring distinct seasons, abundant rainfall, and humid air. This climate is conducive to crop cultivation, particularly the growth of rice. Abundant forest resources, with the Dong region rich in forest resources, including various trees and bamboo groves, providing materials for Dong's wooden structures and serving as the primary source for food gathering and material production. Numerous rivers: the Dong region is crisscrossed with rivers, with a well-developed water system. These rivers not only serve as important water sources for irrigation in farmland but also form a crucial part of Dong people's livelihood and transportation. Biodiversity: due to topographical and climatic reasons, the Dong region boasts high biodiversity, with various wild flora and fauna resources. Agriculture as the mainstay, with the Dong

traditionally relying on agriculture for their livelihood, especially focusing on rice cultivation as the primary agricultural activity. Additionally, the Dong region also cultivates crops such as corn, wheat, potatoes, and engages in certain livestock and fishing activities. Rugged terrain and inconvenient transportation, as the Dong region is predominantly mountainous and hilly with rugged terrain, making transportation relatively challenging and influencing Dong's way of life and social development.

As described in the "Brief History of the Dong Ethnic Group": "Along the Douliu River, there are ten miles of Dong villages built along the river, with banyan and pine trees shading the villages, roots intertwined, small wooden boats shuttle up and down the river. The water of the Qing River is clear to the bottom, wooden rafts racing through the waves, rushing downstream. The surface of the Xun River is rolling with waves, commonly known as 'mother and child boats,' with families of all sizes gathering in the same cabin, returning with full loads of goods. The mountainous areas are densely forested, with fir trees and tea plantations lush and green. Between the valleys and gullies, streams flow gently, terraced fields stack up layer by layer. The flat plains are intricately designed, fields connected with winding paths, rapeseed flowers bloom in spring, and the fragrance of rice fills the air in autumn. Villages nestled among mountains and rivers, with bamboo groves surrounding the villages, ancient towering trees, or peach and plum trees in abundance. The southern Dong villages are more distinctive, surrounded by streams that either pass through or around the villages, with 'flower bridges' (wind and rain bridges) spanning them. Drum towers in the villages, with multi-eaved pavilions, piercing the blue sky. 'Ganlan'-style houses, densely arranged, fish ponds scattered around, 'he liang' structures standing among the villages. Village paths are rugged, often paved with pebbles or stone slabs. Pavilions are built in distant mountain valleys, with wooden benches, stone stools, and wells dug to draw spring water, providing resting places and quenching thirst for travelers. All of these signify the unique scenery of Dong villages." (Zhang Zhongxiao 1997)

The Dong people adapt to such natural environments, and their construction of wind and rain bridges and drum towers are crystallizations of wisdom to adapt to the mountainous and rainy climate and utilize local wood resources. At the same time, the Dong people also preserve many traditional agricultural cultures and

festival activities, all of which are unique cultural expressions formed in specific natural environments. The site selection of Dong villages, agricultural production methods, architectural styles, and the Dong Grand Song are all results of a profound understanding and adaptation to the natural environment. These cultural characteristics not only reflect the Dong people's philosophy of harmonious coexistence with nature but also demonstrate their ecological wisdom and practices for sustainable environmental use. Additionally, the ethical morals, legal norms, reward and punishment ceremonies, and value orientations in the social context are intrinsic value orientations that play a normative and guiding role within the culture. In Dong culture, cultural forms like the Dong Grand Song are not only artistic expressions but also mediums for the dissemination of social norms and values. These cultural practices not only strengthen the internal social identity of the Dong people but also convey a pursuit of harmonious social order to the outside world (Hao Ruihua 2006).

The regions where the Dong people live are densely forested, with abundant flowing water, making the natural environment highly suitable for human habitation. Regarding the natural environment where the Dong ancestors resided for a long time, there is praise in the Dong ancient song "Song of the Ancestral Origins of the Forty-Eight Villages":

"When burying ancestors and grandparents,
 Why is it so difficult to traverse mountains and waters?
 Only to see that:
 The mountains are three feet three inches away from the sky,
 Clapping heads looking up, fearing head coverings and capes falling;
 The small path underfoot is only as wide as a palm,
 Ancient trees block the road, impassable;
 Green vines wind around like dragons embracing pillars,
 Hundred men cannot move the fir trees.
 A hundred birds on the trees chirp and call,
 Groups of monkeys dart through the forest.
 Ancestral grandparents blow the straight flute to worship the earth veins,
 Exploring the earth veins to establish villages,

Confirming the auspicious land where the dragon god treasures reside and people can live." (Dong Ethnic Group Brief History Compilation Team 2008)

In the Dong ancient song "Song of the Ancestral Settlement of the Ancient State Ancestors," there is also praise:

"Arriving at the ancient state as dawn breaks,
 The east begins to brighten, spewing colorful clouds.
 The east begins to brighten, spewing colorful clouds.
 The ancestors all say: 'This is an auspicious sign,
 This place is definitely habitable.'
 As dawn breaks and upon closer inspection,
 Indeed, there are good mountains and waters that everyone praises;
 Everywhere is covered with large banyan trees,
 And there is a good sandbank."

In the Dong ancient song "Migration Song of Tianfu Dong," the description of the natural environment of Dong villages where the Dong people reside is more detailed:

"The soil here is fertile and good,
 The mountains are densely forested, a place where a hundred birds nest,
 Green mountains stretch endlessly,
 Green waters encircle the mountains.
 By the stream, there is a small dam,
 The grains in the fields grow as thick as thighs.
 The green vegetables in the forest are as thick as bamboo shoots,
 Each leaf of the vegetables resembles a fan.
 The Six Halls love the fertile soil of this place,
 Anfu loves the dense forests of this place,
 The Six Halls invite the Six Protectors to settle here,
 Anfu invites the son-in-law to build a home here,
 Living here for three hundred years, not knowing,
 Living here for five hundred years, not feeling it is too long."

(Yang Guoren and Wu Dingguo 1981)

The Dong ancestral songs, origin songs, and migration songs collectively reflect the Dong people's attachment to their "homeland," their love and praise for the land where they live and thrive. The Dong ancestors chose their homeland, valuing the mountains and water in the natural environment. In the Dong ancient song "How Our Ancestors Settled in This Village," there is also a description of the Dong people's living environment:

*"It's a good place, a good place,
Warm in winter and cool in summer,
The small river flows long in front of the village,
The green mountains behind the village are majestic,
The evening cicadas chirp quietly,
This place is like heaven on earth.
If everyone asks where this place is,
It is the place where we drink and sing tonight,
This place is Jiashuo Village,
Jiashuo means a good place."*

Dong villages are generally built in hilly areas, with a clear and transparent small river surrounding the front of the village, lush green mountains and tall trees covering the back of the village, forming a beautiful natural picture. The praises sung during Dong "Duoye" are like pastoral songs presenting a picturesque scene:

*"Your village is truly wonderful,
With bright mountains and beautiful water, water surrounding the mountains.
From all directions, it surrounds round like a basket,
With the Maolin horse on the left,
The white tiger and flying dragon on the right;
The murmuring water flows bend at the foot of the mountain,
Eighteen ditches interweave in front of the big mountain;
The village is adorned with small hills,
Blooming all year round like a fairyland;
Behind the village lies the agile Houlong,
Blessing you with abundant crops and thriving livestock."*

(Yang Guoren and Wu Dingguo 1981)

The formation and development of folk art are important manifestations of ethnic cultural diversity, rooted not only in the historical traditions, customs, and social practices of the ethnic group but also deeply embedded in specific natural environments. The musical characteristics of the Dong Grand Song, such as its natural flowing melody, harmonious voices, and lingering echo effects, may have been greatly influenced by the vast forests and valleys in the Dong inhabited areas. The natural sounds and echo effects of the forests and valleys provide a natural acoustical effect for the Dong Grand Song, and these natural sounds may have been absorbed and integrated into their music unintentionally by the Dong people. For the Dong Grand Song, its development not only reflects the practical life and spiritual needs of the Dong people but also has a profound connection with the natural environment in which the Dong people live. Therefore, the Dong Grand Song is not only a part of Dong culture but also a response and reflection of their natural living environment. It embodies the concept of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, being a product of the combined effects of the natural environment and human creativity.

1.2.2 Song Content Reflecting the Cultural Value of the Dong Grand Song

In Dong society, singing holds an extremely important position. It is not only a part of daily life but also a crucial component of spiritual and cultural life. Dong folk songs sing: "Singing joyfully, the songs keep coming whether we have food or not. We cherish our youth, we envy your youth, even when we grow old, we still sing, singing until our bones turn to ashes. Without farming, we can't sustain our lives, how can we live without singing mountain songs? Food nourishes the body, songs nourish the heart, oh, to make a living, we must also sing mountain songs" (Zhang Zhongxiao 1997). This Dong folk song conveys the message that for the Dong people, singing is both a spiritual solace in times of difficulty and a way of pursuing spiritual fulfillment and social interaction. Even in environments of material scarcity, the Dong people express emotions and resilience through song. This song reflects the Dong people's love for and dependence on singing; it is an indispensable part of their lives. In Dong culture, the saying "food nourishes the body, songs nourish the heart" is a profound understanding, reflecting their philosophy of valuing both material and spiritual lives equally. The Dong Grand Song is not just a musical performance; it

also carries the history, philosophy, morals, and social norms of the Dong people in its singing content. It serves as an important medium in Dong culture for conveying knowledge, maintaining social connections, and expressing emotions. Through the Grand Song, the Dong people pass down their culture, strengthen community unity, and express their feelings and desires in daily life and various ceremonies.

The Dong Grand Song is a culturally rich and diverse form of expression, encompassing not only music and art but also a concentrated reflection of Dong people's cultural life and social experiences. The content of the Grand Song is wide-ranging, from praising natural landscapes to celebrating labor life, from expressing love between men and women to moral teachings, from praising human relationships to passing down historical legends and social systems, covering almost all aspects of Dong social life. This richness and diversity make the Dong Grand Song an essential part of Dong culture. While each theme in the Grand Song may have its emphasis, they often blend together, permeating each other. While praising nature, it also reflects respect for labor; in expressing love, it incorporates affirmation of ethical values. This kind of content not only adds depth to artistic expression but also provides entry points for a deeper understanding of Dong culture.

Professor Yu Qiuyu's statement that "singing has become the tacit understanding of the nation, the consensus of villages, and the inheritance of generations" profoundly expresses the important role of the Dong Grand Song in social and cultural contexts. The Dong Grand Song is not just a choral performance; it is a way of cultural transmission and social cohesion. With its unique polyphonic structure, it showcases the deep cultural heritage of the Dong people and their pursuit of a harmonious society. As a cultural symbol, the Dong Grand Song is deeply embedded in the hearts of every Dong person, becoming a sign of their cultural awareness and self-identity. When the Grand Song plays, it not only transmits melodies but also represents and promotes Dong cultural values, aesthetic concepts, and social norms. This power of cultural inheritance allows the Dong Grand Song to transcend time and space limitations, becoming a lasting value that is passed down through generations, continuously shaping the cultural identity and spiritual landscape of the Dong people.

Mimicking the Sounds of Nature: Dong music, especially the Dong Grand Song, is known for its imitation of natural sounds. This musical form is deeply rooted in the environment of Dong people's lives, closely related to nature and a reflection of their culture and way of life. The melodies and rhythms of the Grand Song often imitate natural sounds such as bird calls, insect chirps, and flowing water, with these elements cleverly integrated into the music. The Dong people use their sensitive observations and profound understanding of the natural environment to capture these sounds and transform them into musical language. For example, the song "Jinla Ge" imitates the flying and chirping of bees, reflecting the Dong people's observation and understanding of the natural world. "Buguge" mimics the call of the cuckoo bird, a symbol of summer in traditional Chinese culture. In the song "Gabugu," the lyrics roughly translate to: "Spring has arrived, hills and ridges are lush green, the cuckoo birds call out, cuckoo cuckoo singing together, hmm-yah-singing... by the river, willows sprout new leaves, from now on, we will dry the seedling fields, cuckoo cuckoo singing together, hmm-yah-singing... it's not yet the season for planting seedlings, everyone come and seek joy, when the busy farming season arrives, we will go up the mountain to work." The "...hmm-yah-singing..." here imitates the sound of the cuckoo bird; there is also the "River Song," which imitates the murmuring flow of a river, reflecting the importance of rivers in Dong life. Among the Dong people, there is also a story passed down that "all birds are the teachers of the elder brother."

In music composition, nature is not only a common source of inspiration but also an important theme of expression. From the ancient Chinese story of Huangdi distinguishing twelve musical tones by listening to the phoenix's song in the "Lu's Spring and Autumn" to the modern music that simulates and creates natural sounds, this inspiration and form of expression transcend time and space. In Chinese music, representative works in the "realistic" form, such as "Huangluan Liangchi" and "Geese Landing on the Sandbank," use instruments to mimic sounds from nature, such as bird calls and wing flapping. These musical works typically focus on accurately depicting specific natural sounds, allowing the audience to vividly imagine the scene. On the other hand, "expressive" forms of music such as the ancient Chinese qin piece "High Mountains and Flowing Water" and Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony" focus on conveying the overall situation and atmosphere of nature

through music. These works not only imitate natural sounds but also use music to express the beauty and harmony of nature, achieving a unity of music and the spiritual essence of nature.

Of course, in addition to using musical instruments to represent natural sounds, vocal imitation is also an important form of expression. The Dong people's vocal Grand Song is a good example of this. It does not use instruments but instead uses human voices to mimic natural sounds. Whether in a "realistic" or "expressive" style, the Dong vocal Grand Song can accurately capture and express the sounds of nature, such as insect chirps, bird calls, and the sound of flowing streams. The singing of the Dong vocal Grand Song showcases the purity and beauty of nature, while also demonstrating the Dong musical culture's profound understanding and respect for nature. Whether in ancient Chinese music theory or modern musical works, we can see how musicians explore and express the sounds of nature through various means. This is not just an artistic pursuit but also a praise and respect for the harmony and beauty of nature. Through these musical works, we can feel the intimate connection and mutual influence between humans and nature.

Dong music, especially the Dong Grand Song, is known for its imitation of natural sounds. This musical form is deeply rooted in the environment of Dong people's lives, closely related to nature and a reflection of their culture and way of life. The melodies and rhythms of the Grand Song often imitate natural sounds such as bird calls, insect chirps, and flowing water, with these elements cleverly integrated into the music. The Dong people use their sensitive observations and profound understanding of the natural environment to capture these sounds and transform them into musical language. For example, "Jinla Ge" imitates the flying and chirping of bees, reflecting the Dong people's observation and understanding of the natural world. "Buguge" mimics the call of the cuckoo bird, a symbol of summer in traditional Chinese culture. "River Song" imitates the murmuring flow of a river, reflecting the importance of rivers in Dong life. In the singing of the Dong Grand Song, the use of harmony is very subtle. The combination of high and low voices creates a harmonious and pleasant musical effect. The low voice is steady like water, providing a continuous, flowing sound foundation, while the high voice is flexible and changing, like the singing of birds in nature, adding vitality and vitality to the melody.

These imitative songs are not just imitations in music; they convey awe and praise for nature and also reflect the Dong society's values of harmony and balance. Through these musical works, the Dong people demonstrate their philosophy of harmonious coexistence with nature and their deep affection for the surrounding environment. The artistic effect of the Dong Grand Song is not only in its musical beauty but also in the profound cultural significance it contains and its deep insight into the ecological environment. Through such songs, the audience can feel the wonderful harmony between music and nature, as well as understand the important role of intangible cultural heritage in protecting nature and cultural diversity.

"Image" is a very important concept in literature, art, and music, especially in terms of aesthetics and symbolism. Images are not only a direct reflection of the real world but also a symbolic expression of the rich emotional and intellectual content of the subject. The images in the Dong Grand Song are a concentrated embodiment of these emotions and cultural identities. Carl Jung's concept of the "collective unconscious" explains how common psychological structures spread and preserve elements of culture and spirit within a population. In Jung's view, archetypes are part of the collective unconscious, universal and preset patterns that help explain and guide human behavior and experience. As a cultural form of expression, the images in the Dong Grand Song not only reflect the emotions of individual singers but also embody the collective emotions and cultural memories of the entire group. In Dong music and songs, natural elements are often used as images to convey deeper emotions and thoughts, such as insights into life, reverence for nature, and social identity.

In the Dong Grand Song, these images often have dual or even multiple meanings: they are first direct depictions of objects or phenomena in nature. They have specific symbolic meanings in Dong culture, linked to specific social values, historical memories, or mythical legends. They carry elements of the collective unconscious, manifesting as shared emotions and values of the entire group. The images in the Dong Grand Song are not just expressions of individual experiences but also embodiments of cultural heritage and group identity. These images become cultural symbols and totems for the group, carrying the memories and emotions of the ethnic group and passing them down through music, a timeless form of expression.

From the perspective of aesthetic phenomenology, images are the externalization and expression of the subject's emotions, but in the Dong Grand Song, this expression also carries the emotions and collective consciousness of the entire group. This makes the Dong Grand Song not only an artistic work but also an important medium for cultural transmission and ethnic identity. In this way, the Dong Grand Song transcends individuals to become a reflection of a people's voice and soul.

The imagery of "fish" appears frequently in the lyrics of the Dong Grand Song. In the Dong Grand Song "Love Song" (sung by a female), the lyrics go like this:

*"Today my lover,
Acts as a fish swimming in the creek,
Afraid someone
Has already prepared a branch to cover,
I, shy, arrive
By the creek, tapping my foot,
Fish don't appear,
My heart is anxious,
Why did my lover
Turn into a dragon swimming in the river,
Leaving behind the tender lady,
Acting as a fish guarding the creek."*

This is a soft song in the Dong Grand Song, where the anxious woman awaiting her lover's return is likened to a fish in a small stream, while her lover seems to have disappeared like a dragon into a larger river. She still hopes and longs for his return (Yang Yi 2015). In the responsive lyrics sung by the male chorus singer, fish is also used as a metaphor:

*"Today I act as a tail fish,
South of the creek,
No one
Comes with a branch to cover,
Let me act as a tail fish,
A black fish reveals its back in the water,"*

*Intentionally making you anxious,
 Today, shy, along the creek poking holes,
 Out comes a group,
 Swimming into the lady's net,
 The net can't hold,
 Today I act as a dragon in the pool,
 Only waiting for you
 To come like a fish."*

The imagery of "fish" in the Dong Grand Song indeed carries profound cultural significance and rich symbolic connotations. In Dong culture, fish is not only an important food resource but also an indispensable symbol in cultural inheritance, ethnic reproduction, and social activities.

The imagery of "fish" in the Dong Grand Song has multiple meanings, primarily reflecting the foundations of life: Fish as an important part of the Dong people's diet embodies a way of life where humans coexist harmoniously with nature. The Dong people see fish as part of their livelihood, symbolizing nourishment and abundance in life; reproduction and survival: The strong reproductive ability of fish symbolizes vitality and the continuation of the ethnic group. In primitive cultures, symbols of fertility are closely related to the prosperity and development of the nation. Fish as such a symbol express hope and blessings for future generations; cultural heritage: The use of fish in important Dong ceremonies such as sacrifices and weddings shows that it is a carrier of ethnic culture and expression. The appearance of fish in these social activities is not just about material provision but also about the transmission of spiritual culture and beliefs. Totem worship: As a totem in Dong culture, fish represents reverence and admiration for natural forces. In Dong beliefs, the "Sa" deity embodies the meanings of "grandmother," "fish," and "reproduction," showing that fish is not just a biological entity in nature but also a part of ethnic beliefs and the spiritual world; literary symbolism: In the Dong Grand Song, the imagery of fish is often used as metaphor and symbolism to express more complex emotions and thoughts. Fish in the songs may represent themes such as love, freedom, dreams, or other profound topics.

In conclusion, the imagery of fish in the Dong Grand Song is not just a depiction of nature but also an interpretation of Dong culture, social structure, and cosmology. Through the use of these images, the Dong Grand Song not only showcases the harmonious relationship between the Dong people and nature but also conveys their profound understanding and respect for life, society, and the universe. These images make the Dong Grand Song a powerful cultural transmission medium, providing a window for future generations to understand Dong history, culture, and values.

The Dong people's deep emotions and reverence for the mountains they inhabit. The lyrics not only depict the beauty of the natural landscape but also express the harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. The Dong Grand Song is not only a combination of music and poetry; it is also an important part of Dong social culture and spiritual life. The song "The Mountains Are Truly Beautiful" praises the natural beauty in the hearts of the Dong people, reflecting their philosophy of life. By praising the magnificence of nature, the Dong people express their awe for nature, love for their homeland, and optimistic attitude towards life. Through the hymn to the mountains, this grand song reflects the Dong people's worldview and values, as well as showcasing their aesthetic taste and philosophical thoughts.

In Dong culture, elements of nature such as mountains, rivers, plants, bird songs, etc., are often imbued with sacred meanings, becoming indispensable parts of songs, legends, and rituals. These elements are not only seen as gifts of life but also symbols of spiritual and cultural identity. In the polyphonic choral form of the Dong Grand Song, natural elements such as mountains, water, forests, and birds are often used to construct the themes and emotions of the music, creating a unique musical style and social resonance. This song's lyrics also reflect this artistic expression, conveying a sense of harmony, joy, and a beautiful way of life through the depiction of nature.

From an interdisciplinary perspective, Dong Grand Songs are not just musical works; they also serve as a record and expression of Dong culture, ecology, history, and social relationships. From a botanical and ecological perspective, the plants and animals mentioned in the grand songs are direct reflections of the local natural environment. They not only constitute natural resources that the Dong people

rely on but also play crucial roles in maintaining biodiversity and ecological balance within the ecosystem. For example, the most mentioned "dancong" insect in the grand songs refers to a specific insect that holds special significance in relation to the local vegetation. It may serve as a pollinator for a specific plant in that particular region or play a vital role in the local food chain.

From an ethnological and anthropological standpoint, the natural elements and daily life intertwined in the lyrics of the grand songs reflect the Dong people's way of life, belief systems, and values. The plants, animals, and other natural elements in these lyrics often carry symbolic meanings, known as imagery. They represent certain social relationships, historical events, or cultural beliefs. For instance, the plants mentioned in the songs might be important elements in specific festivals or ceremonies or symbolize particular social meanings.

Especially in Dong culture, the relationship between nature and humans is not one of simple domination or being dominated but rather a mutually dependent partnership. The Dong people hold a deep reverence for nature, viewing it as the nurturing mother. In the Zhuang song "Vines Entwining Trees," the lyrics mentioning "vines entwining trees in the mountains, where in the world do you see trees entwining vines" similarly express observations of natural phenomena, metaphorically alluding to the interdependence between men and women, while hinting at philosophical reflections on relationships between people and nature, life and growth, and mutual support.

The lyrics of the Dong Grand Song "Leaving the Mountain Chestnuts" go like this, sung by a female voice:

*"In the beginning, our conversations,
Step by step pushing forward,
Today, the company of love,
Not sure which heart is infatuated,
Forget the pile of conversations we had,
Earlier, we
Repeated those conversations,
Only then did I
Regard you*

*As mountain chestnuts,
Let them split open whenever."*

The song sung by the female voice expresses emotional experiences, with "conversations" and "company of love" hinting at the complexity of interpersonal relationships and the depth of emotions. The mention of chestnuts as an element in the song is not just a direct description of a plant but also a metaphor for a lover, memories, a place, or a specific emotional experience.

Oral Ethnic Memory

In cultures without a written language, where traditions are passed down orally, songs serve as vital vessels of memory, especially when detailed documentation is lacking. The Dong Grand Song, as a core component of Dong culture, documents the historical changes, social life, philosophical thoughts, and moral standards of the ethnic group. Through its rich lyrical content, it showcases the daily lives, labor practices, social relationships, religious beliefs, and ethical concepts of the Dong people. These songs are not just pieces of oral literature; they also serve as vehicles for social education and cultural preservation. In Dong culture, singing is a common social practice. From a young age, Dong individuals learn and pass on knowledge through songs, forming a shared memory and sense of identity. For example, labor songs help regulate work rhythms, while wedding and funeral songs carry religious and ceremonial meanings. The "encoding" in the Grand Song includes observations of the natural environment, responses to social events, and summaries of cultural traditions, while "decoding" is the process by which later generations understand and inherit these cultural messages through singing, listening, and experiencing. The transmission of the Dong Grand Song is not just a reflection on the past; it is also a continuous practice of cultural conventions, a living cultural innovation.

In Dong folklore, Song En and Song Sang are the first man and woman born from four turtle grandmothers hatching eggs, "Song Sang is the girl, Song En is the young man, and from that time, there were people in the world." Later, to propagate humanity, Song En and Song Sang paired up and had twelve children: Zhang Liang, Zhang Mei (also translated as "Zhang Liang, Zhang Mei" or "Jiang Liang, Jiang Mei") and ten animals: tiger, bear, snake, dragon, thunder, cat, fox, pig,

duck, and chicken, but only Zhang Liang and Zhang Mei would call for "parents" (Yu Dazhong 2005). During a competition among the twelve siblings, the boundary between humans and animals was drawn, with animals dispersing to their respective realms, while the human ancestors remained on land. When Zhang Liang and Zhang Mei returned to the earth, the sun had scorched the earth red. So, they asked the long-bellied bee to go to heaven and cut down five suns, leaving two, one for the day and one for the night, which are now the sun and the moon. The Thunder Mother was subdued, but besides Zhang Liang and Zhang Mei, there were no other humans left on earth. This story also includes a narrative of a flood destroying the world and the rebirth of life, a theme common in the mythology of many ethnic groups. Zhang Liang and Zhang Mei survived the flood in a gourd and ultimately defeated the Thunder Mother, protecting themselves and other small animals. This part of the story not only tells of survival and struggle but also showcases human wisdom and courage.

Finally, for the propagation of humanity, Zhang Liang and Zhang Mei became husband and wife through the matchmaking of an eagle, and their children became various different ethnic groups, symbolizing diversity and the development of human society. This legend is not only a part of Dong culture but also provides us a window through which we can glimpse how the Dong people view the world and humanity's place within it. These stories often contain themes of respect for nature, the origins of life, the formation of human society, and the establishment of moral and social norms. In the ancient Dong song "The Turtle Grandmothers Hatching Eggs," it is said about the turtle grandmothers hatching Song En and Song Sang:

*"Four turtle grandmothers at the foot of the slope,
Each hatching an egg.*

*Three barren eggs were discarded,
Leaving the good egg to hatch.*

*Hatched was a boy called Song En,
Smart and agile.*

*Four turtle grandmothers at the foot of the village,
Again hatching four eggs.*

*Three barren eggs were discarded,
Leaving the good egg to hatch.*

*Hatched was a girl called Song Sang,
Beautiful as a flower.
And from that time on,
People came into the world,
Song Si and Song Sang passed on to descendants,
The world's people gradually increased."*
(Jin Gaodi 2019)

Although the Turtle Grandmothers hatched Song En and Song Sang, there were no other humans present. The ancestors of the Dong people, however, descended from the siblings Zhang Liang and Zhang Mei, who married in accordance with the will of heaven. In the Dong ancient song "Zhang Liang Zhang Mei," it is sung:

*"Peacefully and quietly,
I sing a song for all to hear,
Recalling the past,
Listen to what I have to say.
Now I speak of
The chaos at the beginning, the transformations,
Transformations into day and night, wildcats at night.
The rocks in the river speak,
The birds on the mountain return home.
The birds on the mountain return home.
In ancient times, children were born on earth,
Named Dao Mei,
Dao Mei scattered in the village.
Born was a child named La Jin,
Born were Song En and Song Sang,
Who are the parents of Zhang Liang.
Zhang Liang and Zhang Mei, siblings,
Made companions with animal siblings,
Set fire to the house.
The tiger said the tiger was fast,
But Thunder was more nimble,*

Thunder went to the sky,
 Sending lightning.
 The tiger entered the jungle,
 Searching for a place to settle,
 The Dragon King descended the river,
 Found a place to build a palace,
 Gave birth to a son named Lang Yi,
 Let him guard the fields and water channels.
 Thunder, with a kind heart,
 Gave a melon seed to Zhang Mei,
 And a good seed to Zhang Liang.
 Three days for the vine to grow, four days long,
 After five days, go see,
 Form a gourd like a grain house.
 When the rain rose heavily,
 Zhang Liang and Zhang Mei,
 Hid in a gourd,
 With the flood,
 Rose to the sky.
 Rose from water to sky,
 To the gate of Thunder,
 Pulled out a bow and arrow,
 Shot Thunder Mother, making her cry for her parents.
 Thunder Mother was helpless,
 Shot Thunder Mother, making her cry for her parents.
 Thunder Mother was helpless,
 Took out gold and silver from the sky,
 To forge,
 Creating the sun and moon,
 Shining day and night.
 Ten suns and nine moons,
 Causing the flood to recede.

*Zhang Liang returned to his old place,
 Zhang Mei returned to her hometown,
 They circled the edge of the sky,
 But found no pairs of humans.*
*Zhang Liang searched the earth,
 Met Blue Bamboo,
 He hurriedly asked:
 'Under the vast sky,
 Are there heartless people?'*
*Blue Bamboo turned and replied:
 'Only Zhang Mei is matched with Zhang Liang.'*
*Zhang Liang was angry,
 Cut the bamboo into pieces with a knife,
 Blue Bamboo died, its leaves withered.*
*Zhang Liang searched every place,
 Did not find a partner,
 Returned and took Blue Bamboo,
 Blue Bamboo regenerated, growing shoots.*
They became husband and wife.
*Zhang Mei carried the child for nine months,
 The son born was named Yi Lang.*
*Yi Lang had no hands or feet,
 He was truly in a sorry state,
 They discussed:
 'What should we do with this child?'*
*Zhang Liang, in a fit of anger,
 Killed Yi Lang and threw him away,
 After three days, looking around,
 The mountains were filled with green smoke,
 All transformed into sons and daughters.*
*The liver and intestines turned into men seeking flat land,
 The bones turned into seedlings,*

*Running to the mountain top.
 The flesh turned into Dong people seeking a home,
 No one gave them a name,
 Not knowing what to call them!
 The phoenix in the sky taught the Han people,
 To call father 'dad',
 And mother 'mom'.
 And taught the Dong people,
 To call divination 'bo' and talent 'nai'.
 The foundation of Zhang Liang and Zhang Mei,
 Has been sung,
 Compiled into a story,
 To be passed on to all corners."*

After the marriage of siblings Zhang Liang and Zhang Mei, they gave birth to humans and also to the ancestors of the Dong people. But how did they come to reside in the current location? This is narrated in the Dong ancient song "Where Did the Ancestors of the Dong People Come From":

*"Our Dong ancestors,
 Fall in what?
 It's right there in Wuzhou.
 Right next to the Xunjiang River,
 Coming out of that gallows village-belt,
 From the village called Guts.
 Live there in Wuzhou,
 The people are really thriving.
 Live there in Wuzhou,
 The population has grown in successive years.
 Father's Generation,
 People fill the dam and make noise;
 Son's generation, □
 Population additions fill villages;
 Girls crowd the ping*

*Backwoodsmen crowded Lane.
 It's hard to feed a small population on a small piece of land.
 The days get tougher and tougher.
 Boughs eat up
 Tree roots also chewed up.
 Can't be stuck here waiting to starve to death.
 Ancestors called a crowd to consult.
 Everyone meets up and goes out.
 Looking for that place to live.
 Two Hmong families meet to walk along the river.
 Leaving home in search of a way to live.
 Some built maple boats.
 Some built heather boats.
 Our ancestors wanted easy,
 Too lazy to go to the far mountains
 It's right on the opposite side of the ridge.
 Cutting down maple to make a boat.
 Hmong ancestors were industrious.
 Go as deep as you can into the mountains and forests.
 Through Many Great Prickly Ponies,
 Cutting down heather to make a boat.
 Boat caused,
 The Dong family speaks to that Miao ancestor,
 Finding a new place to live with a companion
 The Dong family speaks to that Miao ancestor,
 Partnering to find a new place to live,
 The only way to go up against the water is along the great river.
 To find that hillside with trees and fields and water,
 A place to be able to feed your children and grandchildren.
 Choose an auspicious day to move together.
 Young and old have boarded the ship.
 Posterior Bowed Back Slender Cord,*

Sweat like rain on the riverbank,
 To find a resting place,
 Not afraid of the difficulty of traveling against the current.
 I don't know how many miles I've traveled.
 I don't know how many bays I've turned.
 Coming to a large village,
 The terrain there is very flat.
 The head of the fortress is a good 5,000 handfuls large.
 The foot of the fort is also five hundred handfuls of area wide.
 This place is good though,
 Unfortunately the cottage was full.
 Ancestors of both our families,
 It's all ashore here,
 Make a date to rest here for midday?
 Then together we will make the road.
 Just by this cottage,
 Two Ancestors Swap Boats,
 Dong family used that maple wood boat,
 Replaced the Hmong heather boat.
 The heathered boat moves fast.
 Maplewood's boat moves slow
 Dong families traveling in front of boats made of nanmu,
 Hmong family rushes behind in Maplewood's boat.
 The two families' ancestors agreed to
 Back to back no interruptions,
 If you turn the corner into the estuary,
 Insert a grass marker in the riverbank.
 The back crowd goes here,
 Knowing to follow the grass markers and chase the front boat.
 The two families' ancestors followed the river.
 Walking ahead to scout out the road,
 Past the Rong River past Chung Mei? ,

*Also known as Koan after the river mouth,
 Haste before coincidence does not stop,
 No turns along the Grand River.*

*Boats on the water over the Balogh,
 Ancestors still don't disembark
 Ishin takes the boat directly to Sambo,
 But it's hard to navigate a boat in a rising river.
 Upstream, the big water is whirring down.
 The boat went down the beach with the current.*

*The crowd exerted their usual force,
 Pulling off the fibers to hold up the pole.
 Turbulent waves roll over the bow of the ship,
 Our ancestors were afraid the boat would capsize.
 Just have to turn around and go into the Balogh,
 Up at the mouth of the Nabalo River.*

*Dong family inserts grass markers in that river bay,
 Save it for the Hmong ancestors behind you.
 Dong ancestor front row,
 One thing out of the back is really rare:
 A herd of wild boars is bathing by the river.
 Drag down the grass markers to float across the river to the other side.*

*Hmong seeks grass markers along river,
 Saw the grass bridge across that river.
 Rush the boat across the river,
 Toward the front to put the road in motion.*

*Drifting across the grass markers on the other side of the river,
 Blown by the wind in front of the hillside,
 Hmong abandon their boats and head for the mountains instead
 Along the way, cut thorns and drill zits to the West Hills.
 Over the Mountain and into the Cave,
 Uneasy to see no trace of Dong family,
 I don't know where the Dong family falls,*

*Miao's worried brow,
 Shouting the Dong family along the mountain peaks,
 Only the echoes of the mountains are heard everywhere.
 The Hmong family has since forked the road,
 Crowds turn as far as the mountains,
 So falling in this area of the West Hills,
 Ancestors have lived in the high mountains for generations.
 Hmong into the Western Hills,
 There's already a landing,
 Looking at the Dong family again,
 Exactly where does it fall to live?
 Dong family Bailuo river mouth on the shore,
 Saw this as a good place to land:
 Wide places around
 Can open fields and soil.
 The sun is shining out of the cotton here,
 Here the fields are wet and the grain grows.
 Our Ancestors Were Happy
 May people stay here to live. □
 Wider Ground Further Ahead,
 Pass through Guan Dong to Long Thu,
 Not far ahead is Lo Heung,
 Each land can accommodate thousands of families.
 Past the Ballow to Pilling,
 There are big trees in the mountain rushes there.
 Growing thick and straight,
 Just in time to start housing,
 It's spacious along the Pirin,
 Crowds are willing to stay and live.
 Lived all winter and spring,
 The path is well-trodden.
 Found that there are really many rocks here,*

The crowd can't all land here.
 Sharp stones at the head of the fortress resemble knife blades.
 It's hard to walk barefoot;
 There are many large jumbled rocks in the fortress.
 Difficult to build houses;
 The foot of the fortress is full of large rocky mountains.
 It's hard to start a field, it's hard to plant soil.
 Water sources are again lacking,
 It's so hard to make a living.
 This is a great place to stay if you have a lot of people.
 Not enough food for the crowd to fill their bellies,
 There are not enough clothes to go around.
 Or find a way forward.
 Our ancestors went further:
 Upper Sham Ou, via Hualong and Langzhai;
 Cross the flat sky to the pit and the foot of the fortress;
 Lower High Scale and enter Zai Gao and Si Zhai.
 That hill rush is fine,
 That bayou is narrow.
 Most people move on.
 Only a few remain.
 Moving on,
 When you meet a mountain, open the road to it.
 Go to Present Paring,
 Walk past the Kuan Ying Rock.
 After when the hooks and pendulums light up,
 Arrived at Pingrui Zhai.
 Everywhere you pass,
 All keep some crowds to stay.
 The year of the Eighth, falling on Pingrui and Cmei,
 In the year of hexagrams, it falls on the foot of the solution, the cen hold,

In the year of the first lunar month, it fell on Gao Zeng, Ping Qiu, Yinliang,

The year of the ding ovum fell in Little Yellow and Long Horn.

Crowds come together,

Dispersed living in various places,

Where does anyone fall?

People remember:

Silverton falls to Little Yellow,

Yinliang falls in Long Horn,

Yinla falls on rocky cottage,

Yinnah falls in the Return Surge,

Therefore, the coaxing falls on the solution form,

Therefore, the silver falls in the un-fat,

Therefore, the silver falls in the un-fat,

The old light and the old road fall in Gidang,

*The old forest and the old courage fall in the solfegging and cenching
embrace.*

Therefore the hilarity falls on the solving of the mother,

Pine South, Pine Decay fall in High Increase,

Gintang and Jinhan fall in the direction of the Nong,

The Golden Hall falls in the Mountain Press,

Lao Lo and Lao Loan fall in the return to Rakshasa,

Leiting falls in Doppel,

Ginbetsu, Gin to fall in Ka-beg,

To seek, loose strength fall in the solution of Dan,

Darwin falls to King Boo,

Block to fall in the official present,

So dry fall in dry cat"

(Yang Guoren and Wu Dingguo 1981)

These various ancient songs record the migration routes of the Dong ancestors. Although the specific place names may vary, they generally describe the starting point, routes, and settlement areas of the ancestors in a consistent manner.

The migration history of the Dong people is closely related to the geographical environment, with living along rivers being an important factor in their choice of settlement. Starting from areas such as Wuzhou, Dejiang, and Dancun in Guangxi, passing through places like Chang'an (now Rong'an), Danzhou, Tangfu, and Laobao, they arrived at important nodes like Baluo, Guandong, and Longtu during the migration process or at their final settlement places. These place names are repeatedly mentioned in Dong ancient songs and oral histories. Through such songs and stories, the Dong people pass down their history and culture, helping to maintain a sense of shared identity and belonging within the community.

"Ancestral Songs," "Migration Songs," and "Settlement Songs" are terms used to describe traditional cultural forms among the Dong and other ethnic groups. In these traditional song lyrics, not only do they record the history and migrations of the ethnic group, but more importantly, they express the group's identity, culture, emotions, and aesthetics. These songs, as part of oral tradition, hold special significance for the ethnic group. Particularly for those ethnic groups without written records of history, such songs are a key way to pass down history and culture. Through such forms of oral art, the wisdom, life experiences, emotions, moral concepts, values, and worldviews of ancestors are passed down through generations, allowing culture to continue and evolve. The Dong Grand Song is a powerful cultural transmission method for the Dong people. These grand songs are not just music and poetry; they are collective memories shared by the community and serve as vital sources of ethnic identity and cohesion.

During the feudal era, the central dynasty's rule over Dong areas was not firm. The Dong regions maintained local autonomous organizational systems based on the Dong "kuan" organizational system, which operated on the principle of voluntary association. This system not only had elements of military alliance but also served as a maintainer of local order, enabling democratic self-governance. This relatively autonomous social structure provided a relatively harmonious social environment for the development of Dong culture. However, starting from the Yuan Dynasty, especially during the Ming and Qing Dynasties, through the implementation of the "tusi system," "tusi + garrison" system, and the "conversion of land to flow" system, Dong regions were gradually incorporated into the central dynasty's

governance system. In the late Ming and Qing Dynasties, the central dynasty adopted oppressive policies towards the Dong people, leading to strong resistance and numerous uprisings among the Dong people. This period saw the emergence of Dong people's leaders and national heroes. The Dong Grand Songs also include works reflecting resistance against feudal oppression and praising national heroes. These songs, developed and passed down through long social practices, convey the Dong people's aspirations for freedom, equality, and their historical memory of resisting feudal oppression. Examples include the "Sasui Song," "Mianwang Song," "Chaos in the Fifth Year of Xianfeng," and "Dayong Song," among others, as famous Dong Grand Songs. These songs not only celebrate Dong leaders and heroes but also record and convey the social life and spiritual world of the Dong people in different historical periods.

The "Sasui" myth of the Dong people is an important part of Dong culture, filled with reverence and respect for nature, society, and the spiritual world. Through myths, songs, rituals, and other forms, the Dong people pass down and worship "Sasui," considered the grandmother deity who bestows protection and blessings. In the Dong mythological system, "Sasui" is depicted as a wise, kind, and heroic female figure. She is not only a spiritual support in people's lives but also a symbol of national pride and unity. Her legend expresses not only people's awe of the natural environment but also mirrors the maintenance of social order and national spirit. In the folk-sung "Sasui" Grand Songs, the lyrics praise the origin, virtues, and achievements of "Sasui," expressing reverence and wishes for her continued blessings upon the Dong people, bringing health and longevity. These lyrics not only show deep respect for "Sasui" but also reflect the Dong people's pursuit of a harmonious society and a better life.

In the Pingdeng and Piaoli areas of Longsheng County, Guangxi, the Dong people express their praise and worship for "Sasui" in the form of antiphonal singing. They view "Sasui" as the guardian deity of their own ethnicity, a heroic female figure who bravely sacrificed herself in times of national crisis. To commemorate her noble virtues and immortal achievements, her deeds are integrated into songs that are passed down from generation to generation.

*"The mountains are connected to the mountains,
This is our barrier.
Our sacred 'grandmother',
You are the sunlight of these deep mountains.
The white stones in the altar are shining,
Showing that you have not left the side of all beings.
The ancient trees outside the altar are lush and cherished,
Your blessings protect the Dong villages in all directions."*

In the land of the Dong people, "Sa Sui" is a native Dong daughter. She bravely sacrificed herself in the fight to reclaim their land from the rulers who came to plunder it, fighting alongside her father to defend the dignity of her people. Later, to commemorate this goddess-like figure whose achievements were unparalleled, her deeds were woven into the Dong Grand Song and passed down through generations:

*"Sa Sui's father was named Duoneng,
Her father, let's not mention his name,
Duoneng raised her, he was her dear father,
No need to name names, she knew her roots.
Sa Sui's mother was called Yangxiang,
Her mother, let's not mention her name,
Yangxiang raised her, she was her dear mother,
No need to point out names, she knew the love.
Duoneng built houses and granaries,
Five rooms he built well,
Once the houses were built, they moved in,
Gaining the 'Li Wang Iron Piece', a high prestige.
Forged a large knife to kill the thieves,
Causing chaos in the Li family,
With the precious knife in hand, fear was said to be none,
To eradicate the root of trouble and return our fields.
Duoneng, unfortunately, fell from the building and died,
His blood drenched the vegetable garden,
The green leaves and cabbages were dyed with his blood,*

Who could bear to eat that cabbage?"

The song goes on to praise the national heroine "Sa Sui" who, after her father died in battle, inherited his will and continued to lead the Dong ancestors in a nine-year arduous struggle against the enemy, finally reclaiming the land that had been occupied by the rulers:

*"Store the wine-soaked knife in a vine-wrapped sheath,
Fighting the chaos with the Li surname;
After nine years of war, the root of disaster was eliminated,
The fields and lands were returned and evenly distributed."*

(Feng Zuyi 1999)

Facing defeat, the rulers were naturally unwilling to accept their loss. Later, they organized a large force to counterattack the peasant army led by "Sa Sui". Outnumbered, Sa Sui and her two daughters heroically sacrificed themselves for the ethnic interest at the place called "Nongtang Gai".

*"Jumping off the cliff,
She returned to her original form,
Transforming into a goddess walking through Dong villages,
Every road is guided by the goddess,
Every village sees the presence of the goddess."*

After "Sa Sui" sacrificed herself, her deeds were passed down through generations among the Dong people, and she became the "Holy Mother Goddess" of the Dong ethnicity. Every village built a "Tang Sa" to commemorate her:

*"The east called forth this Holy Mother,
The west summoned Sa Sui,
A golden stool in the Mu hall invites the Holy Mother to sit,
With the Holy Mother in the center, prosperity reigns for ten thousand years."*

*Fourteen years later, the Holy Mother comes to manage the village,
The village is lush because the Holy Mother comes to shelter,
Chickens, ducks, and livestock are all under the Holy Mother's care,
Cattle and sheep go out in the morning and return on their own in the evening"*

The "Sa Sui Song," as part of the Dong ethnic group's traditional ballads, is not only a praise of the mythical figure "Sa Sui" but also records the historical and social changes of the Dong people. It reflects the Dong people's desire for peace and tranquility, their critique of unequal social systems, and their admiration for historical heroes. This song expresses the Dong people's recognition and respect for their ethnic history. By praising the heroic deeds of "Sa Sui," it reflects the ethnic pride and the determination to resist foreign invasion and protect their homeland. The "Sa Sui Song," passed down through oral tradition from generation to generation, has become a common memory and spiritual treasure for the Dong people.

These ballads and ritual activities are not only manifestations of religious beliefs but also important means of community cohesion and cultural heritage. Through such cultural expressions, Dong society maintains its internal moral order and social structure, while also conveying respect and preservation for ancestors and traditions to future generations. In modern society, although lifestyles have changed, the Dong people's reverence for "Sa Sui" has not diminished. On the contrary, these traditional sacrificial and offering activities continue in Dong communities, serving as an important bridge connecting the past and the future and maintaining the ethnic cultural identity (Shi Gancheng 2003).

Whether "Sa Sui" existed as a historical figure, she has become an important symbol in Dong culture. Her image and what she represents have transcended individual existence, becoming an embodiment of collective memory and cultural identity. The image of "Sa Sui" as a female figure is related to the matrilineal society in traditional Dong culture. Matrilineal societies are a common social structural characteristic of many ancient ethnic groups in their early stages of development, where women often occupy important positions, especially in family and religious ceremonies.

The "Sa" as a religious idol may have originated from the Dong people's reverence for nature and ancestors, reflecting a primitive form of religion that differs fundamentally from mainstream religions today. In religious systems like Christianity and Buddhism, God or Buddha is seen as a transcendent being beyond the world, whereas the Dong "Sa" is more like a force derived from nature and ancestors, serving as a maintainer of societal and natural order. The worship of "Sa" among the Dong

people reflects a so-called "worship of yin culture," possibly connected to the respect for women and feminine forces in Dong tradition. In its original form, the worship of "Sa" as a grandmother deity among the Dong may symbolize the source of life, nurturing of new life, and the maintenance of social order. This reverence for ancestors and respect for natural forces are closely intertwined with Dong daily life and cultural values. It is not just a part of religious belief but also an integral component of social norms and moral systems. Through the worship of "Sa," the Dong people express reverence for nature, ancestors, and history, reflecting their pursuit and maintenance of a harmonious social order.

The content of the Grand Song is typically not constrained by geographical boundaries; whether from Southern Dong or Northern Dong, or other regions with Dong populations, their shared reverence for national heroes and historical figures can be the subjects of Grand Song praises. This cross-regional cultural feature reflects the inherent consistency and common national spirit of Dong culture.

The narrative songs of the Dong Grand Song mainly recount Dong historical stories, legends, heroic deeds, and other significant events. Through the narration of these stories, the Dong Grand Song not only records the history of the ethnic group but also continually affirms and constructs the mainstream values of the nation. These values include an emphasis on justice, courage, wisdom, and collectivism, serving as important foundations for Dong social stability and cohesion. The Grand Song is also a part of Dong social education, transmitting traditional knowledge and values to the younger generation through songs. The functions of the Grand Song go beyond this; they serve as bridges for emotional communication among community members, strengthening ethnic unity and social harmony. In the postmodern cultural context, these traditional Grand Songs not only hold value in preserving ethnic characteristics but also offer a way for modern individuals to connect the past with the present, enabling people to rediscover and cherish their ethnic history and cultural identity in today's globalized and digitized world. These songs carry not only history but also the soul of the nation and hopes for the future. Researching and passing down these Grand Songs is of significant importance for the protection and development of ethnic culture.

Expressing True Feelings

Love songs exhibit their own characteristics and functions in different ethnic music forms. Love songs in the folk songs popular in the Dong dialect area in the south also have their own unique qualities. The Dong Grand Song, pipa songs, and niutuiqin songs are completely different. Firstly, the love songs in the Grand Song do not directly confess to individual objects, but rather embody the collective view of love within the entire community. As a form of collective singing, they are typically performed at formal social gatherings, such as drum towers, to praise guests from friendly villages while also possessing a competitive singing nature. In other words, the emotional expression in these songs is more of a social and collective emotional transmission, rather than directed towards specific individuals. On the other hand, the love songs in pipa songs and niutuiqin songs, which are performed and sung together with instruments, tend to express specific romantic emotions between individuals, often describing small scenes, such as the admiration during the "moonlit night," with a more direct emotional expression function.

Emotions are crucial in human life, forming one of the three major dimensions of human nature alongside reason and intellect. In artistic and literary creation, emotions are not only the driving force of creativity but also the core content of expression. In both Eastern and Western classical literary theories, whether it's the Chinese belief that "poetry expresses the poet's aspirations" or the emphasis on emotions in Western Romanticism, they all highlight the central role of emotions in artistic creation. The expression and communication of emotions are key to creating resonance in artistic works and providing viewers with aesthetic pleasure.

The Dong Grand Song is an example of elevating emotions from daily life to the realm of artistic emotions. These songs are not just tools for young men and women to express their feelings and share their hearts, but also provide an ideal environment for emotional expression through the pure and natural ethnic customs, the harmonious scenes of labor, and the unity of humans and nature they embody. Therefore, the Grand Song has become an important medium for conveying emotions, reaching a peak experience where emotions and art intersect.

For example, the Dong narrative Grand Song "Ganiang Mei" draws from the real love story in Dong history, "Zhulang Niangmei," showcasing the combination

of narrative and emotional expression in Dong song culture. Through its unique artistic techniques like metaphor and symbolism, the Dong Grand Song expresses emotions, making love songs not just straightforward emotional outpourings but also showcasing the subtlety and depth of emotions through observations and descriptions of nature and the comparison with animals. In the Grand Song "Bees Flying in Pairs on Honeybee Ridge," the depiction of bees and swallows flying in pairs metaphorically represents the love between men and women and their yearning for free love. The song reflects an underlying conflict: the love and free will of the younger generation versus the interference and traditional beliefs of the older generation. The lyrics "the elderly do not care about our concerns, as long as we pine for each other, we can be together" reveal the determination of the young people to uphold love, even in the face of difficulties and opposition.

*"The bees fly in pairs up the mountain ridge,
The swallows land in pairs on the branches and sing;
Why don't the birds perch on the low branches,
Just because the elderly do not approve of our love;
The elderly do not heed our concerns,
Longing and love can be united as one,
As long as we long for each other, we can be together,
With children, life's chores become sweet."*

This song is not just a declaration of specific emotions but also a symbolic expression of freedom in love and a challenge to traditional constraints. Through such artistic techniques, the realm of "symbolizing beyond symbols, depicting beyond scenes" is achieved, conveying broader and deeper emotions and thoughts through concrete objects. This aesthetic technique of transferring emotions is fully utilized in the Dong Grand Song, becoming a distinctive feature in Dong musical culture.

For example, the Grand Song "Little Bird Learns to Sing with Worrying Mouth Open" is sung in this way:

*"The trees grow one section after another,
The tree roots split like branches;
I invite the maiden to sit by the hedge,
Just like a bird learning to sing, hiding on one side of the tree,*

*The little crow learns to sing with a worried mouth open,
 The maiden's intentions make the heart of the young man even more eager;
 Sweet words of love between you and me,
 In the future, as adults, I will carry the sedan chair to fetch the maiden."*

Love is expressed in different ways in different cultures. In the Dong Grand Song, love songs often use the scenery and objects of nature to metaphorically express human emotions, making the expression of emotions richer and more dimensional, and easier to understand and resonate with.

For instance, in the Dong love song "Grape Song," through metaphor and symbolism, the woman's love is likened to grapes, vivid and implicit. In this song, the woman compares herself to grapes entwining branches, while her beloved is likened to a carefree dragon. The lyrical storytelling reflects the woman's desire for love, uncertainty about the future, and the emotional shifts upon hearing good news. In the "Grape Song," the taste of love is conveyed through the woman's longing and anticipation for her lover. The lines "The maiden is like grapes, entwining the branches, hanging on the frame, the brother is like a dragon, swimming in the deep pool, carefree and happy" symbolize the woman's persistence in love and her beautiful vision. The line "Believe it or not, it's up to you, my brother, my heart feels like a stone falling down" reflects the woman's uncertainty and anxiety about this relationship.

*"Plucking the pipa lightly, sitting steadily,
 Listen to me sing the Grape Song,
 We have been together for many days,
 I wonder how your brother's heart is?
 The maiden is like grapes, entwining the branches, hanging on the frame,
 The brother is like a dragon, swimming in the deep pool, carefree and happy.*

*I heard that your parents want to find a companion for you,
 I worry and can't sleep at night.*

*Later, they said your brother didn't want that companion,
 My heart felt like a stone falling down.*

Believe it or not, it's up to you, my brother,

My heart feels like a stone falling down.

Inviting my brother to swim with the carp in the river, to the sea,

Don't be like the carp hiding in the water hole all year.

If you want to be a blacksmith, don't fear the wind or the fire,

When hunting in the mountains, don't fear the fierce wild boars or the thorny bushes.

With a willing heart to accompany you, I advise my beloved brother not to fear anything,

Don't fear the steel claws of the crab when you want to eat it.

If you want to be an earthworm, don't fear going blind,

With a willing heart to elope, not afraid to travel the ends of the earth and sea.

Believe it or not, it's up to you, my brother,

With a willing heart to elope, not afraid to travel the ends of the earth and sea.

Climbing the mountain, my brother takes the winding road, I take the ridge,

Going into the water to catch fish, my brother in the shallow pond, I on the bank.

If my brother loses the field, I am willing to lose the silk,

Even if I leave behind all worldly possessions, I still want to play with my brother.

Despite my parents' scolding and anger, I don't care,

With my brother, even if we die on the way, I am content.

Life in this world is only sixty or seventy years,

No one can sit on this earth for a thousand years.

As long as my brother's heart thinks the same as mine,

Leaving the hometown, eating the bitter heart of the yellow bryony will still be sweet.

Believe it or not, it's up to you, my companion,

Leaving the hometown, eating the bitter heart of the yellow bryony will be content."

(Yang Guoren and Wu Dingguo 1981)

Through this song, we can feel how emotions in Dong love songs are infused with color and flavor: through lyrics and melodies, abstract emotions are made tangible, allowing listeners to envision the essence of love in their minds, feel its sweetness and bitterness, and experience its depth and complexity. Although the "color" and "flavor" of love cannot be seen with the naked eye or tasted directly, they can be felt and experienced through poetic and musical forms. In Dong love songs, emotional expression is often indirectly conveyed through the depiction of metaphorical objects, such as the sweetness and fullness of grapes symbolizing the beauty and satisfaction of love.

In Dong Grand Songs, an interesting phenomenon is also revealed, where Dong women boldly express their longing for freedom in love and marriage. This reflects the relatively high status of women and the more liberal views on marriage and love in Dong society. In many traditional societies, marriages are often arranged by parents, but in traditional societies like the Dong, autonomous marriage can become mainstream, which is a cultural characteristic in itself. The expression of love by Dong women in folk songs is not only a manifestation of emotions but also a cultural affirmation. Through such expressions, young Dong people can convey their understanding of love, and it also serves as a way of social education, advocating a certain view on marriage and love within the community. The so-called "virtual love" duet in love songs is actually a cultural performance that allows young people to simulate and experience love and marriage within a socially accepted framework, aiding in the understanding and internalization of community values regarding marriage and love.

This cultural transmission method through love songs, to some extent, influences and shapes Dong views on marriage and love. These songs are not just music but also a part of cultural heritage. In the songs, Dong people not only express their yearning and understanding of love but also, inadvertently, convey shared life philosophies and worldviews of the community. Through this method, individual emotional expressions blend with the cultural values of the entire community, collectively forming Dong people's collective identity and the continuity of their social culture.

This is also related to the fact that the Dong ethnic group has been known for its relatively equal gender relations throughout its tradition, a characteristic not commonly found in many traditional societies. In Dong culture, women hold significant positions in religion, family, and social activities, reflecting Dong gender beliefs indirectly. The highest deity in Dong culture, "Sa," is female, symbolically affirming the status of women. Women play important roles in rituals, showcasing their influence in religious activities. Additionally, women enjoy equal status with men in the family, and this egalitarianism is evident in many aspects of daily life, including romantic relationships.

In traditional concepts of love, men often hold dominant positions in romantic relationships, but in Dong society, women also have the right to choose and decide on their own love and marriage. Therefore, it is observed that not only do men abandon long-term female partners, but women also leave long-term male partners. When men face such emotional setbacks, they also express their pain and emotions through Grand Songs. For example, the Dong song master Lu Dayong's "Eighteen Young Men's Song" is an example of this, reflecting the vulnerability and true feelings of men in emotional relationships. This song, from a male perspective, narrates the pain of being abandoned by a loved one, a theme not commonly seen in literature and art, especially in traditional societal contexts. This cultural practice among the Dong helps promote gender equality and mutual understanding, challenging traditional gender roles. This emotional expression and respect for gender equality play important roles in Dong songs and social structures, directly embodying the uniqueness of Dong culture.

Dong Grand Songs embody a very unique way of emotional expression, which is not only specific to Dong culture but also a profound insight into universal human emotions. Love, as a universal theme, presents diverse expressions in different cultures and artistic forms. The emotional expressions in Dong Grand Songs are both direct and implicit. They can directly convey emotions while maintaining cultural restraint and subtlety, reflecting the reserved and profound emotional characteristics and cultural refinement of the Dong people. This form of expression is closely related to the collective singing characteristic of Dong Grand Songs, as these songs are typically collective activities involving multiple participants, requiring a way to

express personal emotions that can also be understood and resonated with collectively.

"Dong Grand Song" is an example of this. In the short lyrics, using the mournful cry of an animal as a symbol, it conveys deep longing for a lover. Although this expression is subtle, it can touch the hearts of listeners, evoking broader emotions and life experiences. It is not just an expression of personal emotions but also a depiction of Dong community life and the natural environment. This expression is similar to the style of the Book of Songs, as the poems in the Book of Songs also extensively use metaphorical techniques, using elements of nature to symbolize human emotions. Dong Grand Songs and the Book of Songs both reflect a deep understanding and unique expression of nature and emotions in Chinese culture. The translated lyrics are as follows:

*"Only the cicada cries for its mother,
The cicada cries for its mother on the tip of the maple tree,
On the tip of the maple, the cicada cries, lamenting my aging youth.
Not being able to have my true love truly makes me sad,
Only hearing the cicada's cries,
The cicada's cries are full of sorrow,
As if pitying my single status,
Quietly listen to me imitate the cicada's cry,
Hoping everyone will join in harmony,
Although our voices may not be as good as the cicada's,
Life fills me with passion,
Singing about our youth,
Singing about our love."*

The Dong Grand Song "Ganenglang. Chuchu Cicada Song, No Cicada in Sight" is another excellent example showcasing the intricate use of symbolic techniques in Dong music. This song describes the sound of cicadas without directly showing their image, employing a symbolic technique to convey deeper emotions and messages. Literally, the life cycle of cicadas is a great metaphor in nature, often used to symbolize transience or a yearning for eternal life. In this song, the chirping of cicadas symbolizes a longing and pursuit for life, love, or beautiful things, even

knowing the brevity of life. The lyrics mention "After September, the cicadas will die," yet the cicadas continue to sing incessantly, conveying a love for life and a desire for immortality. This song expresses yearning and admiration for a kindred spirit. Although the word "love" does not appear in the lyrics, the strong emotional message is metaphorically conveyed through the life cycle and singing of cicadas, a natural phenomenon. The sound of cicadas is everywhere, yet the cicadas themselves are unseen, much like the intangible nature of love and longing for a loved one, intense yet elusive.

*"Everyone, listen attentively,
I sing a cicada song for you to hear,
Singing a cicada song for the kindred spirit;
In March, the cicadas chirp incessantly,
After September, the cicadas will die,
Yet they continue to sing;
Cicada songs everywhere, but no cicadas in sight,
I delight in the noise of cicada songs,
My voice is not good, unable to sing."*

(Zheng Hanfeng 1985)

The use of symbolic techniques in Dong songs is not uncommon, as it not only imbues the songs with deeper meanings but also elevates Dong Grand Songs beyond mere musical performances, transforming them into a multi-layered cultural and emotional communication method. Through these songs, the Dong people showcase their philosophy of harmonious coexistence with nature and the unique emotions and worldview cultivated through this way of life.

Dong Grand Songs present an art form closely related to the natural world. A series of cicada songs reflect a very specific scenario in the lives of the Dong people: while working in the mountains, listening to the cicadas chirping and birds singing, they reflect on the passage of time, unfulfilled aspirations in life, such as the deep regret of not finding a partner. These lyrics, originating from everyday life, touch upon common emotions—sorrow for lost youth and anxiety for the future.

The melodies of Dong Grand Songs are typically tranquil and profound, showcasing beauty in a simple and unadorned manner, naturally exuding elegance

without excessive embellishments. This artistic expression not only reflects the singers' profound experiences of life but also mirrors the philosophical concept of "unity of man and nature" in Dong culture. In Dong culture, "unity of man and nature" signifies harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, where human emotions and natural phenomena reflect and merge with each other. The imagery and emotional expression in cicada songs are not just direct depictions of personal emotional experiences but also a comprehension and manifestation of universal natural laws. Through their songs, the Dong people express reverence for the natural world and their sense of place within it. This form of music and poetry allows listeners to perceive the profound meanings contained within, triggering limitless contemplation on nature, the universe, and life.

Praising Social Phenomena

The Dong culture's characteristic of "gentleness" is reflected in their harmonious way of living with nature and interpersonal relationships. Dong society emphasizes ethical values, with respect for the elderly, love for the young, and diligence being their fundamental social norms. Particularly, the long sentence song form in Dong Grand Songs delicately portrays the inner worlds of characters and conveys praise for familial relationships through this form. This cultural form is not only filled with wisdom of life but also reflects the pursuit of good familial relationships and respect for moral values. The meaning of life lies in emotions, and emotional relationships between individuals form the core of society and life experiences. Through cultural expressions like Dong Grand Songs, the Dong people not only convey their culture and emotions but also reinforce moral and ethical values in an "edutainment" manner. Songs like "Quanshige" and "Jinglaoge" are representative works in Dong Grand Songs, widely sung for their emphasis on familial relationships and social morals, making songs reflecting familial relationships an important part of Grand Songs. These songs embody the profound meaning and historical heritage of Dong culture.

Filial piety is one of the core values in traditional Chinese culture, long regarded as a traditional virtue of the Chinese nation. In Chinese culture, filial piety is not only the foundation of family ethics but also the cornerstone of social stability and harmony. Filial piety emphasizes children's respect and care for their parents, as well

as reverence for elders. The lines "In the loving hands of the mother, the son's clothes are sewn. Stitching tightly before departure, fearing a delayed return. Who says that a blade of grass has no heart, to repay the warmth of spring thrice" are from the poem "Song of the Traveler" by the Tang Dynasty poet Meng Jiao. This poem expresses a mother's deep love and concern for her traveling children, as well as the children's gratitude for their mother's kindness. In Chinese literary history, this poem is widely recited, becoming a classic example of expressing filial piety. "Zengguang Xianwen" is a popular collection of proverbs from the Ming and Qing dynasties, where phrases like "A lamb kneels to suckle, a crow feeds its parent" are common references to filial piety, using natural phenomena in the animal world to metaphorically depict the gratitude children should have towards their parents for nurturing them.

The song "Ga Parents" is a typical Dong Grand Song that conveys children's gratitude for their parents' hard work in raising them through its melody. The lyrics are simple yet heartfelt, depicting the mother's strenuous labor and selfless dedication in raising her children. Starting from the detail of the carrying strap, to the years of nurturing, and to the metaphorical imagery of being "bone-weary," it profoundly expresses recognition and respect for the mother's toil and sacrifice, reflecting the importance placed on family ethics and filial piety in Dong society. "Ga Parents" is sung as follows:

*"Mother carries her children on her back,
Countless carrying straps have been broken,
All grown on mother's shoulders,
Washing diapers in the cold,
Hands bitten by wind and frost,
Hastily drying the diapers,
Bed wet with urine,
Damp blankets and mats,
Year after year,
Raising children,
Bone-weary and exhausted."*

(Zheng Hanfeng 1985)

In Dong Grand Songs, the reverence and gratitude towards parents is a recurring theme that not only reflects deep familial emotions but also serves as the cornerstone of social harmony and stability. Through learning and singing these songs, young people can learn how to respect and appreciate their parents, as well as how to uphold this tradition of filial piety and respect for elders in society. Gratitude is a universal value that transcends cultures and borders. Learning to be grateful is not just about adhering to societal moral norms but also a part of personal cultivation and spiritual pursuit. Particularly, gratitude towards parents is the most fundamental expression of filial culture, manifesting not only in words and actions but also as a deep-seated emotion and belief. In modern society, despite changes in lifestyles and social structures, the core principles of filial piety are still considered important by many. It represents a recognition of family and societal responsibilities, as well as a bond that upholds relationships between individuals. Understanding gratitude, especially towards parents, is not only an affirmation of one's identity and life but also a driving force for social harmony and civilization progress.

Dong Grand Song culture, characterized by its profound social awareness and moral values, emphasizes integrity, moderation, harmony, and a sense of responsibility, which are all fundamental principles that have maintained Dong society's long-term stability. Songs like "Admonishing Filial Piety to Parents," "Admonishing Respect to Grandparents," "Mother-in-law and Daughter-in-law Song," and "Father and Son Song" specifically embody these values, serving not just as musical works but also as tools for social education. The song "Song of Wine, Lust, Wealth, and Temper" carries an important function of moral education and cultural inheritance. This song, through its warning against greed, conveys a clear message: excessive desires can lead to personal, familial, and societal breakdown and destruction. The "Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars Song" is another example reflecting Dong's focus on filial piety and family ethics. Through 72 rhyme parts, this song tells various stories and forms of filial piety, emphasizing the importance of filial piety towards parents to maintain harmony in families and society. It has been widely circulated in Dong areas like the "Seven Caves," "Nine Caves," "Ten Caves," and "Four-footed Cow," reflecting the universality and profound impact of filial piety concepts in Dong culture.

For instance, the lengthy Dong Grand Song "Song of Admonishing the World," spanning over 2000 words, conveys profound insights into life philosophy, ethical values, and social values through traditional singing forms. This song is not just an expression of Dong musical art but also a manifestation of Dong wisdom and life philosophy. Here is a partial translation of the "Song of Admonishing the World" in Chinese:

*"Listen quietly as I sing this admonishing song to the world,
If you are willing to listen, I will elaborate further.
The world's affairs are ever-changing,
Customs are numerous and varied.
First, let's talk about the issue of unequal wealth,
Then sing about the principles of human interaction.
Since ancient times, there have been the rich and the poor,
Some dressed in splendor, others in tattered clothes.
The rich amass wealth, with endless food and drink,
While the poor have no land, no fields, and no rice in their pots."*

(Zheng Hanfeng 1985)

This song, through contrasting the different fates of the rich and the poor, reflects societal realities and extracts wisdom and moral teachings. It instructs people to maintain upright character, not to feel inferior due to poverty, and not to be arrogant because of wealth. At the same time, it emphasizes the importance of diligence, believing that true happiness can only be attained through labor. The lyrics of the "Song of Admonishing the World" are concise yet profound, playing an important role in educating young people about respecting traditional ethics and cultivating an upright life attitude. This song has been widely circulated in Dong regions, becoming a force that unifies society and guides the people, playing an undeniable role in maintaining social order and promoting interpersonal harmony.

For example, the "Lazy Song" depicts a scene where a young person disregards the advice of an elder and lazily refuses to tend to the fields, aiming to satirize and criticize those unwilling to work diligently. The lyrics mention, "The old man told him to tend to the fields, but he climbed onto the bench to sleep," implying dissatisfaction with the young person's disobedience to elders and neglect of family

and societal responsibilities. Lines like "If the rice fields go unattended for three days, they crack in five days, the rice fields at the foot of the slope won't get water, and the fish are taken by wild cats by the field's edge" further emphasize the consequences of laziness-neglecting the fields leads to crop failure, resulting in significant losses for a community dependent on agriculture for survival.

This reflects the Dong society's disapproval of lazy behavior and underscores the values of diligence. The Dong people, a typical ethnic group in southwestern China, embody these values in their culture and songs. In Dong societal concepts, diligence is considered a virtue, closely tied to their predominantly agricultural mountainous way of life. Respect for labor, especially agricultural work, is seen as a guarantee for national harmony and prosperity. Through such songs, community members are educated to work diligently, adhere to social norms, and contribute to the common welfare. This reflects common values in many traditional agricultural societies.

The "Children's Grand Songs" in Dong culture are a unique cultural phenomenon that not only showcases the unique charm of Dong musical culture but also nurtures the emotional and social cognitive development of Dong children. These songs are typically created from a child's perspective, with themes closely related to children's daily lives, such as animals, family, and festivals, brimming with childlike wonder and imagination. As a blend of education and entertainment, the "Children's Grand Songs" help enhance children's language abilities, musical literacy, and social interaction skills. Through learning and performing these grand songs, children not only enjoy the pleasure of singing but also learn about Dong traditional culture and values, cultivating a love and respect for ethnic music.

For instance, the Dong Children's Grand Song "Lullaby" (known as "Gao Lou Nu" in Dong language) is a heartwarming element in Dong traditional culture, reflecting the permeation and influence of Dong music in daily life, especially playing a significant role in the care of infants and toddlers. These songs often feature simple, repetitive, and melodious tunes designed to soothe babies and help them peacefully drift off to sleep. Such songs serve not only as lullabies but also carry Dong cultural characteristics and emotional expressions. The titles of children's grand songs often reflect their content, such as "Little Goat," "Ant Mother Song," "Painted Brow Song,"

"Catching Crab," "Frog Song," "Visiting Grandma," "Growing Up to Be a Singer," and more. The children's sections in Dong Grand Songs are not just a cultural inheritance but also a display of children's emotional worlds. They reveal how Dong society shapes children's emotional and cognitive development through music education. Growing up in such a cultural environment, children naturally integrate these musical elements into their daily practices, forming a unique emotional and cultural identity. In regions where Dong Grand Songs are popular, the educational approach of "being held in one's arms and immersed in songs" from birth leads children to start engaging with and learning these songs early on, profoundly influencing their growth. Dong Grand Songs are not just a musical form; they are a way of life, a solace for the soul, an expression of emotions, and a societal and cultural bond.

Recording Daily Life

Music originates from life and, to a certain extent, transcends life. It is a refinement and elevation of life experiences, able to capture the essence of life and the flow of emotions in the subtle details. There is a profound connection between artistic creation and material practices, where art mirrors life while also critiquing and transcending it.

In artistic creation, especially in music, labor not only provides people with practical settings but also offers rich creative materials. Descriptions of production and life are the earliest forms of music. This evolution from mutual responses in cooperative labor gradually transformed into melody and rhythm, forming a natural process in music culture. The Dong Grand Songs are a manifestation of this cultural formation process. They not only document history but also reflect the Dong people's life philosophy, values, and worldview. In Dong Grand Songs, scenes of labor such as plowing fields with oxen, as depicted in the song "Ling Ling Song," are not just descriptions of the labor process; they also encompass interactions among laborers, perceptions of nature, and attitudes towards life. The general meaning of this translated passage is as follows:

"Lead singer: As the sun sets, we finish our work,

Chorus: Ling ling ling ling ling-ling ling ling ling,

Hmm, ling ling ling ling ling!

*Lead singer: Men and women walk in rows along the mountain path,
 Adults carrying plows and harrows on their shoulders,
 Children driving herds of cattle and sheep down the mountainside.
 People sing as they walk,
 Emerging from the forest to the riverbank,
 Hearing the rushing water,
 In the evening, cicadas chirp on the treetops,
 Our lives are so beautiful!*

*Chorus: Ling ling ling ling, finally ling ling ling ling ling,
 Jin dang kai ya!*

*Lead change: Ling ling ling ling ling inside,
 Chorus: Lei yong hei nong-hei nong yi jin dang kai ya!
 Ai yuan dang kai ya ling-ai hei nong,
 Ai nong eh-ai nong eh,
 Hei nong jin dang kai eh!"*

(Long Yaohong and Long Xiaoyu 1997)

The phrases "lei yong hei nong, hei nong, jin dang kai" in this song are rich in Dong ethnic pronunciation, aimed at making the melody of the entire music more beautiful and melodious.

In Dong Grand Songs, there is also a type known as "Agricultural Songs," a cultural expression that tightly integrates music with agricultural production. For example, "Ga Yue Gong" ("Twelve Months Labor Song") is one such song that intricately details the agricultural activities of the Dong people throughout the twelve months of the year, reflecting the rhythm of agricultural society and the Dong people's harmonious coexistence with nature. The general translation of the lyrics is as follows:

*"In the first month, chopping firewood on the high slope,
 In the second month, clearing land and planting in the mountains,
 In the third month, carrying manure to fertilize the seedlings,
 In the fourth month, driving oxen to plow the fields,
 In the fifth month, transplanting rice seedlings without rest,
 In the sixth month, weeding one patch after another,*

*In the seventh month, sharpening sickles to cut the grass,
 In the eighth month, harvesting rice when the time is right,
 In the ninth month, filling the granary with grains,
 In the tenth month, leisurely sitting and enjoying the land,
 In the eleventh month, entering the cold winter as ice forms,
 In the twelfth month, carrying hoes to clear new land.”
 (Long Yaohong and Long Xiaoyu 1997)*

Through this song, the agricultural production activities of the Dong people are given rhythm and melody, with these folk songs becoming a medium for the transmission of production knowledge, skills, and experiences. They serve as a warm form of life education, sung during agricultural activities to help people remember farming schedules and to enjoy the pleasure that music brings while engaging in hard work.

Through such songs, we can see how the Dong people communicate emotions, transmit knowledge, and strengthen community bonds through their singing. This musical form derived from specific practices in life is an unconscious form of artistic creation that is both free-flowing and purposeful—aiming to reinforce community relations, maintain cultural continuity, and add emotional colors to life. The transmission and performance of Dong Grand Songs vividly embody this cultural transmission and community cohesion.

Dong Grand Songs fully embody the Dong people's philosophy of harmonious coexistence with nature and their life wisdom and artistic creativity in daily labor. This art form is not just for entertainment but also serves as a means of social education and cultural heritage. In Dong Grand Songs, the lyrics not only convey agricultural production knowledge but also hold the emotions and life experiences of laborers. The beauty of these songs stems from the Dong people's authentic depiction of their labor life. The songs lack elaborate embellishments yet provide profound artistic enjoyment. Like the natural flow of "mud with water," smooth and continuous, they evoke a sense of tranquility and harmony. The beauty of this art form lies in its authenticity and naturalness, avoiding deliberate pretense and maintaining a simple appearance, thus appearing more sincere and moving.

At the same time, the aesthetic and emotional artistic treatment in Dong Grand Songs provides a window to observe and understand Dong society, helping outsiders comprehend the daily lives, traditional customs, and social structure of the Dong people.

In Dong drum tower duets, songs like "Zheng Yue Li Chun" depict scenes of spring plowing and the emotions revealed between men and women during this daily activity. The lyrics sung by the female vocal ensemble cleverly express yearning and anticipation for loved ones through descriptions of the labor during the spring season. These songs portray the artistry and integration of art into daily life of the Dong people.

One of the characteristics of Dong Grand Songs is the skillful integration of natural surroundings, social customs, personal emotions, and ethnic music, making the songs themselves a medium for transmitting culture, emotions, and knowledge. They also showcase an attitude towards life that is increasingly rare in modern society—an attitude that seeks harmony with nature and finds joy in labor.

For example, in the frequently sung Dong drum tower duet "Zheng Yue Li Chun":

Female vocal ensemble sings:
"In the first month of spring,
People till the fields,
In February,
Listening to the cicadas across the bank,
Jiao, because of you,
My heart is filled with worries,
During the day, we climb the high mountains to cultivate,
My heart is always uneasy,
Why doesn't my beloved come,
To chat by my side,
This kind of love,
Is like people,
Farming without water in the fields,
Fetching water from the ditch is in vain,

I miss you, my beloved."

Male vocal ensemble responds:

*"In the first month of spring,
The weather is still cold,
The fields and ponds,
Have not been plowed,
In February,
The tree leaves have not budded,
How can you, Jiao,
Hear the cicadas cry across the bank,
Before my beloved is wed,
Why would you be coquettish,
With a heart full of worries,
During the day, we climb the high mountains to cultivate,
My heart is always uneasy,
Thinking of our conversations,
Jiao, why don't you come,
To chat by my side,
We've talked about the dry fields,
My beloved already knows,
Diverting water from the ditch,
To keep the soil from cracking,
Remembering us,
Blocking the river water with a dam,
To rear fish fry,
Protecting the lush river valley,
Full of grains,
Seeing it in dreams,
Fills the heart with joy,
Why be coquettish,
In vain, putting in effort."*

(Dong Grand Song Editorial Committee 2000)

The Dong Grand Song, as a unique form of folk music, is indeed a shining pearl in Dong culture.

Firstly, the Dong Grand Song emphasizes a life philosophy of harmonious coexistence with nature. In the lives of the Dong people, nature not only provides for their material needs but also serves as a spiritual sanctuary and a source of aesthetic pursuit. For example, the natural scenes depicted in some songs, such as the floating and sinking of rotten wood and the drifting of grass debris, reflect the geographical features of the Dong community nestled among mountains and waters. These natural elements intertwine with human emotions and become an integral part of the song's content.

Secondly, the Dong Grand Song embodies a natural consciousness of unity between heaven and humanity, which is reflected in the Dong people's labor, emotional expression, and moral and ethical relationships. In the Dong Grand Song, the relationship between heaven, earth, deities, and humans is not fragmented but harmoniously coordinated and perfectly unified. The Dong Grand Song also showcases the Dong people's simple and pure labor life and beautiful natural love songs, revealing social harmony and pure emotions. The harmonious natural environment, labor relationships, and humanistic ideas are conveyed in the grand song, and this harmony is passed down through generations through cultural identity and aesthetic concepts.

In the context of modernity and post-modernity, the simple and natural artistic content and harmonious aesthetic concepts in the Dong Grand Song are particularly valuable. They are not only important means to resist instrumental rationality and technological civilization but also aesthetic resources that can inspire and be emulated by all of humanity. Therefore, the Dong Grand Song is considered not only a treasure of the Dong people but also a cultural heritage with universal human significance. The inheritance and promotion of these cultural values and aesthetic meanings require continuous practice, protection, and promotion, so that the Dong Grand Song, this unique musical form, can continue to influence every generation in the future, whether within the Dong community or on a broader scale.

1.2.3 The Social Function of Dong Grand Song

Functionalism is a theory that posits all social phenomena, including cultural phenomena, have specific functions. Marinovski's notion of the "non-utilitarian" playful function of art emphasizes that art can transcend mere entertainment, providing spiritual and emotional satisfaction, refreshing individuals' mental states, enabling them to better engage in social and cultural responsibilities. In reality, the functions of art and play are far more complex and extensive than we might think. According to Marinovski, culture is an instrumental reality that satisfies human needs, not just a direct response to the environment. He believes culture can create new needs and continually develop while meeting these needs. Within the framework of functionalism, the Dong Grand Song, as a cultural phenomenon, is seen as a tool to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of the Dong people. It is not only a fusion of music and literature but also an essential component of Dong culture, possessing cohesion and creativity. The enduring popularity of the grand song lies in its ability to address the deep-seated needs of the Dong people in their daily lives, becoming a part of their social life and cultural identity. Functionalists would point out that aesthetic characteristics are not purely for the non-utilitarian nature of art itself. Instead, this art form, in the inheritance of aesthetic, cultural, and identity values, showcases emotional and social values. The grand song not only provides aesthetic enjoyment but also serves a function in cultural practice, combining popular culture, identity, and lifestyle aesthetics with individual lives and ethnic morality.



Figure 12. The Activities Of Chinese New Year In Dong Villiage

The connection between beauty and life resonates with the actual function of the Dong Grand Song. The grand song is not just a product of art but also a part of

the Dong social-historical process, reflecting Dong life and social structure. William Haviland in "Cultural Anthropology" holds a similar view on the social function of music. He points out that songs, due to their lyrical content, exhibit particularly apparent social functions. Music and songs are not only concentrated expressions of individual aesthetic experiences but also expressions of collective cultural values, reflecting collective cultural values and spiritual totems. Music is closely linked to society and intertwined with human life; the Dong Grand Song, through its unique performance style, embodies functions such as group entertainment, social interaction, ethnic education, religious beliefs, ethnic identity, and cultural heritage. The significance of the Dong Grand Song lies not only in its artistic and aesthetic value but also in its social function—meeting the spiritual needs of the Dong people, maintaining social structure, and fostering the formation and inheritance of cultural identity.



Figure 13. The Block Road Song Of Dong Villiage

Art, including music, painting, literature, and other forms, is undoubtedly a vital component of human culture. It is not just a product of pure aesthetics but also a carrier of social, cultural, and emotional aspects. The importance of art lies in how it shapes and reflects societal values, promotes communication and understanding among humans, and influences and enhances the spiritual lives of individuals and groups. The concept of "group" in ancient Chinese literary theory, as emphasized by Confucius, underscores the role of literature and art in social education. The study of

the "Book of Songs" is not just for personal cultivation but also for common interests—through shared art, people can enhance understanding, raise awareness, and strengthen unity. This reflects the role of art in cultural heritage, promoting social harmony, and advancing moral values. Western art theories also stress the social role of art. For instance, German sociologist Georg Simmel discusses how art leads people into passionate realms and balances the unity and diversity of music. In his view, the power of art lies in its ability to evoke deep emotions and collective experiences. American semiotic aesthete Susanne Langer believes that art is an expression of emotional symbols, transcending individual emotional outlets and manifesting as shared human emotional experiences. Music, in particular, as an artistic form that stimulates emotions through the organic combination of melody and rhythm, not only appeals to the sense of hearing but also delves into the human heart, eliciting emotional resonance. The "imaginal" aesthetic function of music, including emotions, imagination, resonance, and sympathy in its creation and reception processes, constitutes a complex aesthetic experience. The combination of music's communicative, educational, pleasurable, and informational functions with its aesthetic function reveals the sensuality, freedom, and delight of beauty.

Music can transcend time and space because it deeply roots itself in the hearts of listeners through emotional resonance and imaginal expression. It evokes not only individual emotions but also shared emotional experiences among people, thereby promoting social empathy and unity. Through the experience of music, individuals can reach spiritual peaks and find pleasurable satisfaction, fostering mutual influence and understanding among people at the societal level. The Dong Grand Song serves as a vivid example, illustrating that music is not merely an aesthetic activity but deeply ingrained in societal structures and daily life. Scholars believe that the creativity of art and culture is a significant indicator of human social development, with music engaging in various aspects in its unique way, from individual emotional expression to collective social organization. The emergence of the Dong Grand Song is closely related to the collective labor of the Dong people. Initially serving as a form of entertainment, it helped individuals find spiritual solace and alleviate stress during work. Over time, this musical form gradually evolved and developed multiple functions, not limited to simple accompaniment during labor.

In Dong dialect areas, Dong people's interactions exhibit strong collectivism, evident not only in singing but also in daily social activities. Communication between groups (drum towers), villages, and clans is diverse, including forms such as "weiye," "waiding," and "waike," with Dong festivals being numerous and rich in culture, each with unique celebration methods and cultural meanings. In these festivals, whether "Duoye Jisai" (the third day of the lunar New Year), "Ganshe" (the second day of the second lunar month), "Huapao Festival" (the third day of the third lunar month), "Chixin Festival" (the sixth day of the sixth lunar month), "Gange Ping" (the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month), "Jiashu Festival" (the first Jiaxu day after the beginning of autumn each year), or "Yangxing Dongnian" (the third day of the eleventh lunar month) and "Kuanhui," the communal and folk characteristics are prominent. These social forms emphasize collective participation and visitation. The collective performance of the Dong Grand Song is a crucial part of festival activities primarily aimed at entertainment. These festivals are not only a significant component of Dong culture but also important occasions for community members to interact and deepen emotional connections. Through forms of collective singing and dancing like the grand song, Dong people express joy and convey feelings of happiness.

For example, "Weiye" is a special form of collective visit where a majority of members from one entire village are invited to another village collectively as guests. "Weiye," or sometimes referred to as "Yueye" by scholars, is one of the most grand social activities in Dong culture. The term is a transliteration from the Dong language, meaning "eating homesickness" or "eating village food" in Chinese, symbolizing the intimacy and friendliness between villages. This collective visiting behavior usually occurs during the lunar New Year, the second lunar month, or during the agricultural idle season after the autumn harvest, as well as during wedding ceremonies and other events. This ritual and custom are particularly grand in Li Ping County, Congjiang County, Meitan County in Guizhou Province, Hechi County and Longsheng Autonomous County in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and Tongdao Dong Autonomous County in Hunan Province. The "Weiye" activity mainly consists of three parts: "blocking the road to welcome guests," "drum tower duets," and "generously sending off guests," which represent the most grand and interesting

aspects of Dong social etiquette. Among these three parts, duet singing is the main activity. Singers from two villages' singing groups showcase their talents in this group entertainment activity, amusing each other through their singing, creating a warm and harmonious atmosphere that brings joy and unity through their voices. "Ganshe" is another important social activity of the Dong people, characterized by strong ethnic features, with the "Ganshe" event in Gubang Dong Village in Long'e Township, Li Ping County, Guizhou Province being the most typical. During the "Ganshe" event, Dong people gather together to engage in a series of cultural and social activities, with the grand song being an integral part of the celebration (Yang Yi 2015).



Figure 14. The Activities Of Yue Ye

This form is not just a mere visit; it is also a cultural and social exchange activity, reflecting the Dong society's emphasis on collective and community relationships within the social structure. When Dong villages engage in significant social activities such as house-building events, the collective participation of Dong people becomes particularly evident. Other villages that maintain long-term friendly relations with a particular village will collectively come to congratulate them, participate in the celebration activities, and strengthen community connections and friendships through this collective visitation method. Through these activities, Dong people deepen their understanding and emotional connections with each other.

In the melodies of the Dong Grand Song, people find a way to release emotions and stress, allowing them to resonate in joy and coexist harmoniously,

creating a spiritual haven free from worries. It is not just a simple form of entertainment but also a manifestation of social cohesion. Through singing together, Dong people support each other spiritually and rely on each other psychologically, with this unity and harmony being the cornerstone for the continued stable development of the Dong community. Alan P. Merriam's perspective profoundly highlights the multifaceted role of music in culture. He believes that to fully understand music, we cannot just focus on the musical work itself but must delve into the social and cultural context in which music is produced and exists. This viewpoint can be perfectly applied to the analysis and understanding of the Dong Grand Song. The Dong Grand Song is not just a musical form; it plays a central role in Dong daily life, festival celebrations, and ritual activities. Each grand song carries specific social and cultural meanings, reflecting not only the Dong people's aesthetic experiences but also vividly embodying Dong social life, spiritual beliefs, and customs. It is an essential component of social etiquette activities, through which the grand song fulfills its cultural and social functions. Such functions make the Dong Grand Song a cultural practice with deep social significance, with its performance and experiential process holding a significant place in the lives of the Dong people, becoming a part of their spiritual life.

The concept of "Aesthetic Education" was indeed systematically proposed by the German poet, playwright, and philosopher Friedrich Schiller in his 1795 work "On the Aesthetic Education of Man." He believed that "beauty" is a manifestation of human freedom, a perfect combination of sensory and rational cognition in human life. Therefore, to become a natural human being in an aesthetic state, one must break free from the domination of natural necessity and moral necessity. To transition from nature to reason, from practical reason to pure reason, from knowledge to will, one cannot ignore the critical role of aesthetic judgment (Friedrich Schiller 2004). Schiller, inspired by Kantian philosophy at the end of the Enlightenment era, deeply reflected on human comprehensive development and freedom. Schiller's theory of aesthetic education posits that beauty is the embodiment of human freedom, not merely sensory desires or rational commands but a harmonious unity of both. In Schiller's view, aesthetic experience can transcend various constraints of daily life, including social pressures and personal desires, achieving a balanced state of reason

and sensibility. He believed that this aesthetic state is crucial for the moral and rational development of individuals. In his letters, Schiller introduced the concept of the "play impulse" (Spieltrieb) as a bridge between human reason (form impulse, Formtrieb) and sensibility (material impulse, Stofftrieb). The play impulse can establish an aesthetic kingdom based on freedom, where individuals can attain inner harmony, ultimately achieving self-perfection. The German scholar Alexander von Humboldt inherited and developed Schiller's theory of aesthetic education. Humboldt, a linguist, educator, and philosopher during the German Romantic period, was renowned for his theories on language philosophy and educational reform. Humboldt believed that language is an external manifestation of human spiritual activities, with each language having its unique worldview. Therefore, language is not just a tool for communication but also a way to form and understand the world. He argued that different languages influence people's ways of thinking and worldviews. Humboldt emphasized the importance of individual free development, stating that education should focus on nurturing individuals capable of independent thought. He believed that the purpose of education should not be vocational training but rather the perfection and development of individual inner abilities. He emphasized the development of the individual's inner form, the cultivation of personal capabilities and potentials, which aligns with Schiller's "play impulse" in aesthetic education.

Aesthetic education has gradually gained importance in the fields of education, philosophy, and art theory since the era of Schiller. Over time, it has been applied and developed to varying degrees in different cultural and educational systems. In modern society, aesthetic education typically refers to educational practices that promote individuals' aesthetic abilities, creativity, and critical thinking through art and cultural content. The development in this field has led to a greater emphasis on art education, highlighting the value of art at both the individual and societal levels. Art is no longer merely about imparting skills but is seen as a crucial aspect of holistic education, closely related to emotional, cognitive, social, and moral development. Aesthetic education encourages active engagement in artistic experiences to cultivate aesthetic sensibility, critical thinking, and personal expressive abilities.

The Dong Grand Song, with its gentle and melodious qualities, profoundly embodies the Dong culture's unique understanding of "beauty." It is not just a musical form but also a medium for the expression of Dong spiritual culture and emotions. The beautiful melodies and harmonious harmonies of the Dong Grand Song can touch the emotions of listeners deeply, evoking aesthetic experiences and emotional resonance. This transmission of beauty and emotion is an essential aspect of the educational function of the Dong Grand Song. In the singing of the Dong Grand Song, artistic beauty blends with emotional content, expressed through poetic and picturesque performances. For example, the Dong Grand Song often depicts natural landscapes, conveys life philosophies, tells historical stories, and communicates moral concepts, social values, and humanistic spirit. The artistic infectiousness of the Dong Grand Song lies in its ability to educate people naturally through aesthetic experiences. This mode of artistic infection, which emotionally engages and moves individuals, is more subtle and effective than direct moral preaching. In Dong culture, the Grand Song is not just a form of entertainment but also a means of education. It influences listeners' emotions and behaviors in a non-coercive, indirect manner, subtly conveying cultural and moral values. The aesthetic education function of the Dong Grand Song skillfully combines emotional and moral education through the artistry of music, enriching the spiritual world of the Dong people and providing a vivid and effective path for cultural heritage.

The Dong Grand Song carries significant social and aesthetic educational functions in Dong culture. In the absence of written texts, the Grand Song serves as an important means for the Dong people to record and preserve cultural traditions. In the Dong Grand Song, singers and group members convey their understanding and cognition of life through their singing, often revolving around themes such as the group's migration history, family origins, daily life experiences, moral norms, and concepts of love. The Grand Song is sometimes referred to as "song chapters" because they are like textbooks of Dong society, containing accumulated wisdom, rational understanding of nature, social moral observations, and philosophical viewpoints. The educational form of the Dong Grand Song is informal but deeply integrated into the group's daily life, constantly influencing and educating people. This education is subtle, powerful, and enduring, achieving cultural heritage through subtle influence

and edutainment, embodying the Dong people's life philosophy and social concepts. Through the Grand Song, the Dong people educate their descendants in an intangible way, transmitting not just knowledge and skills but more importantly, moral, ethical, and aesthetic values.

In many historical civilizations, religious art forms such as sculpture, painting, music, dance, and architecture were used to convey religious meanings, sublime doctrines, sacred stories, or images of deities. These art forms sometimes served to beautify or decorate sacred spaces (such as temples or churches) and were also used in religious ceremonies to enhance the believers' faith experiences and spiritual participation. The relationship between art and religion is ancient and complex. Jane Ellen Harrison's viewpoint suggests that in human civilization, art and religion are not only closely related but also stem from the same human impulses. In many cultures, art indeed became a significant means of religious expression, with the two often intertwined in terms of function and form. For example, the Dong Grand Song, as a stable art form, with its sounds, movements, and performances passed down through generations, has become a constant in cultural transmission. The use of the Dong Grand Song in rituals is not just artistic expression; it also carries religious and spiritual significance. Through collective singing and dancing, the Dong people express their collective beliefs and cultural identity, with this art form also potentially serving as a form of spiritual redemption, allowing individuals and groups to connect with a religious and spiritual world beyond everyday life. Art is not just about aesthetic enjoyment; it can also ascend to ethical and value-based levels, providing a form of redemption. Through aesthetic experiences, art and religion can touch the depths of people's emotions, stimulate profound thoughts about life and the universe, and help individuals achieve spiritual elevation. In the Dong Grand Song, the religious and aesthetic dimensions of this art form are clearly integrated. By engaging in religious and societal functions through art, the Dong Grand Song demonstrates how art becomes an essential tool for cultural heritage and social cohesion.

German philosopher Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach was a prominent 19th-century thinker known for his influence in the fields of philosophy and religious criticism. One of Feuerbach's significant contributions lies in his analysis of the essence of religion, particularly his exploration of how religion originates and its

relationship with natural and human desires. Feuerbach believed that nature is the primary and most primitive object of religion, a viewpoint that indeed reflects a developmental stage in human history regarding religious beliefs. In his works, especially in "The Essence of Christianity," Feuerbach further delved into how religious beliefs externalize from the inner world of humans into the worship of deities. He argued that religion is a projection of human nature onto the external world, where humans attribute their characteristics to the image of gods and worship these gods as a form of self-worship. Feuerbach made significant contributions to the development of modern religious criticism and atheism, providing a critical perspective for understanding the role of religion in culture and society.

In early human cultures, natural phenomena were often imbued with sacred meanings. Due to a lack of scientific understanding of natural phenomena, people often personified forces of nature such as wind, rain, and lightning, believing them to be manifestations of deities. In this cultural context, the worship of nature gods was a way for people to try to comprehend and control natural forces beyond their understanding. For example, agricultural societies would pray to nature gods for a bountiful harvest, while sailors would pray to sea gods for safe voyages. These religious beliefs and rituals reflect human dependence on and awe of the natural environment, as well as the desire to influence and control natural conditions through religious activities to achieve favorable weather, ward off diseases and disasters, and ensure the well-being of humans and animals. Ethnic minorities like the Dong people, who live in natural environments, also demonstrate reverence and dependence on nature in their culture and religious beliefs. In these cultures, there is often a lack of the notion of "man conquering nature" but instead a greater emphasis on harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. Without understanding the reasons behind natural phenomena, they may perceive natural disasters as punishments from gods, actively avoiding angering nature gods in daily life and expressing respect and dependence on nature through various rituals and worship.

The religious beliefs of the Dong people are largely reflected in folk activities such as "worshiping Sa." "Worshiping Sa" is an important ritual used by the Dong people to worship ancestors and nature spirits, serving as one of the core religious activities in Dong culture. In the "Worshiping Sa" ceremony, the singing of

the Grand Song is an indispensable part, conveying reverence and supplication to the spirits through the song. The content in the Grand Song about "Sa Ancestor Mother" reflects the Dong people's worship and prayers to ancestors and nature spirits. Sa Ancestor Mother is often seen as a representative of the spirits or a noble ancestor, with her image endowed with many positive attributes and virtues in the Grand Song. Through the singing of historical accounts, praises of her virtues, and requests for her blessings, the Dong Grand Song vividly showcases the religious function of faith. In Dong "Worshiping Sa" activities, the Grand Song is typically used to welcome Sa Ancestor Mother into the hall, narrate her history, extol her virtues, request her blessings, and ultimately send her back to the altar. Such activities not only deepen the Dong people's faith in the spirits but also strengthen unity and a sense of community identity among community members. William A. Haviland's perspective highlights the changes in religious beliefs in modern society. With social development becoming more complex, religious activities may no longer be a part of daily life but rather confined to specific occasions and rituals. Dong "Worshiping Sa" activities seem to be an example of this social change, embodying concentrated forms of religion and folk customs in specific times and settings.



Figure 15. The Activities Of Sa Sui Worship

The formation of ethnic groups is a complex historical process that reflects the development and changes in human society. The concept of ethnicity emerged only at a certain stage in human history, based on common historical origins, modes

of production, language, culture, customs, and ideological identities, forming stable populations within a certain region. Scholar Wu Naide mentions that "identification" is one of the key factors in constituting ethnicity, involving group members' enduring emotional attachment or sense of belonging to a group. Ethnic identity is the individual or group's cognitive and emotional attachment to their own ethnic group, typically including recognition and affirmation of the uniqueness of their own ethnicity in terms of history, culture, language, values, and beliefs. This identity is not isolated but gradually established and developed in relationships with surrounding societies, other groups, and nations. The Dong Grand Song is an important part of Dong culture, serving not only as a form of artistic expression but also as a vital vehicle for Dong cultural identity. Through the singing of the Grand Song, the Dong people express their respect and pride in their ethnic history and culture, while also strengthening internal cohesion and identity. The historical stories, cultural characteristics, values, and ethnic spirit reflected in the Dong Grand Song are essential components of Dong ethnic identity. Therefore, the Dong Grand Song is not just a cultural heritage but also a manifestation of Dong ethnic identity. It helps the Dong people maintain a connection with their ancestors and promotes the inheritance and development of their ethnic traditions. Through shared singing customs, the Dong people find a sense of belonging and define their identity and position within a broader social and cultural context.

The Dong Grand Song is a part of Dong culture that goes beyond mere musical expression, serving as an integral component of social and cultural activities. As noted by American anthropologist William Haviland, music, like other art forms, is a creative skill of humanity that people can cultivate and take pride in. The social and cultural functions of music far exceed the music itself, involving aspects such as aesthetics, expression, communication, social structure, and personal identity. The Dong Grand Song establishes emotional experiences and moral sentiments, conveying the life experiences and values of the Dong people through music and lyrics. Through its unique polyphonic and choral techniques, the Dong Grand Song becomes a social and cultural practice in Dong society, strengthening connections among community members and showcasing the Dong people's unique identity and culture to the outside world.

This musical form originates from the Dong people's unique natural ecology and social practices, with a long history that has largely remained untouched by the erosion of modern civilization and technological rationality. Throughout its long historical process, the Dong Grand Song has become a link between the past and the present, helping the Dong people preserve and develop their cultural traditions and identity. By maintaining and developing this unique cultural expression, the Dong people can continue to affirm and celebrate their distinct cultural identity in the modern world, while also contributing to the preservation of global cultural diversity. In an increasingly globalized world, the protection and inheritance of traditional art forms like the Dong Grand Song become particularly crucial as they offer profound insights into human history and cultural diversity, strengthening people's understanding and respect for their cultural roots. Music is a powerful form of cultural expression that transcends time and space, conveying and preserving a nation's history, traditions, and spirit. The Dong Grand Song, as a cultural symbol, holds significant meaning for ethnic identity. Through learning, performing, and appreciating the Grand Song, the Dong people not only preserve and pass on their unique culture but also continuously reshape and affirm their ethnic identity. This ongoing tradition not only elevates the Dong Grand Song to an important cultural heritage but also provides a vivid case for the preservation of Dong culture and broader cultural diversity.

The Dong Grand Song establishes emotional experiences and moral sentiments, conveying the life experiences and values of the Dong people through music and lyrics. Through its unique polyphonic and choral techniques, the Dong Grand Song becomes a social and cultural practice in Dong society, strengthening connections among community members and showcasing externally. As American anthropologist William Haviland points out, music, like other art forms, is a creative skill of humanity that people can cultivate and take pride in. The social and cultural functions of music far exceed the music itself, involving aspects such as aesthetics, expression, communication, social structure, and personal identity.

1.3 Ontological Characteristics of Dong Grand Song

The Dong Grand Song is based on the gentle, graceful, and naturally coordinated musical characteristics, combined with romantic and unique rhythmic

transitions, vivid natural imitations, and harmoniously elegant stylistic presentations, embodying the aesthetic features of Dong ethnic music. The multi-part structure and harmonic application of the Dong Grand Song showcase its musical charm, with its well-arranged modal transitions (modulations) and poetic discourse style adding to the uniqueness of this musical art form. These musical elements not only constitute important components of the musical rhythm and form of the Grand Song but also enrich its ideological content and stylistic form. In terms of ideological content, the Dong Grand Song reflects the emotional experience of unity between man and nature, expressing reverence and care for nature, as well as the life philosophy of harmonious coexistence between the Dong people and nature. It portrays vibrant scenes of natural life, documenting the simple and natural state of existence, making the Grand Song a carrier of Dong culture and aesthetic concepts. In terms of form, the Dong Grand Song not only possesses basic elements of music such as melody and rhythm but also exhibits complex qualities such as integrity, transformation, harmony, and imagery, all of which enhance the artistic expression and cultural transmission of the Grand Song. Through the combination of these musical and cultural elements, the Dong Grand Song has become not only a highly aesthetic art form but also an important means of inheriting and showcasing Dong cultural values.

1.3.1 Naturalized Melodies

In the 18th century, the early British philosopher Charles Avison proposed the theory of musical imitation, suggesting that music can mimic various sounds found in nature. This viewpoint reflects the understanding and exploration of musical expressiveness at that time, as well as observation and reflection on the natural world. Avison's thoughts represent a viewpoint of musical aesthetics, indicating that music is not just an abstract combination of sounds but can also imitate sounds from nature, such as flowing water, thunder, wind, animal calls, especially bird songs. In the Dong Grand Song, we can also find similar elements of natural imitation. Within the musical characteristics of the Dong Grand Song, many elements imitate sounds from nature, such as echoes in the mountains, the murmuring of streams, and the rustling of the wind through bamboo forests. These elements not only enrich the expressiveness of the music but also tightly connect the music with nature, reflecting the Dong culture's reverence for nature and the concept of harmonious coexistence with nature.

Musical imitation extends beyond direct sound replication to include imitation of movement, emotions, and behaviors. In the design of rhythm and melody in the Dong Grand Song, inspiration may be drawn from the rhythm and movement found in nature, such as imitating the flight of birds, the running of wild animals, and even the rhythm of seasonal changes. This imitative quality gives the Dong Grand Song a unique artistic charm, making it not just a musical form but also a cultural expression. In the Dong Grand Song, the most classic "Ga Suo" or "Sound Song" originates from the imitation of natural sounds, showcasing the naturalistic ontological characteristics of the Grand Song and reflecting the profound connection of this artistic form with the natural world. Through singing, the Dong Grand Song transforms the imitated images of natural sounds into musical language. This process goes beyond individual expression by singers, integrating the collective unconscious of the entire community and encompassing deep reflections and innovations on history and culture. It personifies natural elements, imbues aesthetic significance, and becomes a "historical sediment" with expressive and meaningful functions.

"Ga Suo," as a form within the Dong Grand Song, emphasizes the expressiveness of music and singing skills. This form often mimics sounds from the natural world, recreating and integrating these sounds through unique musical techniques and aesthetic contexts. For example, in the "Song of the Cicada," the bass singer uses circular breathing techniques to produce long sustained low tones, creating a sound effect similar to flowing water. Meanwhile, the high-pitched singer imitates bird calls and other natural sounds, showcasing a rich melody and tonal quality through alternating and improvisational singing. This expressive and skillful musical form not only demonstrates the individual talents of the singers but also represents the artistic expression of the community's observations and understanding of the natural world. The way in which the Dong Grand Song imitates natural sounds allows the audience to experience a sense of beauty and emotional resonance that originates from nature but transcends it, combining cultural heritage with nature worship.

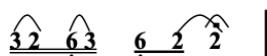
In the Dong Grand Song, "Ga Suo" represents music through the imitation of various sounds found in nature, primarily using the following five forms of imitation: 1. Imitation of insect calls: This includes different pieces that imitate the sounds of cicadas in different seasons, such as the chirping of cicadas in spring,

summer, and autumn. The "Ga E" (also known as the "Song of the Cicada") expresses feelings towards nature and an understanding of seasonal changes through the imitation of cicada sounds. 2. Imitation of bird songs: By mimicking the calls of cuckoos, swallows, waterfowl, bulbul, and other birds, the changing seasons and vitality of nature are showcased. For example, in "Busy Spring of the March Cuckoo," the imitation of the cuckoo's "cooing" sound, and in "Swallows Return in January and February," the imitation of the swallow's "returning, chirping" sound. 3. Imitation of cattle and sheep calls: By imitating the calls of young goats and calves, the close relationship between the Dong people and animal husbandry is demonstrated, as these animal calls are common in Dong people's daily lives. For instance, in "Young Goat," the imitation of the young goat's "baaing" sound. 4. Imitation of flowing water sounds: Works that imitate the sounds of flowing water reflect the importance of water in Dong culture. Water holds a central position in Dong life and beliefs, as seen in "The Quiet Flow of the Fulu River," imitating the sound of flowing water as "gushing." 5. Mixed use of various imitations: Some pieces combine multiple imitations of sounds, such as simultaneously mimicking insect and bird calls, as well as the sounds of flowing water, showcasing a comprehensive listening and imitation of nature.

"Ga Suo" plays a finishing touch role in the Dong Grand Song, often appearing at the end of a song or sometimes interspersed in the middle to enhance the expressiveness and emotional depth of the music. "Ga Suo" places more emphasis on the beauty of the singing voice and the skill of imitating natural sounds. The "throat singing" part particularly focuses on the beauty of tone and the smoothness of melody. These lyrics are often short, sometimes only consisting of one or two sentences, yet they can profoundly express emotions and aesthetic values. The way of singing "Ga Suo" is very free, it can be performed in drum towers, song platforms, residential areas, or mountains, showcasing the flexible and diverse performance forms of the Dong Grand Song, reflecting its social function and cultural significance. For example,

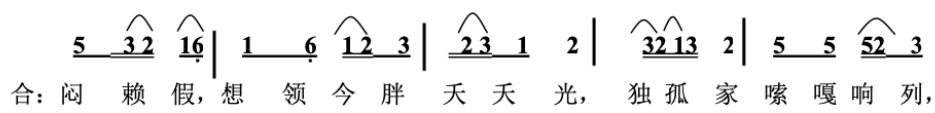
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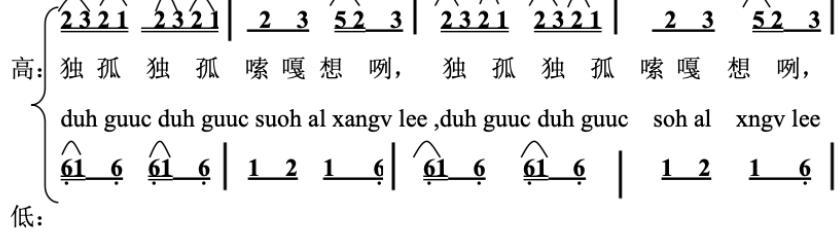
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高: ①呀 响 领 而 领 而 ②领 而 领 而
①ya xang ling ee ling ee ②ling ee ling ee

低:

高: ①呀 响 领 而 领 而 ②领 而 领 而
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高: ①呀 响 领 而 领 而 ②领 而 领 而
①ya xang ling ee ling ee ②ling ee ling ee

低: <img alt="Musical notation for the fourth line of the song, consisting of five measures. The first measure has a note with a '6' above it and a '35' below it, followed by a note with a '12' above it and a '3' below it, followed by a note with a '32' above it and

1 6 2 5 3 2 2 |

领: 龙 留 这 那
Liong^c liuc geel nya

高: $\begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|} \hline \overline{12} & \overline{3} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} \\ \hline \overline{12} & \overline{3} & \overline{1} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} \\ \hline \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|} \hline \overline{3} & \overline{5} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} \\ \hline \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{1} & \overline{6} \\ \hline \end{array}$

③ 领 而 领 而 咳 咳 咳 唉 M 克 而
③ Ling ee ling ee hee hee hee eis em kee ee
6 - 6 - 6 - |

低: 而 (ee)

高: $\begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{5} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} & \overline{1} & \overline{2} & \overline{1} & \overline{5} \\ \hline \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{5} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} & \overline{1} & \overline{2} & \overline{1} & \overline{5} \\ \hline \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline \overline{2} & \overline{1} & \overline{1} & \overline{5} & \overline{6} & \overline{0} \\ \hline \end{array}$

④ M 克 啊 呀 M 克 啊 呀 而 行 合: 而 咳 咳 嘿 足。
④ em kee oi ya em kee oi ya ee heeng ee hee hee ei ju
6 - 6 - 6 - |

低: 而 (ee)

6 2 6 32 2 | 1 6 2 5 3 2 1 |

领: 没 斗 十 插 合: 同 斗 申 侗 侗 家
Miic touv xebx laeml dongc douh senl gaeml dongs jah

高: $\begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} & \overline{1} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{1} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{1} \\ \hline \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} & \overline{5} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{1} & \overline{2} & \overline{6} \\ \hline \end{array}$

着 乃 拜 伦 劳 动 月 工 道 水 用 今 胖 用 今 胖
Jodc naih bail lenc laoc dongs weex kgongl daol seiv yongl jenc pangl yong jenc pangl

低: 6 1 6 2 1 6 | 6 1 2 6 1 2 | 2 3 2 3 2 10 | 3. 2 16 |

高: $\begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline \overline{3} & \overline{5} & \overline{3} & \overline{3} & \overline{5} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{3} & \overline{5} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{5} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} \\ \hline \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{5} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{3} & \overline{5} & \overline{3} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} & \overline{5} & \overline{2} & \overline{3} \\ \hline \end{array}$

独 孤 独 孤 噜 嘎 想 咧, 独 孤 独 孤 噜 嘎 想 咧,
duh guuc duh guuc suoh al xangv lea, duh guuc duh guuc soh al xang lee

低: 6 1 6 6 1 6 | 1 2 1 6 | 6 1 6 6 1 6 | 1 2 1 6 |



高: $\begin{array}{c} \hat{3} \underline{5} \ 3 \ \hat{2} \underline{3} \ 1 \ \hat{6} \underline{1} \ 6 \\ | \quad | \\ \begin{array}{lll} ① \text{独孤} & \text{独孤} & \text{独孤} \\ ② \text{独孤} & \text{独孤} & \text{独孤} \\ ③ \text{独孤} & \text{独孤} & \text{独孤} \end{array} \\ | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \\ \begin{array}{lll} ① \text{du gu} & \text{du gu} & \text{du gu} \\ ② \text{du gu} & \text{du gu} & \text{du gu} \\ ③ \text{du gu} & \text{du gu} & \text{du gu} \end{array} \\ | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \\ \begin{array}{lll} 6 & - & - \\ 6 & - & - \\ 6 & - & - \end{array} \end{array} \right.$

低: 而 (ee)

高: $\begin{array}{c} \hat{6} \underline{7} \ 6 \ \hat{3} \underline{5} \ 3 \ \hat{2} \underline{3} \ 1 \ | \ \hat{6} \underline{7} \ 6 \ 0 \ \hat{6} \underline{7} \ 6 \\ | \quad | \\ \begin{array}{lll} ④ \text{独孤} & \text{独孤} & \text{独孤} \\ ④ \text{独孤} & \text{独孤} & \text{独孤} \end{array} \\ | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \\ \begin{array}{lll} ④ \text{du gu} & \text{du gu} & \text{du gu} \\ \text{du gu} & \text{du gu} & \text{du gu} \end{array} \\ | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \quad | \\ \begin{array}{lll} 6 & - & - \\ 6 & 1 \underline{6} \ 0 & - \end{array} \end{array} \right.$

低: 而
Ee

而 咳
ee hee

合: 独 孤 独 孤 独 孤
du gu du gu du gu |||

The lyrics of this song convey the following message:

Spring arrives with its strong essence,

Thousand mountains and rivers lush with greenery,

The cuckoo bird sings its melodious tune,

Cuckoo, cuckoo, swiftly sowing seeds.

By the river, willows sprout new buds,

Layered terraced fields with the sound of flowing water.

Cuckoo hastens the arrival of spring for sowing,

Our labor, our love,

All await harvest in the autumn.

Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo.(Xie Chen 2007)

This is a two-part Grand Song, with each part featuring a lot of cuckoo bird call imitations in the singing, creating a lively and alternating chorus of bird songs, depicting a cheerful scene in the forest. The sustained "la" note in the bass part for a long time gives a sense of stability, smoothness, and simplicity. The interplay between movement and stillness effectively blends the primitive natural forest landscape with the joyful living scenes of the Dong people, showcasing a lively and interesting atmosphere of life.

1.3.2 Hierarchical Harmony

The "throat singing" section in the Dong Grand Song is its unique feature, serving not only as a showcase of vocal technique but also as a reflection of the profound cultural heritage of the Dong people. Teacher Shi Gancheng vividly describes and metaphorizes the natural and cultural elements contained in the "throat singing," showcasing the artistic charm and cultural significance of the Dong Grand Song from multiple perspectives: Imitation of natural scenes, through mimicking the sounds of cicadas, birdsong, hens pecking, frogs singing, and other natural sounds, the Dong Grand Song demonstrates a harmonious relationship with nature. The complexity and richness of sound, as mentioned in the metaphorical references to valley waterfall sounds, melodious calls of Chinese hwamei birds, and mixed instrumental performances, illustrate the diversity and complexity of the sounds in the "throat singing" section. Description of landscapes, mentioning sea market houses, rapeseed flowers, lantern shadows, etc., paints picturesque natural and rustic scenes. Expression of emotions, expressing love for nature, life, as well as active participation in traditional festivals and community activities through music. Cultural integration and community unity demonstrate the collective celebration and cohesion of the Dong people during festivals or in daily life.

"Chain Breathing" (also known as "circular breathing" or "alternate breathing") is an important singing technique in the Dong Grand Song, especially in the "many low, one high" choral form, where this technique is crucial for maintaining prolonged sound continuity and smooth singing. "Chain Breathing" involves members of the choir taking breaths at different times to ensure the continuity of the music. When one singer needs to breathe, others continue singing, allowing the sound to pass seamlessly without interruption. Harmony and branching, in the Dong Grand Song,

harmony is actually created through vocal branching, where each vocal part has its unique melodic line, but they complement each other in harmony, collectively creating rich musical effects. The role of the bass part, in the "many low, one high" choral form, the bass part typically sustains the main note 6 (la), and this note often needs to be sustained for a considerable amount of time. The stability and continuity of the bass part are essential foundations for the entire choir. Alternating breaths, for maintaining prolonged notes and musical continuity, members of the bass part will alternate breaths when necessary, ensuring that the long notes can be sustained continuously. The quality of sound, through the use of "chain breathing" technique, the Dong Grand Song can exhibit a unique charm of continuous and melodious vocal quality while maintaining continuity. Mastering "chain breathing" is a challenge for singers of the Dong Grand Song, but it is also key to achieving a perfect singing performance. It not only tests the singer's personal breath control skills but also requires a high level of coordination and harmony among the team.

"Nasal Resonance" in the Dong Grand Song is an acoustic phenomenon involving the vibration of sound in the singer's nasal cavity, creating a unique resonance effect. This method can enhance the resonance and warmth of the sound, making it fuller, more penetrating, and increasing the expressiveness and infectiousness of the music. The rich nasal tone effect produced by nasal resonance adds solidity and power to the sound compared to using only the throat for singing, giving it a more lively and local flavor. Singing by male and female voices, whether male, female, or mixed voices, utilizes nasal resonance to enhance the texture and depth of the sound. The difficulty of vocal techniques, mastering the technique of "nasal resonance" is not easy and requires extensive practice and a deep understanding of one's vocal control abilities. Improper use may lead to an excessive nasal sound, affecting the overall harmony and aesthetic appeal of the choir. Flexible application, "nasal resonance" is not continuously used throughout the singing process but is flexibly applied based on the needs of the performance and the musical expressive intent. Combination with true voice, singers often combine "nasal resonance" with the true voice in actual performances, creating a more varied and rich singing effect through interleaved use, showcasing the diverse style and unique personality of the Dong Grand Song.

"Tremolo with the Tip of the Tongue" is a unique singing technique in the Dong Grand Song used to imitate sounds from nature, especially when mimicking bird calls or insect sounds. The technique involves producing sound by rapidly vibrating the tip of the tongue, creating a rapid vibrating sound effect similar to the calls of birds or insects. In the Dong Grand Song, "tremolo with the tip of the tongue" is used to mimic various sounds from nature, especially bird calls and insect sounds, representing an artistic reproduction of natural environmental sounds. In most songs, the lead singer in the high voice part, supported by the sustained notes in the low voice part, uses the tremolo with the tip of the tongue technique to imitate insect sounds, creating a vivid natural atmosphere.

In collective singing, the combination of the lead singer's "tremolo with the tip of the tongue" and the voices of other lower singers creates a magnificent and powerful sound effect, intertwining horizontally and vertically, allowing the audience to feel as if they are in nature, experiencing the spectacular scene of insects chirping in unison. By skillfully mastering the "tremolo with the tip of the tongue," singers not only showcase their superb skills but also establish a simple connection between humans and nature through sound, allowing listeners to feel the wonder and harmony of the natural world.

The use of "tremolo with the tip of the tongue" requires singers to have considerable tongue control and a keen perception of sound. In the Dong Grand Song, this technique is not only an imitation of natural sounds but also a manifestation of the fusion of musical culture and the natural environment, representing an extremely unique and expressive aspect of Dong music culture.

The Dong Grand Song, with its unique multi-part choral form, achieves coordination and harmony in singing through the tacit cooperation between singers, without any instrumental accompaniment or conductor. This coordination is mainly reflected in the following aspects: 1. Leading, leading is an important concept in the Dong Grand Song, referring to the guiding role of the high-pitched singer. Leading is not only a musical start but also a guide for rhythm and melody. Through the leading of the high-pitched singer, the key and rhythm of the song are established, providing a basis for other singers to follow; 2. Spatial transmission of sound, in the singing process of the Grand Song, the transmission of sound is hierarchical, from far to near,

creating a spatial musical effect that increases the dynamic range and expressiveness of the music; 3. Changes in pitch and rhythm, from soft to strong, the Dong Grand Song creates tension and rhythmic flow through dynamic changes, giving the song both intensity and rhythm; 4. Combination of individuals and the collective, although each singer has their unique role, such as high or low pitch, they have precise coordination and harmony, ensuring the continuity of the music and overall harmony through alternating breaths; 5. Harmony and voice part arrangement, the high and low voice parts complement each other, mutually enhancing each other, creating a smooth and uniform sound through harmony techniques. The high voice part typically leads the melody, while the low voice part provides harmonic support and rhythmic foundation. The singing of the Dong Grand Song reflects the internal logic and social structure of Dong music, where each individual's participation is not just a musical act but also an expression of social interaction and cultural heritage. This singing style is not just a display of musical skills but also a manifestation of Dong social harmony and collective consciousness.

In conclusion, the singing style of the Dong Grand Song mainly includes the following aspects:

Unaccompanied and conductorless, the Dong Grand Song is usually performed in a cappella form, without instrumental accompaniment or conductor. During singing, it is typically led by a high-pitched singer, with other singers following, achieving musical harmony and unity through tacit cooperation;

Solo high-pitched lead, group singing in the low voice part, the Dong Grand Song adopts a call-and-response form, alternating between high and low pitches, creating musical layers and contrasts through leading and group singing;

Large ensemble lineup, the Dong Grand Song can be sung by as few as three people to as many as hundreds of people, requiring highly trained coordination and harmony among performers to avoid discordant sound quality, demonstrating the outstanding collective performance ability of the Dong people;

Singers perform sitting down: The Dong Grand Song originated from leisure and entertainment after labor, with performers usually seated in rows of men and women, responding and communicating with each other through this method, representing an immersion in the state of music and singing;

Drum tower duet-style choir, in traditional festivals and important ceremonial activities, the Dong Grand Song is often performed in a duet format in drum towers. During tourism activities, the performance of the Grand Song typically takes place in specific locations.

When considering the perspective of ethnomusicology, we can see that music is not just a combination of melody, rhythm, and harmony but a broader cultural phenomenon. Ethnomusicologists like John Blacking and J.H. Kwabena Nketia emphasize the importance of music as a cultural expression. Blacking views music as a social and cultural expression that reflects collective emotions and social relationships, rather than just individual emotional expression. Nketia further expands on this concept, directly referring to music as "musical culture," implying that music is part of cultural practice and a carrier of cultural identity and tradition. Based on these viewpoints, we can more deeply understand the cultural significance of the Dong Grand Song. The Dong Grand Song is not just a collection of musical patterns; it encompasses Dong cultural identity, social structure, and historical traditions. The multi-part nature of the Grand Song provides a framework through which to explore how music is expressed and experienced collectively.

In the Dong Grand Song, this multi-part structure provides a unique cultural expression. For example, the lead singer's melody and the harmony or sustained notes of other voice parts collectively create a unique musical texture that holds meaning at the social and cultural levels. In multi-part folk songs like the Dong Grand Song, music is not just a combination of sounds; it represents community cohesion and social practice. Through folk songs, Dong society conveys its history, religious beliefs, social values, and worldview. Therefore, studying the Dong Grand Song from the perspective of ethnomusicology can help us better understand how music serves its social and cultural functions in Dong society.

The harmonic characteristics of the Dong Grand Song primarily consist of major and minor thirds, which are common in Western music and considered harmonious and pleasing. The use of major seconds brings a subtle tension and unique timbre, which is also a stylistic feature in the Dong Grand Song. Meanwhile, perfect fourths and fifths, which are very stable harmonic intervals in Western music, are less commonly used in the Dong Grand Song, possibly due to Dong music's traditional

aesthetics. The rare use of major sixths provides a special musical color when it does appear. The harmony of the Dong Grand Song is not arbitrary; it demonstrates a certain hierarchy and regularity. In a song, you may hear a variety of harmonic intervals ranging from seconds to octaves, combining diversity and regularity to provide performers

1.3.3 Soft Modal Tonality

The Dong Grand Song embodies a pentatonic scale without semitones in its music, characterized by mild tones, a narrow range, and most voices staying within one octave. This reflects the gentle, graceful, and lyrical characteristics of Dong music. This musical form not only showcases the refined and friendly national character of the Dong people but also resonates with the tranquility and beauty of the natural environment in Dong culture. Scholar Zhao Deyi's research on the Dong Grand Song indicates that the majority of Dong Grand Songs use the Yu diao mode (a type of pentatonic scale) and considers it the fundamental mode of the Dong Grand Song. Although Ga Lao (Grand Song) almost exclusively uses the Yu diao mode, the Dong Grand Song is not entirely limited to this mode, as other modes such as the Shang diao mode are also utilized, demonstrating the diversity of tonal characteristics in Dong Grand Songs. Examples like "Guzhou Mountain Village" illustrate not only the diversity of modes in Dong Grand Songs but also the phenomenon of modal and tonal shifts. With a basic range from "Yu" to "Zhi," this flexible use of modes and control of range showcase the complexity and richness of Dong music. The unique artistic charm of the Dong Grand Song lies in its complex multi-part structure and harmonic relationships.

The Dong Grand Song typically uses the pentatonic scale (based on five main scales) known as the Yu diao mode, constructing harmony through the vertical interval relationships between different voice parts during performance. Through these "vertical" interval relationships, multiple voice parts in the Dong Grand Song can independently develop melodic lines while also coordinating with each other to create harmonious harmonic effects. These harmonic relationships typically include the following aspects: the interval distances between different voice parts, such as fourths, fifths, thirds, etc.; the relative directional movements of melodic lines between voice parts in terms of pitch, which can be the same, opposite, or staggered;

emphasis on different rhythmic points by each voice part to enhance the musical rhythm and vitality; each voice part has its independent melodic line, not just simple repetition or accompaniment. This "vertical" Yu diao mode is reflected in the interval relationships between "Yu" and other tones:

Interval relationships of the "Yu" tone:

Yu and Gong: Minor third

Yu and Shang: Perfect fourth

Yu and Jiao: Perfect fifth

Yu and Zhi: Minor seventh

Interval relationships of the "Gong" tone:

Gong and Gong: Unison

Gong and Shang: Major second

Gong and Jiao: Major third

Gong and Zhi: Perfect fifth

Interval relationships of the "Shang" tone:

Shang and Shang: Unison

Shang and Jiao: Major second

Shang and Zhi: Perfect fourth

Interval relationships of the "Jiao" tone:

Jiao and Jiao: Unison

Jiao and Zhi: Minor third

Interval relationships of the "Zhi" tone:

Zhi and Zhi: Unison, here indicating that the Zhi tone below the Zhi tone is not within the basic range, which may imply specific usage rules or positions for the Zhi tone in the Dong Grand Song.

Regularity of interval differences between voice parts: The interval relationships between voice parts are mostly minor sevenths, perfect fifths, major thirds, and unisons. The diversity of these interval relationships is the source of the harmonic beauty in the Dong Grand Song.

Relationship between the main melody and derivative voice parts: The main melody of the Grand Song typically lies in the lower voice parts, while the higher voice parts sing derivative melodies. This indicates that the melodies in the

Dong Grand Song are distinct, with different melodic cues in the high and low voice parts, but they complement each other, collectively forming a rich multi-part structure.

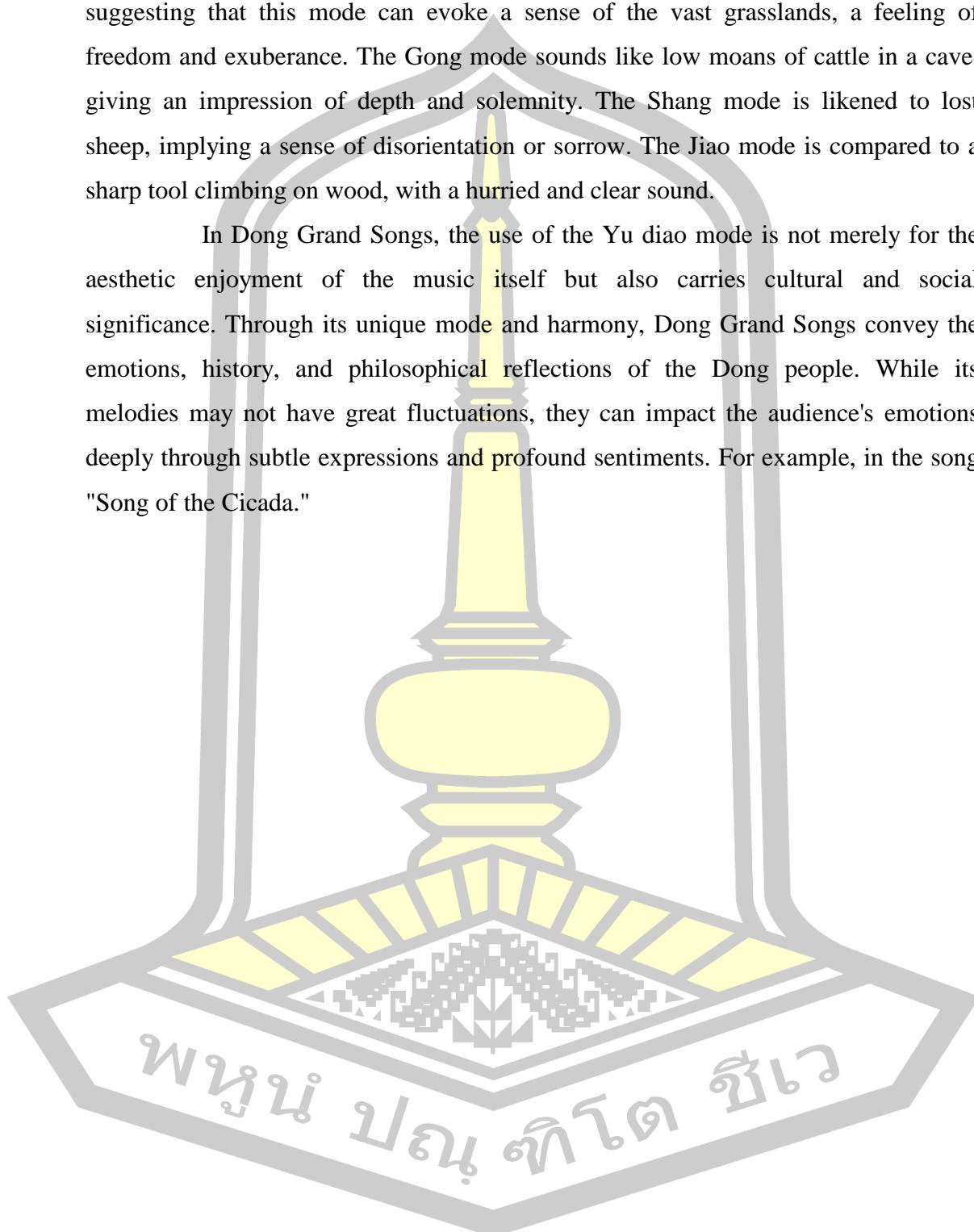
The Yu diao mode used in Dong Grand Songs is a mode based on a pentatonic scale, with its specific interval structure and melodic application rules. In the Yu diao mode, the sixth degree tone serves as the tonic ("6"), which is often emphasized in the melody and acts as the tone with which the music begins and ends. In the pentatonic Yu diao mode, where "6" serves as the tonic, the interval relationships it forms with other tones are as follows: "6" (tonic) forms a minor third with "1," "3" forms a minor third with "5," "2" forms a major second with "3," "5" forms a major second with "6," and the sequences "6-1-2" and "3-5-6" respectively form triads consisting of a minor third followed by a major second. These triads are very common in Dong Grand Songs as they provide the foundational structure of the melody. The triads you mentioned, "6-1-2" and "2-3-5," are also commonly used, but triads starting with the "4" tone are less common, possibly because in the Yu diao mode, the "4" tone (the seventh degree of the scale) is not frequently used and may not be part of the main melodic line, its usage being restricted in some form within the musical tradition.

The tonic "6" plays a stabilizing and tonal role in the Yu diao mode, while the "3" tone serves as an important interval reference point, forming a stable perfect fifth relationship with the "6" tone, providing support for the development of the melody. Throughout the melodic ascents and descents, this perfect fifth relationship acts as a scaffold, helping maintain the structural stability of the music. The melodic application in Dong Grand Songs pays great attention to the natural flow of intervals and harmonic effects, and this unique relationship between melody and intervals is an important characteristic of musical expression in Dong culture.

The Yu diao mode has a unique musical coloration within the pentatonic scale. Due to its foundation on minor thirds and major seconds as the primary intervals, its melodies are often smooth, with a gentle sound that exudes an elegant and subtle beauty. The musical characteristics of this mode make it particularly suitable for expressing lyrical content, imbued with a touch of melancholy or serene beauty. Ancient Chinese musician Guanzi described the emotional colors of different

modes, stating that the Yu mode sounds like horses neighing in the wild, possibly suggesting that this mode can evoke a sense of the vast grasslands, a feeling of freedom and exuberance. The Gong mode sounds like low moans of cattle in a cave, giving an impression of depth and solemnity. The Shang mode is likened to lost sheep, implying a sense of disorientation or sorrow. The Jiao mode is compared to a sharp tool climbing on wood, with a hurried and clear sound.

In Dong Grand Songs, the use of the Yu diao mode is not merely for the aesthetic enjoyment of the music itself but also carries cultural and social significance. Through its unique mode and harmony, Dong Grand Songs convey the emotions, history, and philosophical reflections of the Dong people. While its melodies may not have great fluctuations, they can impact the audience's emotions deeply through subtle expressions and profound sentiments. For example, in the song "Song of the Cicada."



蝉之歌
KGAL NAEMX LEENGH

1=F $\frac{5}{8} \frac{4}{4} \frac{3}{4} \frac{2}{4}$

收集 整理: 吴远隆

中速稍慢

侗文 制谱: 吴运美

3 3 3 5 3 | 3 - | 1 2 1 2 3 2 1 6 |
 Wanp wanp jangl kap yaoc dos meix yah kgal naemx
 范范降卡 尧多梅呀嘎能
 大家静静 听我唱支能朗
 0 0 | 5 5 3 5 3 | 3 - | 1 2 12 3 |
 Wanp wanp jangl kap yaoc dos meix kgal
 范范降卡 尧多梅嘎
 大家静静 听我唱支

2 - 3 2 1 1 | 1 6 6 - - | 3 3 2 6 2 |
 Leengh sail yah sail xaop tiingk Dos kgal naemx leengh
 朗 赛呀赛笑听, 多嘎能朗
 能 朗的歌来听, 唱能朗歌
 6 2 3 2 3 2 3 5 | 5 2 2 - - | 5 2 1 2 3 2 |
 naemx leengh sail yah sail xaop Tiingk
 能朗赛呀赛笑听,
 让大家高 兴。

53 35 2 2 3 3 2 1 ||
 saip xaop diingh tiingk jangs kap mah
 赛笑顶听降卡嘛
 53 35 2 2 3 3 2 1 ||

Figure 17. Song of the Cicada: Lyrics and Music Score (Simplified Notation)

This song creates a special harmonic effect through the interaction between male and female voices. The male voice starts in the Gong mode on the note E of the Jiao mode system, and when the female voice joins in, they sing in the Jiao mode system on the note G, a perfect fourth below the male voice, creating a

harmonic overlap of minor thirds between the voices. This is a basic form of parallel harmony. In compound musical forms, this parallel tuning can become more complex. For example, imitation is a technique where one voice replicates the melodic line of another voice but at different pitches. This imitation can be direct or involve variations in certain parts of the melody, creating a richer musical texture and diversity of modes.

1.3.4 Rhyming Between Words and Phrases

In Dong Grand Songs, the requirements and application of rhyme in the lyrics also demonstrate the rhythmic characteristics of Chinese poetry. In Dong Grand Songs, the concept of "one rhyme throughout" refers to maintaining the same rhyme scheme as much as possible in a complete song or a section of lyrics. This practice helps create a sense of coherence and musicality, making the song easily recognizable and memorable. In practical application, the use of internal rhyme within lines and inter-line rhyme (waist rhyme) is quite flexible. Internal rhyme refers to rhyming within a single line of lyrics, while inter-line rhyme, also known as waist rhyme, refers to rhyming between different lines. These rhyming patterns can vary according to the needs of the melody or the content of the lyrics, without an absolute fixed pattern. Rhyming is preferred as it enhances the rhythmic beauty of poetry, but if it is not feasible, it is still acceptable, showcasing the flexibility of Dong Grand Songs in practice. Tail rhyme, or foot rhyme, refers to the rhyme at the end of a poetic line or lyric, which is a common form of rhyme and one of the most typical rhythmic structures in Chinese poetry. Dong Grand Songs employ these three rhyme schemes - internal rhyme, inter-line rhyme, and tail rhyme - giving the songs a unique sense of rhythm and harmony, as well as the beautiful quality of the melodies. Rhyming in Dong Grand Songs not only enhances the musicality of the melody but also adds a rhythmic effect and a melodic quality to the lyrics, making the songs more melodious and easier to sing along. The use of rhyme in Dong Grand Songs is a unique representation of this tradition, reflecting the Dong culture's unique aesthetic pursuits in language arts.

Through these three rhyme schemes, Dong Grand Songs create a unique harmony of sound and beauty of melody, allowing the songs to be appreciated not only within the Dong community but also in a wider context. The use of rhyme makes

the songs rhythmically distinct, more catchy, and easier to sing along. In the global tradition of poetry, rhyme is used to enhance the rhythmic and aesthetic qualities of language, although different cultures and languages have their own specific forms and rules for rhyme. Overall, the purpose of rhyme is to make the work harmonious, natural, and easy to remember and recite, and the rhyme practices in Dong Grand Songs are a manifestation of this tradition in a specific cultural context.

2. To study the Current condition and Problems of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang County, Guangxi

Dong Grand Songs, as a multi-voice unaccompanied folk song passed down through generations by the Dong ethnic group in China, not only hold significant musical value but also constitute an important part of Dong culture. However, Dong Grand Songs currently face challenges in terms of inheritance, primarily manifested in the following aspects:

Talent Drain: With the acceleration of modern life, especially the impact of the "migration for work" trend, an increasing number of young Dong people choose to leave their hometowns to work elsewhere, leading to a dwindling number of inheritors of traditional culture. The older generation of Grand Song masters is gradually passing away, and there is a lack of sufficient young people to take their place, putting the continuity of Dong Grand Songs at risk.

Impact of Modern Media: The prevalence of new media such as television and the internet has brought in a plethora of external cultures. Dong youth are easily drawn to popular music, TV shows, etc., resulting in decreased interest in traditional Dong Grand Songs, thereby reducing the attractiveness and influence of traditional culture.

Loss of Cultural Awareness: Under the impact of modern society, some Dong people may gradually lose their conscious awareness and pride in their traditional culture. This weakening cultural identity diminishes the internal drive for the inheritance and development of Dong Grand Songs.

Disruption in Inheritance Structure: Traditionally, the learning and passing down of Dong Grand Songs were accomplished through apprenticeship systems or natural transmission within families and communities. Now, due to changes in

traditional social structures, this mode of inheritance has been disrupted, without an effective modern mechanism to replace it.

Destruction of Ecological Space: Traditional Dong Grand Songs often took place within specific cultural ecological spaces, which are fundamental to their survival and development. Due to factors like accelerated urbanization and environmental changes, these ecological spaces are being disrupted, impacting the traditional performance activities of Dong Grand Songs.

Although governments and relevant departments in Dong-inhabited areas have started to pay attention to this issue and have collaborated on funding, urban development, tourism promotion, protection, and inheritance, achieving some results, the top-down protection system still faces many issues in practical implementation. For instance, there might be a lack of in-depth understanding of the traditional characteristics of Dong Grand Songs, and protective measures may not entirely align with the actual needs and cultural customs of the Dong people, leading to less-than-ideal protection outcomes.

In conclusion, the current situation and issues of the inheritance of Dong Grand Songs primarily revolve around talent drain, the impact of modern media, loss of cultural awareness, disruption in inheritance structure, and destruction of ecological space. Effectively protecting and inheriting Dong Grand Songs requires joint efforts from the government, communities, cultural workers, educators, and the Dong people themselves to find inheritance methods that are both traditional and adaptable to modern society.

2.1 Current Status of Inheritance and Protection of Dong Grand Songs

In modern society, the living environment of the Dong ethnic group, like other rural areas in China, has undergone significant changes. Modernization, urbanization, integration, commercialization, and other modern features are rapidly permeating and altering the social structure and cultural life of the Dong ethnic group. Multimedia devices such as television, mobile phones, and computers have widely spread to Dong villages, and mainstream popular culture is quietly impacting the cultural traditions of this ancient ethnic group. At the same time, the uniform social organizational structure is changing the social organization form of the Dong ethnic group, with more and more young Dong people migrating to cities in search of work and life

opportunities, making their ancestral homeland increasingly unfamiliar. Comprehensive basic education poses challenges to the inheritance of a single ethnic culture, leading to a sharp decline in Dong language and cultural consciousness. The Dong Grand Song, sung for thousands of years by Dong song masters who carry the cultural torch, is gradually being buried in the changes of the times. The inheritance of Dong Grand Songs relies on the language, and the current Dong language is facing decline and even endangerment, mainly due to changes in the surrounding linguistic environment. In the historical development at the national level and the "externalization" process of the economy and culture in Dong ethnic areas, the space for using the Dong language is shrinking, and the number of users is decreasing. "If a language loses its users, it loses its basic function of communication and dissemination, thus losing its possibility of existence." If this trend continues, the Dong language will continue to merge with Chinese, not only phonetically but also significantly influenced in terms of vocabulary and grammar, with some Dong people, especially the younger generation, even opting to abandon the Dong language in favor of Chinese. Dong youth who go out to work typically go to cities where Mandarin Chinese is predominant. Their education in their hometown enables them to quickly adapt to new things, leading to Mandarin replacing their mother tongue, which has become very common among young Dong people.

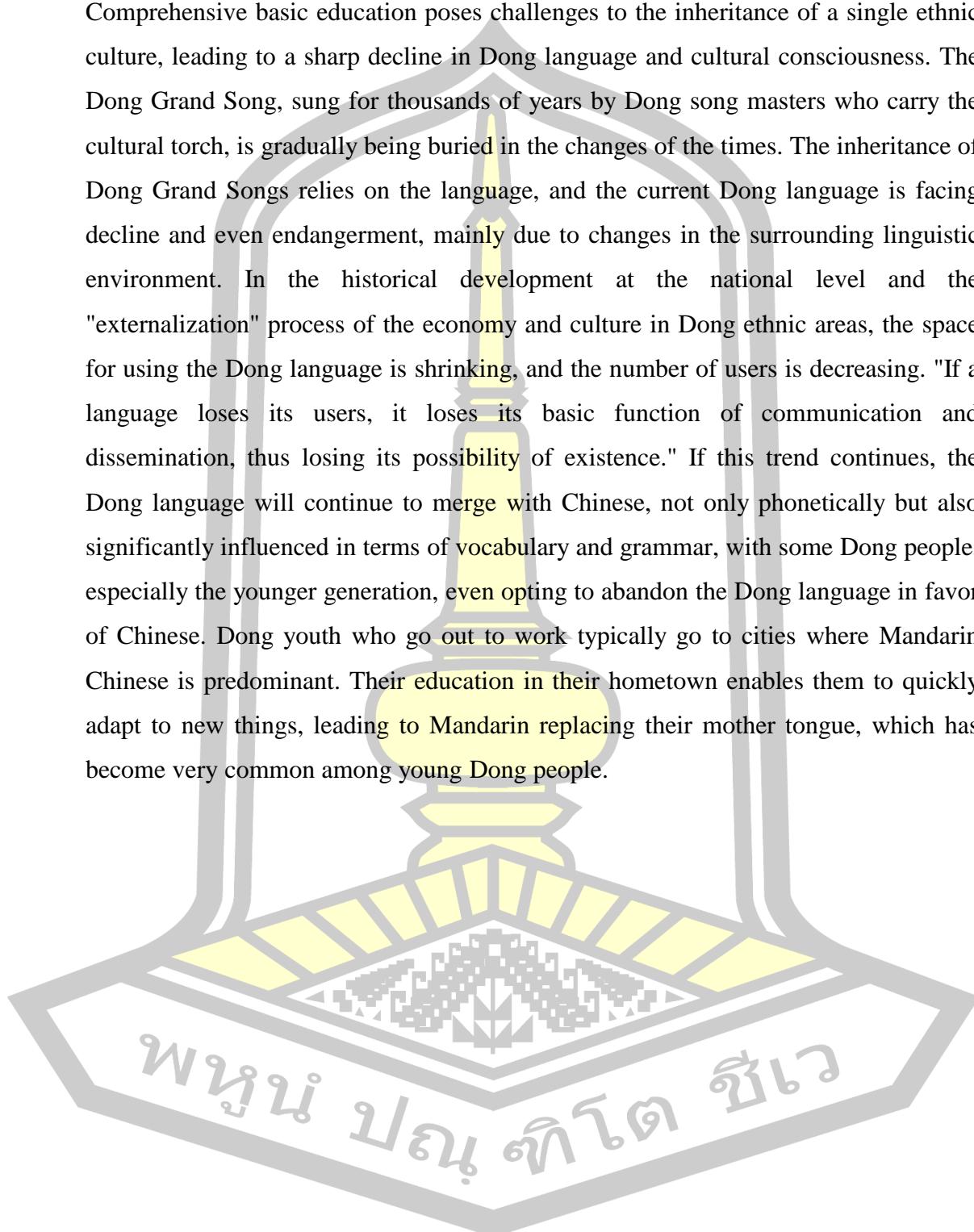




Figure 18. 2022 Gui-Xiang-Qian (Guangxi, Hunan, Guizhou) Folk Song Competition

Mr. Wu Dingguo, a Dong studies expert, has expressed deep concerns about this. He worries that the proportion of people who can speak Dong language has dropped to less than 50%, which will have immeasurable negative impacts on the inheritance of Dong Grand Songs, a phenomenon worth attention. Professor Shi Kaizhong, Dean of the School of Ethnology and Sociology at Guizhou Minzu University, shares the same view, estimating that only about 40% of people can still speak the Dong language. If the Dong language disappears, the performance of Dong Grand Songs will lose its inherent charm and original ecological appeal, resulting in a significant loss to China's traditional culture.

The performance of Dong Grand Songs not only relies on the Dong language as its mother tongue but also closely depends on specific "contexts," referring to the environment in which Dong Grand Songs are presented, which can be seen as the "stage" for their performance. In the broader context of national intangible cultural heritage protection, how should we construct the "stage" for the exhibition of these cultural heritages? The traditional venues where Dong Grand Songs were once performed, such as drum towers, village gates, and moon halls characterized by "seclusion" and "tranquility," have been replaced by the current "globalized, digitized, networked" environment, with ubiquitous broadcasting, television, internet, and all-media becoming the new symbols of this era. Clearly, the new era provides a broader

stage and space for Dong Grand Songs. However, this "stage" is no longer confined to drum towers, moon halls, or stages but has transformed into a concept with a wide spatial dimension aggregated by the thought patterns, cultural needs, and value orientations of contemporary society members. In the present day, the performance "stage" of Dong Grand Songs is shaped by the consciousness of the masses, bearing distinct imprints of the times and broad spatial perspectives. Therefore, public awareness, understanding, and participation in Dong Grand Songs will directly impact the substantive form of this stage. In other words, whether people genuinely and spontaneously integrate into the performance of Dong Grand Songs will become the most crucial, important, and decisive factor in the inheritance and performance of Dong Grand Songs in the new era.

After several visits to Dong settlement areas in Sanjiang County, Guangxi, for on-site investigations and in-depth exploration of the inheritance of Dong Grand Songs, I have observed a trend: the enthusiasm of stay-at-home women and children, as well as young people working outside, for the traditional culture of Dong Grand Songs has noticeably cooled. Many young Dong people who have moved to cities for work, influenced significantly by urban culture, pursue economic gains to buy cars and properties, hoping to improve their living conditions and change their destinies, showing no interest in returning to their impoverished homeland to sing Dong Grand Songs. In the current society, material pursuits should not be blamed, and likewise, we cannot expect residents living in areas of intangible cultural heritage to abandon modern life to endure "cultural protection." I believe that material life and spiritual life are the two main pillars of human nature. To a certain extent, specific material cultural forms can even influence the development of intangible culture. For example, Dong culture related to rice cultivation is reflected in fragrant sticky rice, delicious fish, and sweet fruits. More specifically, the material carriers of Dong Grand Songs such as the cowlegged zither and Dong lute are the foundation supporting Dong Grand Songs as community intangible cultural heritage, closely linked to the daily livelihoods of the Dong people. In simple terms, "cultural consciousness" refers to people's autonomous choices regarding their way of life. Clearly, the survival of Dong Grand Songs depends on the traditional Dong way of life, which is facing pressure from modern life.

Under the guiding development philosophy of "letting economic development take the lead while cultural construction sets the stage," the essence of Dong culture, including Dong Grand Songs, has naturally evolved into a cultural calling card. The county government's cultural departments will take a series of protective and inheritance measures. Despite the relatively low level of economic development and lower income of residents in the Dong areas of Sanjiang County, Guangxi, traditional culture here has been well protected. For example, events such as the "Guangxi Meilin Township 'Second Day of the Second Month' Dong Grand Song Festival" and the "Guangxi Fulu Flower Cannon Festival," with Dong Grand Songs as the theme, have been successively launched. Some local governments, to enhance the attractiveness of these events, have even chosen to hold these festive activities in the original ecological reserve areas of Dong Grand Songs, areas untouched by economic waves. For instance, in 2023, the Sanjiang County Committee and County Government organized the "Guangxi Meilin Township 'Second Day of the Second Month' Dong Grand Song Festival," setting the main venue in Meilin Township, known as the "hometown of Chinese Dong Grand Songs" in Sanjiang County, Guangxi. The purpose of this move is to make the festival more ecologically, ethnically, and experientially distinctive, allowing visitors in Meilin Township to hear the authentic Dong Grand Songs and other ethnic cultural feasts firsthand. Clearly, the successful organization of these activities has played a positive role in enhancing local visibility, reputation, and influence. Through comprehensive promotional activities, the popularity of Dong Grand Songs has also significantly expanded. Looking at the series of Dong Grand Song festival activities organized by the government, it is evident that while it claims to accelerate economic reform under the guise of cultural development to improve the backwardness of the region and swiftly move towards "modernization," in a cultural utilitarian background centered around economic indicators, the inherent purpose of culture is easily overlooked, becoming more of a tool to drive the development of the tourism industry.



Figure 19. Screenshot Of The Online Live Broadcast Of The Sanjiang Meilin Dong Grand Song Festival In Guangxi



Figure 20. Photos From The Sanjiang Meilin Dong Grand Song Festival In Guangxi

2.2 Issues Facing the Inheritance and Protection of Dong Grand Songs

Under the influence of modern tourism, the integrity of Dong Grand Songs has been severely compromised. Dong Grand Songs, essentially a multi-part folk choral art, known as "Ga Lao" in the Dong language, where "Ga" refers to songs and "Lao" signifies extensive content, numerous voices, and a long history. The distinctive feature of Dong Grand Songs lies in their collective choral form with multiple participants, typically acappella and conductor-less, known for their unique multi-part structure. The structure of Dong Grand Songs includes "Guo (group)," "Mei (song)," "Seng (section)," and "Jiao (verse)." Usually, a few sentences make up a section, several sections form a complete song. Each song begins with an independent section called the prelude, followed by a middle part composed of multiple sentences, and concludes with an ending, forming a complete structure with a cohesive beginning

and end. In the original Dong ecological culture, the singing of a Grand Song is expected to be complete, reflecting the characteristic of "Lao," indicating its lengthy nature, implying that a Grand Song is typically long, sometimes taking several days and nights to complete. For instance, the commonly sung "Gajin Xing" in Dong folk drum towers is such a long song; the female part requires singing 252 sentences, while the male part (response) has 289 sentences.

However, under the demands of modern tourism, the duration of Grand Song performances has been significantly shortened to accommodate tourists' schedules and curiosity, sometimes lasting only a few minutes. Organizers may even select a few sentences from multiple Grand Songs and combine them for performance since non-Dong-speaking tourists may not notice this truncation and patching. This practice not only damages the authenticity of the tourist experience but more importantly, severely undermines the artistic and cultural integrity of Dong Grand Songs as a whole. The future development of folk tourism is not limited to organizing superficial folk performances; such an approach is too simplistic. To truly enhance the quality of folk tourism, the richness of its cultural connotations is crucial. The goal of folk tourism should be to showcase the cultural beliefs and spiritual outlook of a region's people, rather than merely engaging in superficial displays. If folk expressions remain at the surface level, it can actually devalue ethnic cultures. As Dong Grand Songs exist as a tourism product, their future development direction must avoid this awkward situation and instead take measures to protect and enhance their cultural value.

As an important cultural activity in Dong society, Dong Grand Songs serve not only as a musical art form but also as a significant bond for community unity and interpersonal relationships. In traditional Dong society, Grand Song singing activities usually involve the entire population, encompassing almost all community members, based on spontaneous organization among community members through shared participation in learning and singing. Singing Grand Songs is a natural, relaxed, and enjoyable collective activity. Through long-term song practice, community members can quickly find their melodies and vocal parts harmoniously in large-scale singing activities without prior rehearsal. Such singing activities not only showcase the musical talents of Dong people but also reflect the well-nurtured community music folklore. However, as Grand Songs become a tourism product, the staged performance

format has altered this traditional model of universal participation. As a staged performance, the participation in Grand Song singing is limited to a few professional or semi-professional singers, excluding the majority of community members from the performance. When Grand Song singing transitions from an interactive activity within the community to a commercial show limited to a few participants, the inherent social network of Dong society may face disruption. Direct participation and communication among community members decrease, and the social cohesion mediated through music may weaken. This conflict between cultural tradition and modern commercial interests is a common issue faced by many traditional cultures in the face of modernization. To protect and inherit Dong Grand Songs as intangible cultural heritage, a balance must be found between tourism development and cultural preservation, allowing more community members to continue participating in and enjoying this traditional musical activity.

As a form of intangible cultural heritage with a long history and unique musical value, especially in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County, Guangxi, Dong Grand Songs are an important component of Dong culture. Based on the author's research and summary, in today's society, Dong Grand Songs face several issues in their inheritance and protection: 1. With the infiltration of modern lifestyles and the decreased interest of the younger generation in traditional culture, traditional Dong Grand Songs face a lack of successors. Young people may be more inclined to engage with modern music and entertainment rather than learn and maintain traditional singing forms. 2. Discontinuity in cultural inheritance, traditional learning and teaching methods are challenged, and oral and practical traditional methods may not adapt to the rapidly evolving society, leading to a gap in cultural inheritance. 3. Pressure from tourism commercial development, local economic development and the pressure of the tourism industry may commercialize Dong Grand Songs, stripping them of their original cultural meaning and value. Commercial performances may take precedence over authentic cultural expression. 4. Cultural environmental changes, with the advent of globalization and the information age, traditional cultural environments are evolving. The traditional social and cultural environment of Dong Grand Songs is influenced, potentially weakening their traditional significance and function. 5. Inadequate legal protection, although there are legal frameworks for the

protection of intangible cultural heritage, there may be issues of weak enforcement or inadequate legal protection measures in practice.

3. To study the Conservation form, Inherited and developed of Dong Grand Song in Sanjiang County, Guangxi

In light of the current status and issues surrounding the protection and inheritance of Dong Grand Songs in society, we can consider and discuss the following aspects:

Language Environment and Cultural Awareness: The key to protecting Dong Grand Songs lies in safeguarding the language and dialect they are sung in. Language serves not only as a vehicle for songs but also carries culture and history. Encouraging the younger generation to learn and use their mother tongue is essential through the education system and community activities. Cultivating a stronger sense of cultural awareness among the Dong people through cultural festivals, school education, and media promotion can enhance people's identification and pride in their own culture.

Reconstruction of Inheritance Structure: The inheritance of Dong Grand Songs requires not only financial investment but also an effective inheritance structure, such as the revival of the master-apprentice system. Experienced elder song masters should directly teach the younger generation to ensure the transmission of skills and styles. Establishing specialized classes or workshops can provide interested young individuals with the opportunity to systematically learn Grand Songs.

Restoration and Protection of Ecological Space: The ecological space of Dong Grand Songs encompasses not only the natural environment but also the cultural and social environments. Initiatives should focus on rebuilding the ecological space of Dong Grand Songs from both environmental protection and cultural activity perspectives. Promoting the practice and display of Dong Grand Songs in modern society, such as incorporating Grand Song performances into tourism activities or creating online platforms to share Grand Song performances, can be beneficial.

Balancing Top-Down and Bottom-Up Approaches: While government protection policies are necessary, it is also essential to implement bottom-up protection measures starting from grassroots communities. Encouraging and supporting local communities to spontaneously organize Grand Song activities helps

maintain their everyday and lifelike nature. Facilitating intergenerational interactions within communities, where communication between older and younger generations becomes a natural social activity rather than being limited to specific cultural events, is crucial.

Integration of Culture with Modern Life: Exploring ways to integrate Dong Grand Songs into modern life, such as incorporating their elements into popular music, stage plays, and other modern art forms, is important. Leveraging modern technologies like the internet, virtual reality, and other tools to create new platforms for the expression and experience of Dong Grand Songs can help bridge the gap between tradition and modernity.

Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation: Conducting ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of protection measures is essential for adjusting strategies promptly and ensuring the efficacy of conservation efforts. Encouraging academic research and studies by civil society organizations on the status of Dong Grand Songs can provide valuable decision-making support. Through these multifaceted measures, it is possible to preserve tradition while enabling Dong Grand Songs to adapt to modern society, ensuring their sustainable development and inheritance.

3.1 Social Inheritance and Development of the Dong Grand Song

As mentioned earlier, government protection policies are essential and are reflected in the societal aspects of inheritance and development. For example, in China, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism organizes a series of folk activities every year to promote traditional culture, enrich the festive lives of ethnic minorities, drive the inheritance and development of Chinese traditional culture, enhance the happiness and sense of achievement of the people, and showcase China's rich and diverse cultural landscapes and unique festive customs to the world. The "Spring to Every Home" series of mass cultural activities held in 2024 is a cultural project initiated by the government to welcome the Chinese New Year. The local government department, the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region Department of Culture and Tourism, responded actively by integrating the Spring Festival activities with local folk customs and rural tourism. Through organizing over a thousand New Year cultural performances and other mass cultural activities, they not only showcased the

new spirit of grassroots people but also demonstrated the natural integration of cultural confidence and local characteristics, promoting a new outlook on rural revitalization and fostering the development of local culture and tourism industry.

For instance, on the morning of February 3, 2024, the national Spring Festival "Village Evening" and "Spring to Every Home" mass cultural main event with the theme "Dong Village Banquet, Joyful Chinese New Year" took place at the Chengyang Bazhai Scenic Area in Linxi Town, Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County, Liuzhou City, Guangxi. More than a thousand cultural teams from various townships in Sanjiang County participated, showcasing the rich ethnic cultures and artistic forms of Guangxi. Diverse programs such as Dong Grand Songs, youth dances, and traditional songs like "Picking Tea" from the story of Liu Sanjie displayed the diversity of ethnic customs in the Guangxi region and the cultural integration phenomenon in the area. The theme song "Beautiful Mountain Village" sung by Guangxi actor Yu Tianqi was a modern piece adapted from the melody of Grand Songs and was also presented during the event. This song not only praised the beautiful rural scenery of Chengyang Bazhai in Sanjiang but also reflected people's yearning for a better life and respect for traditional culture. Through vivid descriptions of scenery, the song evoked nostalgia for hometowns and hopeful expectations for the future. Additionally, cultural activities such as celebrating the New Year in libraries, artistic performances, exhibitions, lectures, park visits, and exchanging couplets brought cultural benefits closer to people's lives, enriched their cultural choices, and elevated their cultural consumption levels.

The Southern Xiaonian Festival is an important pre-Chinese New Year festival in China, where local residents engage in self-directed and self-produced artistic programs on landmarks like the Wind and Rain Bridge, Drum Tower Ping, and stages. These activities not only uphold traditional customs but also represent an innovative expression of rural life. These events attract attention and participation from people nationwide and even internationally. By taking part in the "Village Evening," visitors not only experience the lively atmosphere of the Chinese New Year but also deepen their understanding and appreciation of Chinese traditional culture and ethnic customs. The arrival of foreign study groups indicates that the "Village Evening" is not merely an entertainment activity but also serves as a platform for cultural

education and exchange. For individuals from different regions and nationalities, the "Village Evening" is not just a simple sightseeing experience but a profound cultural immersion. Such activities play a significant role in promoting rural tourism in China, enhancing cultural confidence, fostering the protection and inheritance of cultural diversity, and strengthening international cultural exchanges and cooperation. Through cultural means, China's stories can be effectively disseminated, enhancing foreign understanding of Chinese traditional culture, while also providing new impetus and direction for the sustainable development of rural China.

The "Dong Village Banquet, Joyful Chinese New Year" Village Evening event held in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County is one of the significant cultural activities during the Chinese New Year. It not only showcases Dong traditional culture and customs but also serves as a microcosm of cultural life in rural China. This event received strong support from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and other government agencies, indicating the high importance the Chinese government places on the protection and promotion of traditional culture. In such a cultural event, audiences can enjoy traditional Dong arts performances such as lusheng dances and Dong Grand Songs, and actively participate in traditional festive activities of the Dong people, such as the "blocking the road song." These interactive elements greatly enhance the appeal and engagement of the event. The Chengyang Bazhai Scenic Area in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County, as the venue for this event, is a tourist attraction that combines Dong history, culture, and natural beauty, adding more cultural ambiance and historical significance to the Village Evening. Through such activities, local cultural tourism development can be further promoted, providing visitors from all over the country with opportunities to understand and experience Dong culture. This contributes positively to the promotion of cultural diversity, ethnic unity, and the strengthening of domestic cultural confidence.

The "February Second Grand Song Festival" held in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County in recent years is not only a major festival for the Dong people but also a vital platform for showcasing Dong culture, promoting cultural inheritance, ethnic unity, and has been listed as a representative project in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region's intangible cultural heritage list. The festival offers a rich variety of activities, including traditional Dong Grand Song performances, lusheng

performances, wood stacking, ancestral worship ceremonies, and various other traditional folk activities. On the festival day, people of all ages in Dong traditional attire gather at landmarks like the Drum Tower and riverbanks to celebrate the festival through singing and dancing. Furthermore, the Dong Grand Song Festival, as a spontaneously organized event by the people, embodies the autonomous tradition of Dong society through self-management and organization. By preserving culture and fostering innovation, Dong people not only pass down traditions but also integrate traditional culture with modern society, enhancing the vitality of ethnic culture. The successful organization of the Dong Grand Song Festival plays a positive role in raising awareness of Dong Grand Song culture, enhancing ethnic confidence, nurturing cultural inheritors, and promoting local tourism development. It is not just a festival celebration but also an important venue for the inheritance and development of Dong Grand Song culture, providing a practical base and research subject for contemporary and future researchers and cultural workers.



Figure 21. Lusheng Performance In Dong Villiage

Hosting folk song competitions, Grand Song Festivals, and other activities: These events not only serve as platforms to showcase the charm of Dong Grand Songs but also as crucial avenues for discovering and nurturing new talents. Through competitions and festive activities, more people's interest in Dong Grand Songs can be sparked, while providing the younger generation with opportunities to learn and showcase their talents.

To protect and support the development of traditional culture, the Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County established the Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection and Development Center. In November 2019, the Guangxi Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County Cultural Center (Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection and Development Center) was announced as a national-level protection unit for the intangible cultural heritage "Dong Grand Songs" in the "List of National-level Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative Projects Protection Units." By setting up specialized institutions at the government level and implementing dedicated funding support, a stable institutional guarantee and economic support can be provided for the protection and inheritance of Dong Grand Songs. This approach is beneficial for concentrating resources, coordinating planning, and providing a long-term sustainable development environment for the transmission of traditional culture. It indicates that official institutions attach importance to the investigation, protection, and promotion of traditional culture, as well as the training of inheritors, leading to a certain degree of revitalization of Dong Grand Songs and other Dong traditional cultures. The protection and development of traditional activities by official institutions are not only crucial for maintaining ethnic cultural diversity but also help enhance ethnic confidence and pride, while also playing a positive role in promoting comprehensive regional economic development.

Starting from 2021, the Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County Cultural Center has initiated regular public welfare free training classes, offering courses such as Dong Grand Songs, Dong Lute Songs, Dong Flute Playing, and lusheng playing, with nearly 200 students participating in each session. This training approach adopted by the Cultural Center plays a significant role in protecting and inheriting intangible cultural heritage. Through the format of "voluntary participation + free evening classes + customized curriculum," it not only stimulates public interest and participation in Dong traditional culture but also enhances the effectiveness of training by meeting the specific needs of students. This training method can attract more people to learn about Dong culture, especially crucial components such as Dong Lute Songs, Dong Grand Songs, Dong Flute Playing, and lusheng playing courses. The launch of these training classes creates favorable conditions for the inheritance and popularization of Dong culture, allowing enthusiasts to receive professional

guidance and engage in learning and exchange in a dedicated venue. This not only helps improve their artistic skills but also provides a platform for the dissemination and protection of Dong culture.

Continuing to this day, the Cultural Center maintains the initiation of regular public welfare free training classes, further enriching the spiritual and cultural life of local residents. This is conducive to guiding a healthy and positive lifestyle, strengthening the inheritance and popularization of ethnic culture. This is of profound significance for promoting the development of grassroots cultural undertakings, enabling cultural and artistic training to reach grassroots populations, art enthusiasts, and cultural backbone personnel at multiple levels and in various aspects.

Table 4. Sanjiang Regular Public Welfare Training Class Schedule

Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County Regular Public Welfare Training Class Schedule					
date	time	content	Bambie	Instructor	Introduction
19 April	20:00-22:00	Dong Pipa Song (Rongjiang Pipai Song)	Basic class	Wu Xianqing	Folk pipa singers
20 April	20:00-22:00				
21 April	20:00-22:00		Ordinary class	Shi Cheng	Liuzhou Intangible Cultural Heritage Project Inheritor of Dong Pipa Song
22 April	20:00-22:00				
23 April	20:00-22:00		Dong Grand Song	Basic class	Hu Zhenping
24 April	20:00-22:00				
25 April	20:00-22:00				
26 April	20:00-22:00			Ordinary class	Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region Dong Song Representative Inheritor
27 April	20:00-22:00				
28 April	20:00-22:00				
29 April	20:00-22:00				
30 April	20:00-22:00				

As of now, the Dong Grand Song free training has conducted 130 offline training sessions and 23 online training sessions, benefiting directly and indirectly over 600,000 people. Through these training activities, Dong culture is better preserved and passed down, providing a window for understanding and learning traditional culture in the future.

The "Dong Grand Song" competition held in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County in recent years is an important cultural event. It aims not only to showcase and inherit the intangible cultural heritage of the Dong people but also to enhance participants' understanding of Dong Grand Songs through competition, promoting the dissemination of Dong culture and tourism development. The following are detailed requirements for the event: 1. Requirements for inheritor participants: National and regional representative inheritors must lead or guide at least two song teams for participation. City and county-level representative inheritors must lead or guide at least one song team for participation. This requirement serves as a mandatory indicator for the annual assessment of "Dong Grand Song" representative inheritors. 2. Team size requirements: Each participating team must have over 20 members (including 20 members); teams with insufficient members will not be allowed to participate, and participants cannot compete in multiple teams. Violators will have their team's results canceled. 3. Team composition and point incentives: Encouragement for widespread mobilization, especially the participation of male members and young people. If there are over four singers under 20 years old in the team, it adds 0.005 points, and if there are over eight male members in the team, it adds 0.005 points. 4. Song requirements and singing time: A designated group song must be performed as the first competition song for each team; the chosen song must be a complete traditional Dong Grand Song and not a medley (i.e., combining multiple songs). Violators will lose 0.005 points. 5. Singing time: The performance time for each song should be between 2 and 5 minutes; less than 2 minutes or over 5 minutes will result in a deduction of 0.01 points.

Through these regulations and scoring mechanisms, the organizers establish the fairness and seriousness of the competition while promoting the participation of the younger generation and male singers through positive incentives, which contributes to the inheritance and development of Dong Grand Song culture. Additionally, combining cultural promotion with tourism development, such activities are beneficial for the protection and growth of Dong Grand Songs.

The practice of young people singing Grand Songs through the internet and new media platforms is a model of combining traditional culture with modern technology, representing an innovation in traditional cultural education. This not only

helps students better understand and appreciate their cultural heritage but also spreads the singing of Dong Grand Songs to the younger generation, significantly influencing cultural inheritance and development.

Contemporary young people are proficient in and widely use the internet and new media. By uploading Dong Grand Song performances on these platforms, they not only promote Dong culture to netizens nationwide and globally but also attract and encourage more young people to participate in the inheritance of traditional culture. By disseminating Dong Grand Songs through modern forms like new media, traditional culture can maintain its original charm while incorporating modern elements, increasing its appeal and reach. For example, modern music production techniques can be combined to create modern versions of Dong Grand Songs, or dedicated Dong Grand Song channels can be created on social media platforms. The enhancement of cultural confidence: The proactive online singing of Dong Grand Songs by local young people reflects their confidence and pride in their own ethnic culture.



Figure 22. Dong Grand Song Online Live Streaming

3.2 School Inheritance and Development of the Dong Grand Song

In addition to the series of initiatives led by government departments, heritage and development in the education sector are also an important and indispensable part. Schools are crucial grounds for cultural heritage, as imparting Dong Grand Songs to the next generation through formal education systems helps ensure the systematic and continuous transmission of culture. Bringing Dong Grand Songs into schools and

communities helps promote them to a broader societal scope, particularly influencing the youth.

Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County has introduced Dong Grand Song courses in dozens of schools, including county-level ethnic primary and secondary schools and township-level primary schools. Some song teachers and music educators have collaborated to develop Dong Grand Song teaching materials suitable for teenage singers, design teaching objectives, and arrange teaching plans, marking an essential step towards systematic teaching of Dong Grand Songs. This approach allows students to learn various aspects of Dong Grand Songs in the classroom, including their historical background, lyrical meanings, singing techniques, and their significance in Dong culture. Some schools schedule a weekly session dedicated to teaching Grand Songs, ensuring students have enough time and opportunities to practice and comprehend these songs.



Figure 23. Teaching Activities Of The Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor Wu

Guangzu

ພ້ອນ ປນ ຄົກໂຕ ຂ່າວ



Figure 24. Teaching Activities Of The Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor Wu Chunyue

Furthermore, schools frequently invite song teachers and inheritors of intangible cultural heritage to conduct teaching sessions and demonstrations, acting as a bridge between school education and folk art practices. The direct teaching and demonstrations by song teachers offer students a vivid learning experience, allowing them to tangibly experience the unique charm of Dong Grand Songs and fostering their love, respect, and perceptiveness towards traditional music.

For instance, in Meilin Township, Sanjiang County, a new force in the inheritance of Dong Grand Songs has emerged at Meilin Middle School. Through the "One School, One Product" ethnic cultural activities conducted in Sanjiang County for several years, Meilin Middle School has invited Dong Grand Song teachers and artists into the classroom. Previously only sung by elderly villagers, the melodious Dong Grand Songs now resonate in the skies above Meilin Middle School during extracurricular classes.

National-level inheritor of intangible cultural heritage Wu Guangzu (Wu Fumei Lu'an), a Dong male born in April 1944 with basic education, hails from Xinmin Village, Meilin Township, Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County. Recognized in February 2008 as a representative inheritor of the Dong Grand Song project, he serves as a Dong Grand Song teaching teacher at Meilin Township Central Primary

School, representing a successful case of intangible cultural heritage protection and inheritance. Wu has authored and printed over 100 Dong Grand Songs, preserving traditional tunes and providing valuable learning resources for future scholars and enthusiasts. Such publications serve as crucial material carriers for cultural inheritance. Wu's efforts not only promote the dissemination of Dong Grand Songs among the new generation but also offer valuable experience and reference for the protection and inheritance of Dong and other ethnic minority cultures. He has not only made significant contributions to preserving and spreading Dong Grand Songs but also nurtured a new generation of Dong Grand Song inheritors and enthusiasts. Wu Guangzu expressed his wish to save this endangered folk art form within his lifetime, shaping a positive social ethos through widespread singing of Dong Grand Songs. He remarked, "While other teachers retire at 60, I only started teaching at 60." Wu Guangzu's work and dedication remind us that every traditional art and cultural heritage requires passionate and committed individuals like him. His life and work provide valuable insights on how to protect and promote ethnic cultures. Through education and ongoing cultural activities, Dong Grand Songs and other endangered folk arts can be revitalized and continue to develop in the new era.



Figure 25. The Author's Interview With Wu Guangzu



Figure 26. The Dong Grand Song Manuscripts Compiled By Wu Guangzu

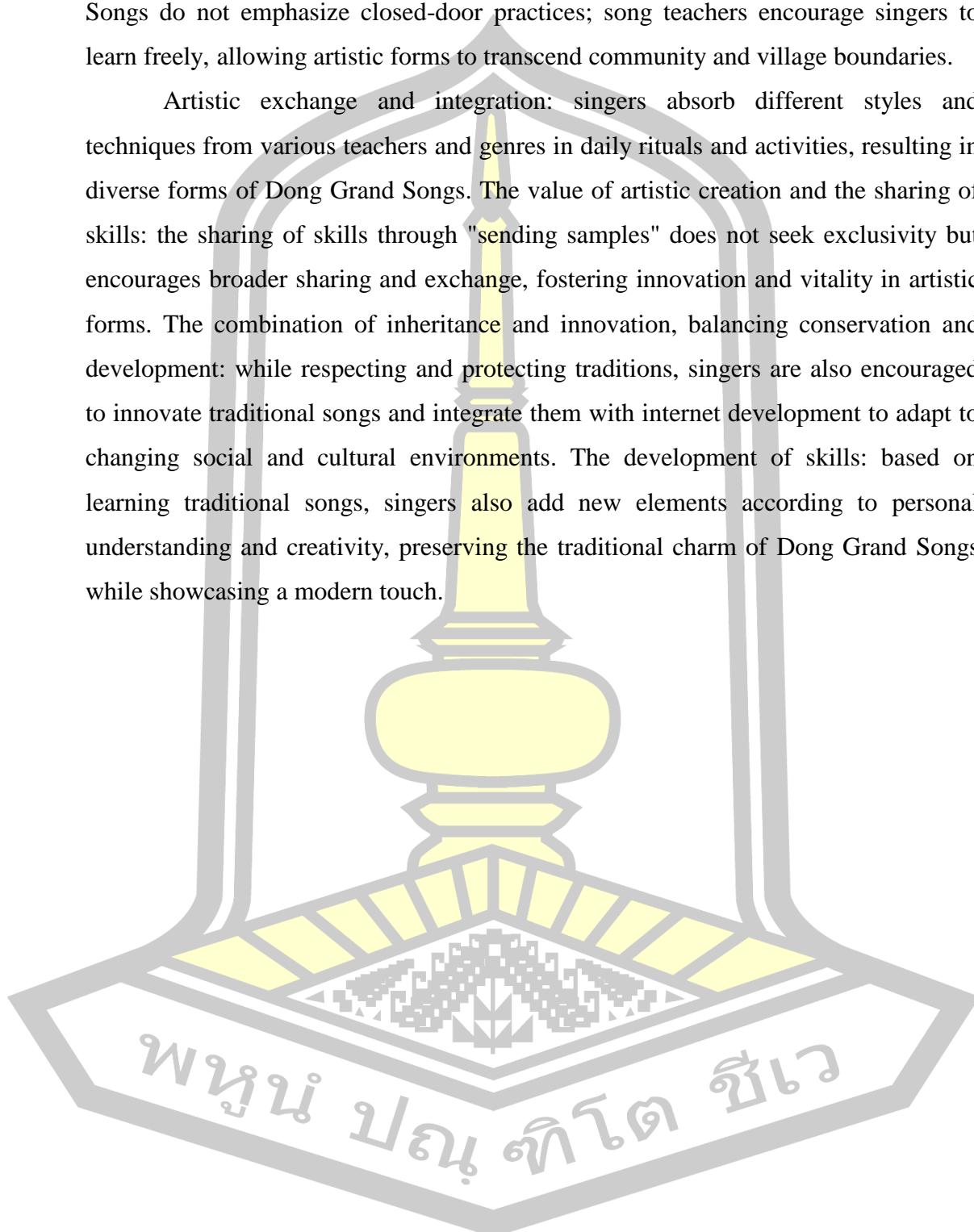
3.3 Abstract

The inheritance of Dong Grand Songs embodies a profound culture of sharing and an open learning model. This is mainly reflected in the spontaneous transmission within the Dong community and the protection and promotion led by relevant government departments. In Dong culture, learning and singing Grand Songs are not just processes of acquiring artistic skills but also activities of social interaction and cultural exchange. The characteristics include: artistic sharing, an open teacher-student relationship, where learning Dong Grand Songs is not limited to a single master-disciple relationship. Singers can learn from multiple song teachers, often with close familial ties, reflecting the traditional artistic sharing within the Dong community. With a flexible learning approach, singers are not restricted by strict sectarian limitations during the learning process; they can freely learn from multiple teachers or "apprentice" in daily life (i.e., observe and imitate others' skills).

Ritual influence and social interaction occasions: Dong Grand Songs are often sung in specific social rituals, festivals, and gatherings, tightly integrating the transmission and learning of songs with the community's daily life and festive activities. Cultural identity: through participating in the learning and singing of Grand Songs, individuals gain recognition within the community, strengthening their sense

of belonging and awareness of Dong culture. Free learning activities: Dong Grand Songs do not emphasize closed-door practices; song teachers encourage singers to learn freely, allowing artistic forms to transcend community and village boundaries.

Artistic exchange and integration: singers absorb different styles and techniques from various teachers and genres in daily rituals and activities, resulting in diverse forms of Dong Grand Songs. The value of artistic creation and the sharing of skills: the sharing of skills through "sending samples" does not seek exclusivity but encourages broader sharing and exchange, fostering innovation and vitality in artistic forms. The combination of inheritance and innovation, balancing conservation and development: while respecting and protecting traditions, singers are also encouraged to innovate traditional songs and integrate them with internet development to adapt to changing social and cultural environments. The development of skills: based on learning traditional songs, singers also add new elements according to personal understanding and creativity, preserving the traditional charm of Dong Grand Songs while showcasing a modern touch.



CHAPTER V

Conclusions, Discussions And Suggestions

1. Conclusions

The Dong Grand Song is not only a unique cultural, artistic and social phenomenon, but also plays an irreplaceable role in the transmission of Dong culture and the expression of ethnic identity. The Dong do not have their own handwritten writing system, which makes oral tradition and intangible cultural heritage particularly important for the preservation and transmission of Dong culture. In this context, the Dong Grand Song has become the main carrier of Dong folklore activities, recording and disseminating the historical, cultural, philosophical, and social knowledge of the Dong people through songs passed down from generation to generation.

1.1 From a Cultural Perspective: The Nature of Inheritance Behavior

From the birth of the Dong ethnic group to the formalization and promotion of the Dong language by the government of the People's Republic of China, the Dong people had a considerable period during which they lacked a written symbol system for information exchange. During this time, the Dong people primarily relied on oral transmission to record important information and events. However, traditional narrative oral transmission had many drawbacks.

The Dong Grand Song, as a significant oral artistic form of the Dong people, represents not only a process of cultural identity but also an optimized form of cultural preservation and self-protection that has evolved within Dong community consciousness. The Dong people, through artistic processing, have transformed their important historical events, cultural characteristics, customs, and collective emotions into a series of Dong Grand Songs. By continuously performing and optimizing these songs at Dong festivals and gatherings, they have maximized the consistency of high-intensity information transmission.

In contrast to other ethnic groups that inscribe cultural information on stone tablets or write it on paper, the Dong people have carved their cultural information into the minds and genes of each generation of Dong people. Through the

intergenerational transmission of songs and singing skills, using cultural disseminators themselves as carriers of cultural information, this method of transmission, resembling DNA information replication, enhances the success rate and stability of cultural information transmission, even though some details may be lost compared to cultural information recorded on stone tablets or in books.

This mode of cultural transmission demonstrates that the Dong people have undergone long and arduous contemplation on cultural heritage and the continuation of life, embodying simple wisdom. By using Dong community consciousness as a carrier of information, it enhances ethnic pride, protection awareness, and underscores the necessity of protecting Dong Grand Songs as intangible cultural heritage.

1.2 From an Artistic Perspective: The Nature of Inheritance Behavior

From the inception of the Dong people to before the government of the People's Republic of China symbolized and popularized the Dong language, the Dong people lacked a written symbol system for information exchange for a considerable period. Instead, they primarily relied on oral transmission to record important information and events. However, traditional narrative oral transmission has numerous disadvantages. Dong Grand Song, as an important oral art form of the Dong people, its inheritance is not only a process of cultural identification but also an optimized form of cultural preservation and self-protection that has evolved within the collective consciousness of the Dong community. The Dong people encapsulate important historical events, cultural characteristics, folk customs, and collective emotions of their ethnicity through artistic processing into works of Dong Grand Song. By continuously performing and refining these works at every Dong festival and gathering, they maximize the consistency of high-intensity information in the transmission process. Compared to other ethnic groups with writing systems that engrave cultural information on steles or write it on paper, the Dong people carve their cultural information into the minds and genes of each generation of Dong people. Through the transmission of songs and singing skills from the elderly to the young, using the cultural communicators themselves as the carriers of cultural information, this mode of transmission, similar to DNA information replication, improves the success rate and stability of cultural information inheritance, despite losing some details. This method of cultural inheritance demonstrates the Dong

people's long and arduous deep reflection on cultural transmission and the continuity of life, filled with simple wisdom. By using the group consciousness of the Dong people as the information carrier, it not only enhances the sense of national pride and protective awareness but also highlights the necessity of protecting Dong Grand Song as an intangible cultural heritage.

1.3 From a Social Perspective: The Nature of Inheritance Behavior

As a side effect of economic globalization, the homogenization of global culture is an irreversible and powerful trend. With the deepening process of global cultural homogenization, the convergence of mainstream cultural identities and values becomes increasingly significant, while the conflict between cultures that differ from universal values and mainstream culture intensifies. Minority cultures, as traditional cultural structures, and more importantly, their attached backward productive forces and economic bases, are progressively losing ground in the face of mainstream cultural impacts. The extinction of ethnic cultures fundamentally results from the disintegration of ethnic community structures, which, unable to integrate with mainstream culture and economic activities, are replaced. Taking modern China as an example, the gradual weakening of traditional Chinese culture is largely due to its inability or difficulty in integrating into the modernized economic and social structure. Gradually, so-called traditional festivals have essentially become holidays known as "traditional festivals." The most significant characteristic of this evolution is that people, long influenced by the homogenization of so-called "global mainstream culture," find it increasingly difficult to recognize the value and significance of traditional folk festivals and activities, resulting in a gradual decrease in participation in folk activities until they disappear completely. The Dong people have a clear distinction between their own culture and mainstream culture. Besides the national holidays, the Dong people still preserve most of their traditional festivals, such as the Dong New Year, the Eating New Festival, and the Harvest Festival, with the grandeur of traditional Dong festivals far exceeding that of nationally designated holidays. As a major activity of Dong traditional festivals, Dong Grand Song plays an active role in reducing the impact and erosion of mainstream culture on Dong ethnic culture. The inheritance and development of Dong Grand Song and the Dong people's identification with their own culture reinforce each other. The inheritance and

development of Dong Grand Song are not only about protecting the Dong cultural tradition but also about maintaining cultural diversity and ethnic characteristics. Through Dong Grand Song, the Dong people are able to maintain their cultural features and identity in the context of globalization. For instance, song masters and inheritors of Dong Grand Song are respected within the Dong community, and outstanding performers are welcomed and revered among their people. This internal identity recognition can generate cultural confidence, which is the psychological foundation for minority ethnic groups to showcase their culture to the outside world. Having certain cultural confidence allows them to display the unique charm of Dong culture through various activities. This process is the fundamental reason why the Dong people can maintain the integrity of their cultural system in the current trend of cultural homogenization.

2. Discussions

The cultural inheritance of the Dong Chorus provides us with profound reflections and insights when considering the continuity and development of culture. This inheritance involves not only how to maintain the originality and vitality of the culture but also how to adapt and develop in a changing world. Therefore, in the discussion section, I mainly consider the Dong Chorus cultural inheritance from the perspectives of culture, art, and society, comprehensively considering the discussion of human needs, cultural choices, and educational choices.

For example, Sun Leilei and Sheng Lianxi (2016) put forward several specific suggestions for the protection of the Dong Chorus: protecting the habitat of the Dong Chorus, including the unique natural and human environment of the Dong ethnic group, encouraging the preservation of various festivals and ritual activities by the Dong people. Incorporating the Dong Chorus into the higher education music curriculum to pass on and protect the Dong Chorus art through university courses. Emphasizing the training of professional talents in the Dong Chorus, establishing a system for inheritance and protection, formulating policies to support the work of inheritors, and attracting more people to join the Dong Chorus art inheritance team. The government can also hold mass Dong Chorus singing events, select outstanding chorus groups, instructors, and singers, and provide rewards to encourage more

people to engage in professional creation and performance of the Dong Chorus. Researcher Fu Yan (2020) proposed the following specific suggestions to protect the Dong Chorus in the article "The Inheritance Structure of the Dong Chorus": relying on the cultural traditions of Dong Chorus inheritance for protection, focusing on the research of the inheritance laws of the Dong Chorus, including inheritance lineages, modes of inheritance, scenes of inheritance, paths of inheritance, and the dialectical relationship between inheritance and innovation. By conducting field investigations and theoretical research, integrating the social resources of Dong Chorus inheritance, and managing inheritors. Inheritance subjects include song transmitters, learners, enthusiasts, researchers, and managers, who need to cooperate in synergy, considering factors such as living environment, economic conditions, and cultural education. Conduct in-depth research on the theory of Dong Chorus inheritance, meticulously explore the laws of inheritance, especially the issue of inheritance structure. Relying on activities such as the Dong Chorus Festival to attract more learners and enthusiasts, expand the group of inheritors, and lay a better social foundation for the inheritance of the Dong Chorus.

In addition to the aforementioned suggestions by researchers, we can further explore the following practices to enhance the protection and inheritance of the Dong Chorus. At the level of cultural resource integration and protection, establish a Dong Chorus cultural resource database, collect and organize materials in various forms such as song scores, recordings, videos, etc., for long-term preservation and inheritance. Strengthen the protection of the ecological environment of the Dong Chorus, safeguarding its natural and human environment, and maintaining the foundation for its artistic creation and performance. In terms of education and training, not only should the Dong Chorus be included in the higher education music curriculum, but Dong Chorus courses should also be offered in local schools to promote traditional cultural education, enhance students' awareness and interest in the Dong Chorus. Through professional training courses and workshops, cultivate professional talents in the Dong Chorus, improve their singing skills and artistic level, and provide more professional support for the inheritance work. In international exchanges and cooperation, we can strengthen cultural exchanges and cooperation with other countries and regions, learn from their experiences and practices in

protecting and inheriting their ethnic music, and jointly promote the international dissemination and development of the Dong Chorus. By comprehensively utilizing various resources and adopting various means, better protect and inherit the Dong Chorus, allowing this precious cultural heritage to continue and develop. In order to provide better recommendations, further discussions are made.

2.1 Cultural Inheritance and Human Needs

Educational anthropology believes that humans are constrained by specific cultures, living in cultural environments as individuals with differences and subjectivity. Different cultures shape different individuals, and the cultural journey of humanity is the process of forming and growing human personalities, in which education plays a crucial role. Therefore, the relationship among humans, culture, education, and their interplay is at the core of anthropological studies of education, providing essential clues to exploring human existence and development. According to the perspective of educational anthropology, cultural inheritance is a social phenomenon that passes down the ancient culture of a nation, shaping the new generation. Ancestors pass on their experiences, knowledge, attitudes, and views of the world to descendants, carrying on the history and cultural traditions of humanity. Cultural inheritance can only be achieved through the learning and practice of culture, thus bearing the profound responsibility of educating the next generation for their physical and mental development. It can be said that cultural inheritance is not just a cultural process but also an educational process, with education playing a significant role in cultural transmission.

The cultural functional theory proposed by British anthropologist Malinowski suggests that culture consists of various tools and customs that, as extensions of the human body and mind, directly or indirectly satisfy human needs. According to this theory, each element of culture is effective and serves a purpose. The material and spiritual cultures developed by different ethnic groups in various historical periods are aimed at meeting the direct needs of their members, relying on their survival and development, thereby fulfilling an educational function. Indeed, specific forms of education exist to address the needs of particular ethnic groups or members of society. For example, the continuous transmission of the Dong ethnic group's Grand Song not only meets the social and spiritual needs within the Dong community but also plays a

significant role in external cultural understanding and exchange. Human basic needs encompass not only material satisfaction but also spiritual and cultural pursuits. The preservation and protection of the Dong Grand Song not only safeguard traditional music and performing arts but also disseminate the Dong community's social structure, religious beliefs, and worldview, which are vital components of community members' identity and cultural continuity. From its inception, Dong Grand Song culture has been closely related to meeting the basic needs of Dong members. In traditional Dong society, songs serve not only as a means of passing leisure time and entertainment but also as tools for recording history, expressing emotions, imparting moral education, and facilitating social interactions. Songs have become an inseparable part of Dong culture, touching upon various aspects of life. However, with social changes, the needs fulfilled by traditional singing have shifted, and new development directions have emerged. For instance, with the advancement of market economy, the rise of tourism in Dong areas has made Dong Grand Song an important cultural resource for development, transforming it into a means of showcasing culture and economic benefits.

Simultaneously, as an important cultural heritage, the transmission of the Dong Grand Song satisfies deep-seated human needs for aesthetics, social belonging, and cultural identity. This musical form is not merely artistic expression but also a key factor in community cohesion, strengthening social connections and individual social identities through ceremonies and gatherings. In the context of increasing modernization pressures, maintaining this tradition is not only a sign of respect for the past but also a means of fulfilling the spiritual life needs of modern Dong people. Therefore, how to inherit and promote local culture in a new community environment, demonstrate its modern value, and utilize community resources to develop folk art for opening up future paths for individuals are new challenges that require continuous attention and exploration.

2.2 Cultural Inheritance and Cultural Choices

Cultures formed in specific periods and environments evolve with social development. Some cultures may become obstacles and be eliminated, while cultures beneficial to human development need to be protected and inherited. Humans, in creating culture, are also making choices, inheriting the superior culture and rejecting

the inferior ones. This process of cultural selection is the process of educational selection of culture, adapting to social development and nurturing talents, embodying the purpose of education. Cultural choices in education include absorption, processing and rejection in three ways to promote the renewal, creation, and development of culture, adapting to social needs. This selection is the creative manifestation of education, driving the continuous development of culture.

The inheritance method of the Dong ethnic group's Grand Song demonstrates the importance of cultural diversity and adaptability. Under the influence of globalization and modernization, Dong communities face diverse cultural choices, reflecting dynamic adaptation to educational and cultural inheritance methods. For example, the traditional apprentice system emphasizes the transmission of skills and knowledge between individuals, while the drum tower songs rely more on collective participation and community interaction, enhancing community cohesion and cultural identity.

The inheritance methods of artistic performances and school education represent a more systematic and structured way of inheritance, combining traditional knowledge with modern educational concepts to adapt to broader social needs and educational goals. These different inheritance methods interact, continually optimizing and adjusting the balance between traditional and modern, forming a dynamic cultural selection mechanism.

In this cultural selection process, the improvement of traditional knowledge systems complements the construction of new cultural knowledge systems. The inheritance of the Dong Grand Song is not just a retrospective of the past but also a prelude to the future. By absorbing and integrating new educational ideas and cultural elements, it continuously reconstructs and develops to ensure its survival and development in modern society. Vigorous vitality.

2.3 Cultural Inheritance and Educational Choices

Firstly, the constant change of culture is a common feature of all forms of culture, whether it is the culture of primitive societies or modern culture, they all undergo changes in different aspects, degrees, and forms. As Lin pointed out, "all cultures, even the simplest ones, are in a state of constant change" (Zheng Jinzhou, Education and Culture Studies. Beijing: People's Education Press, 2000, p. 164). As a

part of traditional culture, the Dong ethnic group's grand songs have been passed down through the original mode of inheritance, but they have also been continuously adjusted and adapted to the social development throughout history. The mode of inheritance has gradually evolved from oral transmission to the use of Chinese characters to record the Dong language, which demonstrates the profound influence of Chinese culture on its development and also reflects the effective improvements made in response to the shortcomings of oral transmission. For example, the song "Gashao" in the Dong ethnic group is adapted from tunes borrowed from elsewhere and has been processed and improved by generations of singing masters, continuing to this day. This indicates that the content of inheritance has undergone multiple changes and developments, evolving continuously from ancient times to the present. Overall, the cultural choice of the Gonglou drum tower in the master-apprentice inheritance mode has preserved the core of Dong ethnic traditional culture, while also adapting and changing with the adjustments and developments of the new social practices, maintaining the main characteristics of cultural inheritance.

Secondly, the cultural choice of the art performance inheritance mode mainly focuses on the grand song inheritance methods and content that are easy for external groups to accept and understand, fully showcasing the essence and value of Dong ethnic culture. This inheritance mode is designed to promote cultural recognition, cultural identity, and cultural self-awareness, among other multicultural adaptation values, and it serves an educational function as well. As an emerging form, the grand song art performance inheritance mode is a product of the Sanjiang County government's tourism development strategy, showcasing the unique ethnic cultural content of the local area through the performance of various Dong songs. This inheritance mode chooses to convey ethnic cultural information through performances to meet the aesthetic and entertainment needs of tourists. Most of the repertoire consists of melodious and beautiful "gama" songs, such as "The Song of the Cicada" and "Bright Moon in the Sky," which are popular and often a must-have for performances. Sometimes, in order to cater to the tastes of the audience, the Dong people will make adjustments to the repertoire, such as increasing the speed and rhythm, adjusting the vocal parts, and adding dance movements to enhance the audio-visual effects and adapt to the aesthetic and lifestyle needs of contemporary society.

The art performance inheritance mode meets the needs of cultural development while making necessary adjustments and improvements to traditional culture, aiming to improve the culture it serves and cultivate individuals who can adapt to social development.

Thirdly, in the exploration of the cultural inheritance of the Dong ethnic group's grand songs, the perspective of educational choices is particularly important because it directly affects how traditional culture is accepted, understood, and carried forward by the younger generation. The education mechanism plays a core role in cultural inheritance, determining how cultural knowledge is disseminated and transformed. The cultural choice of the school education inheritance mode mainly focuses on the modern educational talent cultivation model to adapt to the current trends in education development. The introduction of the Dong ethnic group's grand songs into the school curriculum means the revitalization of the culture and its reshaping and processing through the school education system to conform to the goals and standards of school education, forming a modern inheritance mode. In the classroom environment independent of local life, the grand songs rely on the operation of modern educational structures and apply modern teaching methods while serving the educational function of cultivating talents needed in modern society, fulfilling new educational missions.

The school education inheritance process is essentially a process of cultural recreation, which is evident in the length, type, and nature of the grand song repertoire. It is mainly reflected in three aspects: the length of the repertoire, the types of songs, and the content of the songs. (1) Length of repertoire: The grand songs taught in schools are usually short and concise, with most of them limited to three sections or less. Longer songs are reasonably shortened to fit the standard specifications that children can grasp. This choice takes into account the memorization characteristics of Dong children as students and the nature of the school education system. Due to the different memorization abilities of children of different ages and the limited teaching time in schools, the inheritance of grand songs in the campus cannot be as casual as that of folk singing masters, nor can it involve learning longer grand songs like the traditional way. (2) Types of songs: The grand songs inherited on campus can be divided into two types: traditional and new, with roughly

equal proportions. Traditional songs are grand songs unique to the Dong ethnic region that have been passed down for generations, representing the local unique melodies and cultural inheritance, such as "The Song of Interception," "The Mountain on the Other Side," and "The Song of the Cicada." The new songs include popular songs composed by Dong ethnic composers or educational songs, such as "The Song of Millet," "Building Fish Ponds," and "Visiting Grandma," which are children's songs newly composed by Dong ethnic composers. These songs mostly come from the books "Growing Up to Be a Good Singer" and "School-based Music Teaching Materials." They have a relatively simple and easy-to-learn musical structure and are full of childlike interest. (3) Content of songs: Most of the grand songs inherited on campus have positive and educational themes. Therefore, when selecting songs, school education avoids the romantic content in traditional songs and chooses songs that are full of childlike innocence, praising natural landscapes, and promoting social and family ethics and etiquette, in line with the educational standards of students. Some songs are adapted from the traditional repertoire, such as "The Universal Ninth Song" and "The Policies of the Party Are Really Good," which promote the importance and responsibility of nine-year compulsory education through the addition of new lyrics, achieving the goal of conveying national policies. The grand song repertoire inherited on campus makes educational choices based on the era and educational needs, aiming to promote the modernization of cultural inheritance, cultivate qualified talents, and promote the improvement of the education system.

Education plays a central role in the inheritance of the Dong ethnic group's grand songs. Through the integration of the education system, the teaching of Dong ethnic grand songs is not limited to traditional forms but also extends to school education, community workshops, and even online platforms. This diversification of education ensures the wide-ranging and inclusive cultural inheritance, allowing more people from non-Dong backgrounds to understand and appreciate this art form. At the same time, the modernization of educational choices helps the younger generation better understand their cultural heritage, thereby stimulating their enthusiasm for inheritance and innovation.

3. Suggestions

3.1 Integration of Elements Promotes the Inheritance of Ethnic Culture

In the process of cultural inheritance, "integration of elements" is a crucial part. According to cultural scholars, cultural integration is closely related to cultural change. When a culture undergoes changes in form and content due to external shocks or internal reforms, its different components often show inconsistencies: some elements change while others remain outdated. Therefore, after cultural changes, adapting and integrating these diverse cultural elements and components according to societal acceptance is key to cultural development. Cultural integration refers to the process of achieving logical and aesthetic harmony between different cultural elements and forms, as well as establishing functional interdependencies among cultural norms, symbols, behaviors, and even different cultural institutions and customs.

Viewing culture as a system and facilitating coordination among its components helps to better adapt to future developments. As an indispensable part of cultural integration, cultural inheritance requires effective consolidation among fundamental elements to ensure frictionless fusion and adaptation of various components, cultural genes, and developmental directions. However, the elements of ethnic cultural inheritance in a modern context—combining traditional and modern elements—have not yet formed a time-tested, coordinated, and unified cultural operating mechanism. Only through comprehensive integration and adaptation, and by building an effective cultural inheritance operating mechanism, can the stability, integrity, and regenerativity of culture be ensured during the inheritance process. This element integration can be achieved through spontaneous integration as well as enforced integration, where the former provides the foundation for integration and the latter reinforces it.

Spontaneous integration plays a central role in the inheritance of ethnic culture, based on the cooperation and mutual assistance among cultural scholars, cultural owners, and the general public. This integration occurs naturally in everyday life through the permeation and identification at the level of consciousness, balancing various elements of cultural inheritance with an inherent dynamism. Cultural scholars, with their profound humanistic concern for ethnic culture and an objective, rational

perspective from historical viewpoints, often influence national and governmental decision-making with their theories and strategies, serving as theoretical guides in the process of spontaneous integration. Cultural owners, as creators, bearers, and developers of ethnic culture, have a historical responsibility for its future development. In modern society, they should actively participate in the practices of cultural inheritance, fostering national consciousness and a sense of identity, and promoting the continuous development of culture. The general public, despite different cultural environments and levels of awareness, plays a crucial role in the protection and inheritance of ethnic culture. Their broad participation helps to affirm and support the humanistic value of various ethnic cultural traditions, fostering a social atmosphere conducive to the preservation of cultural heritage and acting as active supporters in the process of spontaneous integration. Cultural scholars, cultural owners, and the general public not only play unique roles in the integration of cultural inheritance elements but also need to cooperate and collaborate with each other. Through such cooperation, the intrinsic mechanisms of spontaneous integration can be formed and developed, effectively promoting the continuous inheritance of ethnic culture.

Mandatory integration is implemented through national laws and policies to effectively control and integrate cultural inheritance. This form of integration relies on relevant regulations, policies, and financial arrangements issued by the state, and requires strict implementation and coordinated planning by government departments at all levels. Building on the foundation of spontaneous integration, mandatory integration provides strong institutional support for cultural inheritance, thereby promoting the deep integration of ethnic cultural inheritance elements.

China started relatively late in the legislation for the protection of cultural heritage. The "Law of the People's Republic of China on Intangible Cultural Heritage," enacted to inherit and promote the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation and strengthen the protection and preservation of intangible cultural heritage, has been in effect since June 2011. The legalization and standardization of cultural protection have significantly promoted the inheritance and preservation of traditional culture and crafts. These experiences provide important insights for our

country in mandatory integration, showing that legal measures can effectively promote the sustainability and development of cultural inheritance.

In the context of modernization, the elements of ethnic cultural inheritance have not yet been fully integrated and stabilized. Therefore, reliance on mandatory legislative measures becomes particularly important. The integration of cultural heritage is not a short-term task, nor can it rely solely on temporary measures or phased plans. It is a long-term and complex systemic project that needs to be continuously carried out and passed down through generations. To effectively implement this project, establishing and improving relevant laws and regulations is crucial to ensure that cultural heritage activities have legal and regulatory frameworks to follow, thereby providing strong institutional support for the integration of elements of ethnic cultural heritage.

Ethnic cultural inheritance is a dynamic historical process that possesses inherent stability but also continuously evolves with changes in the macro environment, constantly generating new elements of cultural inheritance that adapt to individual survival needs and societal progress. These elements are not merely a simple accumulation of disparate components, but require continuous adaptation, coordination, and integration through a combination of spontaneous and mandatory integration. Through this approach, the work of ethnic cultural inheritance can move from disorder to order, from lacking legal support to having comprehensive legislative backing, ultimately forming a complete and effective operational mechanism that promotes the continuous continuation and development of ethnic culture.

3.2 Organic adaptation promotes the inheritance of ethnic culture

Modernity is a concept relative to tradition. As industrialization progresses, society transitions from traditional to modern, encompassing new technologies, cultural trends, and forms of social organization, which trigger new demands and ideologies. Modernity and tradition are not in opposition but influence each other; tradition provides the foundation and impetus for modernity, while modernity challenges tradition, driving innovation and transformation within it. In the age of globalization, modernization has changed the environment for cultural inheritance, prompting new modes of transmission, such as artistic performances and educational inheritance in schools, infusing new vitality into cultural heritage.

Tradition is the accumulation of a nation's history, while modernity represents the new era's technology, culture, and social forms. Although they appear to be in opposition on the surface, they actually contain dialectical attributes of mutual integration. The complex relationship between tradition and modernity allows tradition to absorb modern elements and rejuvenate, and modernization is not about eliminating tradition but integrating and utilizing it. Scholar Narqinligo believes that "tradition and modernity are not directly opposed; their relationship is complex and multifaceted. Stubborn traditionalism can absorb certain aspects of modernity to gain new life. The issue is not to eliminate them, but to use them to mobilize and integrate society, achieving modernization." (Narqinligo, 2000)

The Dong ethnic group's Grand Song cultural inheritance modes include master-apprentice relationships, drum tower singing, artistic performances, and school education. The first two are traditional, while the latter two are modern. Modern modes of inheritance are built on traditional foundations, inheriting the essence while innovating to meet modern demands. Tradition is the foundation of modernity, which in turn promotes, innovates, and inherits tradition. Tradition and modernity dynamically adjust to each other, with tradition demonstrating its strength in the face of modernity, and modernity continuously developing by absorbing new elements. Ethnic groups seek balance between modernity and tradition, and the inheritance modes of the Grand Song demonstrate an organic combination of tradition and modernity.

As modernization progresses, profound social transformations are occurring globally, and these changes, as objective laws of historical development, are not influenced by individual desires. In this grand context, merely adhering to traditional ethnic cultures may gradually lead to their decline, ultimately surviving only in people's memories. Conversely, if we can transform and reconstruct traditional cultures on the basis of inheriting and promoting them, and implement strategies adapted to modernization, then ethnic cultures can not only continue to flourish but also display vibrant vitality.

Cultural adaptation involves updating, transforming, or adding cultural elements to improve the efficiency of natural resource use and technological levels in the face of environmental changes. Through the gradual reorganization and

integration of cultural elements and their structures, a new type of culture with greater viability and stability is formed. Therefore, culture is not static; it adjusts timely with changes in the social environment. Only by adapting to social development and undergoing innovation and transformation can culture continue to be inherited and developed.

To ensure the continuous inheritance of a nation's culture in modern society, at least the following three basic elements are needed:

3.2.1 Ensuring the continuous transmission of cultural heritage bearers.

It is crucial to ensure the continuous transmission of the bearers of the Dong ethnic group's Grand Song, a cultural heritage. Ethnic culture encapsulates the spiritual and material wealth created throughout a nation's history, and its inheritance depends not only on the charm of the culture itself but also on the active participation of each generation of ethnic members. Cultural transmission, through intergenerational interaction, displays a stable and continuous development pattern, ensuring the sustainability of the culture. There are mainly two types of cultural heritage bearers: one is the instructors proficient in their own ethnic culture, who not only deeply understand their people's history and culture but also play the roles of sages and capable individuals in society, being key figures in the process of cultural transmission; the other type includes learners and recipients of the culture, who directly learn and absorb the essence of the culture from the instructors. These two types of bearers interchange roles in the dynamic process of cultural transmission, ensuring the vivid inheritance of the culture. If the chain of inheritance bearers is broken, it could lead to the decline or even disappearance of the culture. Therefore, compared to the "solid-state" protection of material forms, we should emphasize the "living-state" inheritance of culture, ensuring that culture is preserved not only as a testimony of history but also continues to exist and develop as an active and vivid practice. This continuous intergenerational transmission of bearers is the core of the sustainable development of ethnic culture.

3.2.2 Promoting the sustainable development of ethnic cultural industries.

The cultural industry, by enhancing the quality of people's spiritual lives, especially the ethnic cultural industry, utilizes the rich and diverse ethnic cultural resources for market-oriented operations. Currently, the trend of commercializing

ethnic culture within the cultural industry has sparked widespread discussion, including concerns about the potential transformation of cultural traditions into sources of profit. Despite this, the cultural industry is also seen as a product of modern societal development, bringing new opportunities and challenges to traditional cultures. For example, the success of the China Northeastern Errenzhuan (Two-person Comic Show) demonstrates how the cultural industry can help traditional art forms both preserve their essence and innovate, placing equal emphasis on economic and cultural values. This phenomenon indicates that ethnic cultures, combined with market forces, not only find new spaces for survival and development but also stimulate the rejuvenation of culture. However, this also raises issues such as how to balance economic benefits with cultural heritage, which requires our ongoing exploration and resolution in the long term.

3.2.3 Incorporate ethnic cultural traditions into the school education system.

Integrating the inheritance of ethnic cultures into the school education system is a crucial step to ensure the continuous dissemination and development of culture. School education is not only a systematic venue for individual training but also a core medium for cultural transmission. Zhao Shilin, in his work "Outline on the Inheritance of Minority Cultures in Yunnan," emphasizes that schools, through systematic and organized educational models, can effectively take on the responsibility of cultural inheritance (Zhao Shilin, 2012). With societal progress, school education has become an important reflection of new cultural ideas and information. At both individual and group levels, the cultural transmission function of schools is significant, especially in minority areas, where school education plays an integrative and reinforcing role in cultural reproduction.

However, challenges in the modern education system include the marginalization of traditional ethnic cultures within the school environment. Many indigenous knowledges and values related to ethnic cultures have not received the attention they deserve, limiting the effectiveness of cultural inheritance. By drawing on successful international experiences, such as Hungary's "Kodály Music Education System" and Germany's "Orff Music Education Approach," we can see the importance of integrating ethnic musical cultures into educational content. These

educational systems emphasize rooting music education in folk music and highlighting ethnic cultural characteristics.

By introducing curriculum content with ethnic characteristics and multicultural education strategies, school education can not only cultivate students with modern knowledge but also promote the inheritance of ethnic culture. Although modern education poses certain impacts on the transmission of traditional culture, it also provides social opportunities. Through appropriate educational models and methods, the effectiveness of cultural transmission can be significantly enhanced, expanding its scope and enriching its content. In summary, integrating ethnic culture into school education is a multifaceted strategy that requires ongoing exploration and optimization to ensure that ethnic culture occupies an important position in the field of education and paves the way for future cultural inheritance.

Overall, as times evolve, people's needs and ideas continuously change, and consequently, the ethnic cultures they produce inevitably undergo corresponding changes. To ensure the effective inheritance of ethnic culture, we must adapt it to the development of the times, preserving its roots while also making necessary updates and innovations. Among the three basic elements of cultural inheritance, intergenerational transmission maintains the "roots" of ethnic culture. Even though it undergoes various adjustments and changes in the process, its fundamental characteristics remain evident. The development of the cultural industry and the integration of school education represent necessary steps to adapt to modernization, and they are important components in the modernization process of ethnic cultural inheritance. The continuous inheritance of ethnic culture requires finding an appropriate balance between tradition and modernity.

ພ້ອນ ປານ ຄີໂຕ ຂ່າວ

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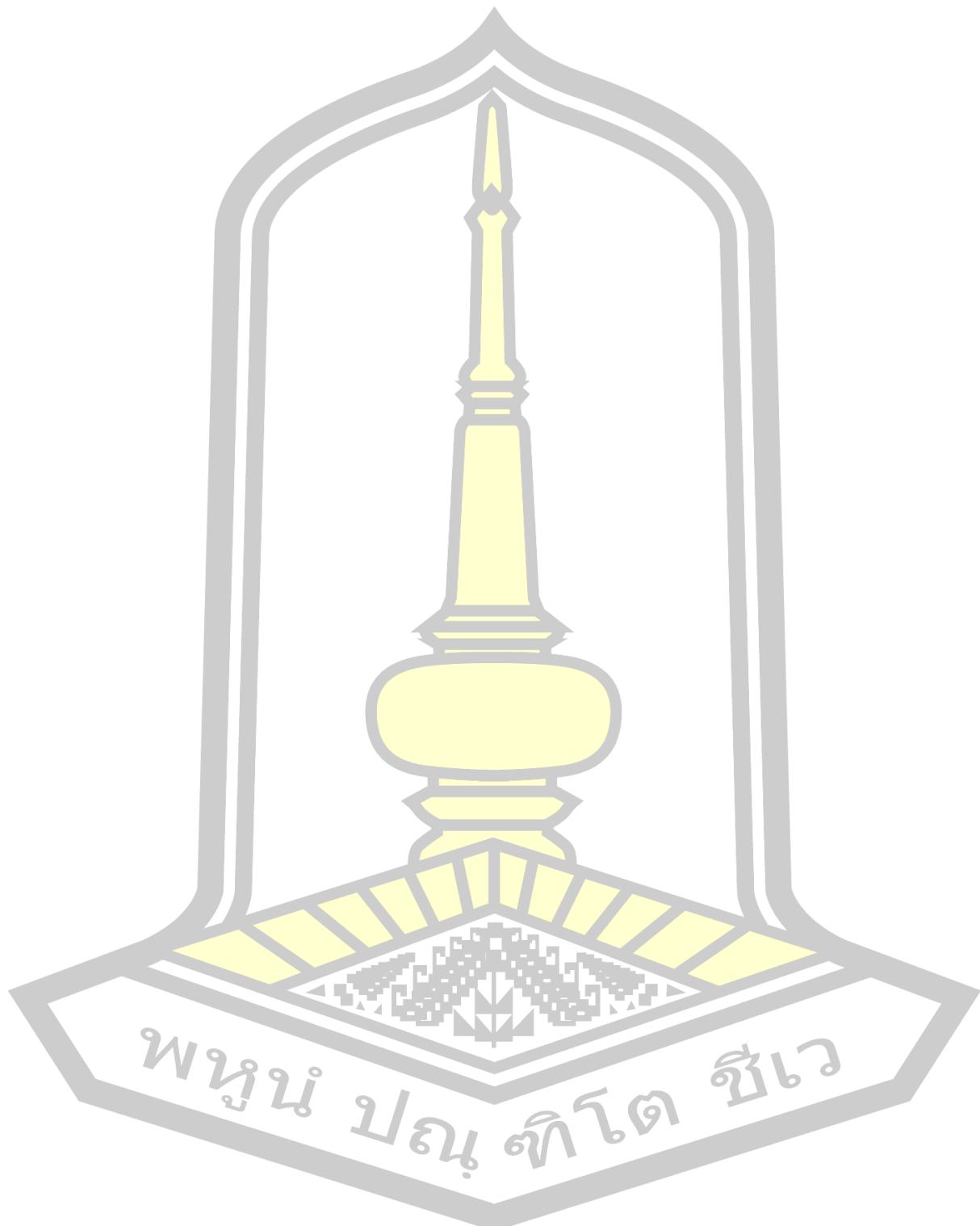
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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

List of Dong Grand Song Inheritors in Sanjiang Guangxi (as of 2022)

No.	Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Birth	Contact Address	Level
1	Wu Fumei Luan	Male	Dong	1944	Meilin Xinmin Zhongzhai	National Level
2	Tan Naihao	Female	Dong	1945	Fulu Township Gao'an Village	National Level
3	Wu Tanhua	Female	Dong	1968	Meilin Xinmin Zhongzhai	Autonomous Region Level
4	Chen Huixian	Female	Dong	1963	Fulu Central Primary School	Autonomous Region Level
5	Yang Yunxiang	Female	Dong	1966	Sanjiang County Middle School	Autonomous Region Level
6	Wu Chunyue	Female	Dong	1986	Meilin Township Xinmin Zhongzhai	Autonomous Region Level
7	Wei Qiyin	Female	Dong	1967	Fulu Township Central Primary School	City Level
8	Yang Hengbin	Male	Dong	1968	Liangkou Township Liangkou Village	City Level
9	Wu Linpeng	Male	Dong	1996	Fulu Miao Township	City Level
10	Wu Lizhong	Male	Dong	1968	Meilin Township Xinmin Village	City Level
11	Shi Yanhui	Male	Dong	1969	Meilin Township Middle School	City Level
12	Yang Nai Geng	Female	Dong	1965	Laobao Township Baiwen Village	County Level
13	Yang Nai Tusheng	Female	Dong	1966	Laobao Township Baiwen Village	County Level

No.	Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Birth	Contact Address	Level
14	Tan Dongri	Female	Dong	1974	Fulu Township Gao'an Primary School	County Level
15	Shi Chaoyun	Female	Dong	1990	Liangkou Township Liangkou Village	County Level
16	Shi Peizhuan	Female	Dong	1970	Fulu Township Cenpeng Tun	County Level
17	Wei Nai Bang	Female	Dong	1946	Fulu Township Gao'an Village	County Level
18	Wu Guizhi	Female	Dong	1977	Meilin Township Xinmin Village Zhongzhai	County Level
19	Shi Peiqiu Niang	Female	Dong	1970	Fulu Township Gaoyan Village	County Level



APPENDIX B

**Inventory of 'Traditional Music' Intangible Cultural Heritage Projects in
Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County (as of March 2022)**

No.	Category	Project Name	Level	Batch	Award Year
1	Traditional Music	Dong Grand Song	National Level	First Batch	2006
2	Traditional Music	Sanjiang Liuqia Song	Autonomous Region Level	Sixth Batch	2016
3	Traditional Music	Dong Niutuiqin Song	Autonomous Region Level	Sixth Batch	2016
4	Traditional Music	Sanjiang Dong Pipa Song	Autonomous Region Level	Sixth Batch	2016
5	Traditional Music	Caomiao Ming Song	City Level	Third Batch	2011
6	Traditional Music	Dong River Song	City Level	Fifth Batch	2016
7	Traditional Music	Dong Flute Song	City Level	Fifth Batch	2016
8	Traditional Music	Dong Flute Art	County Level	First Batch	2008

APPENDIX C

Key Informant Questionnaire

Title:

“Dong Grand Song: Conservation, Inheritance, and Development of Cultural Heritage in Guangxi Province”

Name: Age: Gender: Occupation: Date: Location:

Role:

Questionnaire for the study of historical origins:

1. How did the Sanjiang Dong ethnic group originate?
2. Where is the core area of the transmission of the Dong Grand Song, and why did this route emerge?
3. What is the origin of the Dong Grand Song?
4. What is the process of prosperity and decline of the Dong Grand Song like?
5. Why is the Dong Grand Song sung?
6. Is there any connection between the Grand Song and education?
7. Are there any difficulties in the current teaching and inheritance of the Grand Song? What are the difficulties and why?
8. Can ceremonies or festivals related to the Dong Grand Song better assist its inheritance and development?
9. How can the development of the Dong Grand Song better promote the development of ethnic culture?
10. Can you offer some suggestions for the development of cultural tourism from the perspective of ethnic identity?

APPENDIX D
Casual Informant Questionnaire

Title:

“Dong Grand Song: Conservation, Inheritance, and Development of Cultural Heritage in Guangxi Province”

Name:

Age:

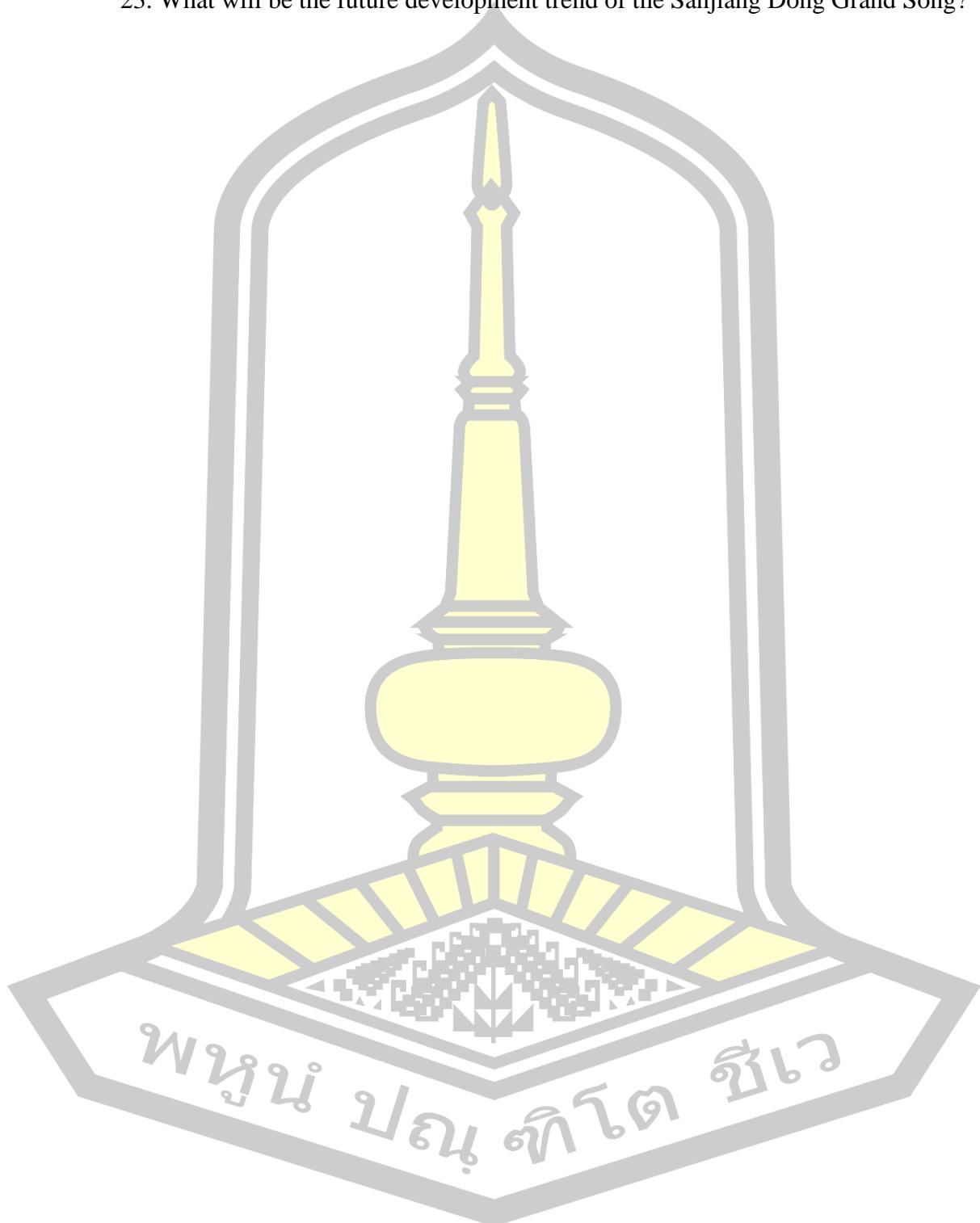
Ethnicity:

Occupation:

Date :

1. When and where did you learn the Dong Grand Song?
2. Do you know the origin of the Dong Grand Song?
3. How are the types of Dong Grand Song divided, and what are the songs in each category?
4. What is the content of the lyrics of the Dong Grand Song?
5. What is the melody of the Dong Grand Song like?
6. What is the singing method of the Dong Grand Song?
7. When is the Grand Song sung?
8. Where is the Grand Song sung?
9. If it is sung during a festival, what is the specific procedure of the festival?
10. Is it necessary to improvise lyrics while singing?
11. Are there any rules for improvising lyrics?
12. Are there any differences between the current singing of the Grand Song and the past?
13. Are there many people or students learning the Grand Song now?
14. When do people usually start learning to sing?
15. Do young people nowadays like to sing the Grand Song? Why?
16. What does it take to become an excellent performer?
17. How do you usually practice the Grand Song?
18. Do you often perform for foreign tourists?
19. Who usually organizes the performances?
20. What are the time, place, procedure, repertoire, and remuneration for hosting performances?
21. Have you had any experience of leaving your hometown to perform or compete elsewhere? How did you feel?

22. Are you willing to perform for visitors?
23. What will be the future development trend of the Sanjiang Dong Grand Song?



APPENDIX E
General Informant Questionnaire

Title: "Dong Grand Song: Conservation, Inheritance, and Development of Cultural Heritage in Guangxi Province"

Name: _____ Age: _____ Ethnicity: _____ Occupation: _____
Date: _____

No.	Questions	Answers
1	Are you familiar with the Kam Grand Choir of the Dong people?	Yes/No
2	What do you think about the current status and influence of the Kam Grand Choir in today's society?	(Open-ended response)
3	What do you see as the main challenges in the process of inheriting the Kam Grand Choir tradition?	(Open-ended response)
4	How do you think the government and society should support and promote the development and inheritance of the Kam Grand Choir?	(Open-ended response)
5	What significance do you think the inheritance of the Kam Grand Choir holds for preserving Dong cultural traditions?	(Open-ended response)
6	Have you participated in or are you familiar with activities related to the inheritance of the Kam Grand Choir?	Yes/No
7	What measures do you believe should be taken to attract the younger generation to participate in the inheritance activities of the Kam Grand Choir?	(Open-ended response)
8	What are your expectations for the future development of the Kam Grand Choir?	(Open-ended response)
9	Would you be willing to share stories or experiences you know about the Kam Grand Choir?	Yes/No
10	Are you willing to provide your contact information for further discussion on the topic of the Kam Grand Choir?	

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APPENDIX F
Interviewee, Location And Interview Date Information Table

Interviewee	Location	Interviewer	Date
Ms. Wu Meilian	Intangible Cultural Heritage Center Office	Tang Manliang	May 4, 2022
Mr. Shi Minghui	County Cultural Center	Tang Manliang	May 4, 2022
Mr. Yang Yonghe	County CPPCC Office	Tang Manliang	May 4, 2022
Mr. Wu Fumei Luan	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	May 5, 2022
Mr. Wu Pengyi	Dong Ethnic Culture Research Association	Tang Manliang	May 5, 2022
Ms. Wu Tanhua	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	May 6, 2022
Ms. Chen Huixian	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	May 6, 2022
Ms. Yang Yunxiang	Sanjiang County Middle School	Tang Manliang	May 7, 2022
Ms. Wu Chunyue	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	May 7, 2022
Ms. Wei Qiyin	Fulu Township Central Primary School	Tang Manliang	May 8, 2022
Mr. Yang Hengbin	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	May 8, 2022
Mr. Wu Linpeng	Fulu Miao Ethnic Township	Tang Manliang	May 9, 2022
Mr. Wu Lizhong	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	May 9, 2022
Mr. Shi Yanhui	Meilin Township Middle School	Tang Manliang	May 9, 2022
Mr. Wu Yanshan	Meilin Township Xinmin Middle Village	Tang Manliang	July 16, 2022
Mr. Qin Dongri	Fulu Township Gao'an Primary School	Tang Manliang	July 16, 2022
Ms. Shi Zhaoyun	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	July 16, 2022
Mr. Shi Peizhuan	Fulu Township Cen Pang Tun	Tang Manliang	July 17, 2022

Interviewee	Location	Interviewer	Date
Mr. Wei Naibang	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	July 17, 2022
Ms. Wu Hongxia	Xinmin Village Middle Village	Tang Manliang	July 18, 2022
Mr. Yang Yongfang	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	October 7, 2022
Mr. Chen Aixing	Linxi Town Guandong Village	Tang Manliang	October 7, 2022
Mr. Wu Zhongru	Fulu Township Central Primary School	Tang Manliang	October 8, 2022
Mr. Shi Fabao	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	October 8, 2022
Mr. Shi Cheng	Fulu Township Fulu Village Ge Liang Tun	Tang Manliang	October 9, 2022
Mr. Yang Jianyun	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	October 9, 2022
Mr. Yang Quenneng	Meilin Township Middle School	Tang Manliang	October 9, 2022
Ms. Wei Yunxiang	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	October 16, 2022
Mr. Wu Fuyongcheng	Meilin Township Xinmin Middle Village	Tang Manliang	October 16, 2022
Ms. Liang Tingying	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	October 16, 2022
Mr. Sun Xianzhong	Bajiang Town Guilin Village	Tang Manliang	October 17, 2022
Mr. Wu Junliang	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	October 17, 2022
Ms. Mo Cuihua	Guyi Town Fengwei Village	Tang Manliang	October 18, 2022
Mr. Yang Kaiyuan	Liangkou Township Nanzhai Village	Tang Manliang	October 17, 2022
Mr. Wu Ganglin	Meilin Township Middle School	Tang Manliang	October 9, 2022

Interviewee	Location	Interviewer	Date
Ms. Li Yunzhi	Tongle Township Guidong Village	Tang Manliang	March 23, 2023
Mr. Shi Jianguang	Liangkou Township Bai Mao Village Tanggong Tun	Tang Manliang	March 23, 2023
Ms. Long Xiuli	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	March 23, 2023
Mr. Yang Fajun	Guyi Town Daoxiang Road	Tang Manliang	March 24, 2023
Mr. Shi Fuwenan	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	March 24, 2023
Ms. Long Meiling	Yangxi Township Yangxi Village Jiuzhai Tun	Tang Manliang	March 25, 2023
Ms. Pan Naixuan	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	March 25, 2023
Mr. Long Qihui	Tongle Township Guidong Village	Tang Manliang	March 25, 2023
Mr. Hu He	County Cultural Center	Tang Manliang	March 26, 2023
Ms. Lan Yuanyuan	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	March 26, 2023
Mr. Hu Hanwen	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	March 26, 2023
Mr. Yang Pingyi	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	March 27, 2023
Mr. Yang Guoqing	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	March 27, 2023
Mr. Kuang Shuntang	Interviewee's Home	Tang Manliang	March 27, 2023

APPENDIX G
Key Informants Table

No.	Name	Gender	Position	Age
1	Wu Fu Mei Luan	Male	National Grand Song Inheritor	80
2	Wu Meilian	Female	Director of the Intangible Heritage Center	58
3	Shi Minghui	Male	Director of the Cultural Center	45
4	Yang Yonghe	Male	Director of the County Political Consultative Conference	60
5	Wu Chunyue	Female	Grand Song Inheritor	38
6	Wu Pengyi	Male	University Associate Professor	46
7	Shi Yanhui	Male	High School Teacher	55

APPENDIX H
Casual Informants Table

No.	Name	Gender	Position	Age
1	Wu Linpeng	Male	Grand Song Singer	28
2	Wu Lizhong	Male	Middle School Teacher	56
3	Yang Hengbin	Male	Elementary School Teacher	56
4	Yang Naigeng	Female	Grand Song Inheritor	59
5	Wu Hongxia	Female	Elementary School Teacher	25
6	Tan Dongri	Female	Grand Song Singer	50
7	Shi Chaoyun	Female	Kindergarten Teacher	34
8	Shi Peizhuan	Male	Grand Song Master	54
9	Wei Naibang	Female	Grand Song Inheritor	78
10	Wu Guizhi	Female	Grand Song Singer	47
11	Wu Yanshan	Male	Grand Song Singer	48
12	Wu Tanhua	Female	Grand Song Inheritor	56

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APPENDIX I
General Informants

No.	Name	Gender	Position	Age
1.	Yang Yongfang	Male	Grand Song Singer	62
2.	Chen Aixing	Male	Grand Song Singer	60
3.	Wu Zhongru	Male	Pipa Song Master	78
4.	Shi Fabao	Male	Villager	72
5.	Shi Cheng	Male	Pipa Song Singer	41
6.	Yang Jianyun	Female	Villager	54
7.	Yang Qunneng	Male	Villager	53
8.	Wu Fuyongcheng	Male	Elementary School Teacher	74
9.	Sun Xianzhong	Male	Villager	72
10.	Luo Xianzhong	Male	Pipa Song Master	52
11.	Yang Gong	Male	Villager	51
12.	Wu Junliang	Male	Pipa Song Master	48
13.	Wei Yunxiang	Female	Liu Jia Song Master	76
14.	Liang Tingying	Female	Villager	41
15.	Mo Cuihua	Female	Middle School Teacher	37
16.	Cao Meifeng	Female	Liu Jia Song Singer	40
17.	Tan Songliang	Male	Villager	45
18.	Wu Gengyao	Male	Dong Ethnic Multi-voice Inheritor	52
19.	Wu Quanjiao	Male	Villager	57
20.	Yang Yongneng	Male	Villager	79
21.	Yang Yuren	Male	Villager	70
22.	Wu Renjie	Male	Dong Ethnic Multi-voice Inheritor	49
23.	Luo Rihui	Male	Dong Ethnic River Song Inheritor	67
24.	Long Qihui	Male	Villager	65
25.	Lan Yuanyuan	Male	Villager	36
26.	Hu Hanwen	Male	Dong Ethnic Instrumental Music Inheritor	82
27.	Kuang Shuntang	Male	Dong Ethnic Multi-voice Inheritor	62
28.	Yang Pingyi	Male	Dong Flute Inheritor	67
29.	Hu He	Male	Dong Flute Inheritor	51
30.	Yang Guoqing	Male	Bull Leg Qin Song Master	55

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