



Chinese Gezi Opera Music in the Minnan Region of Fujian Province, China

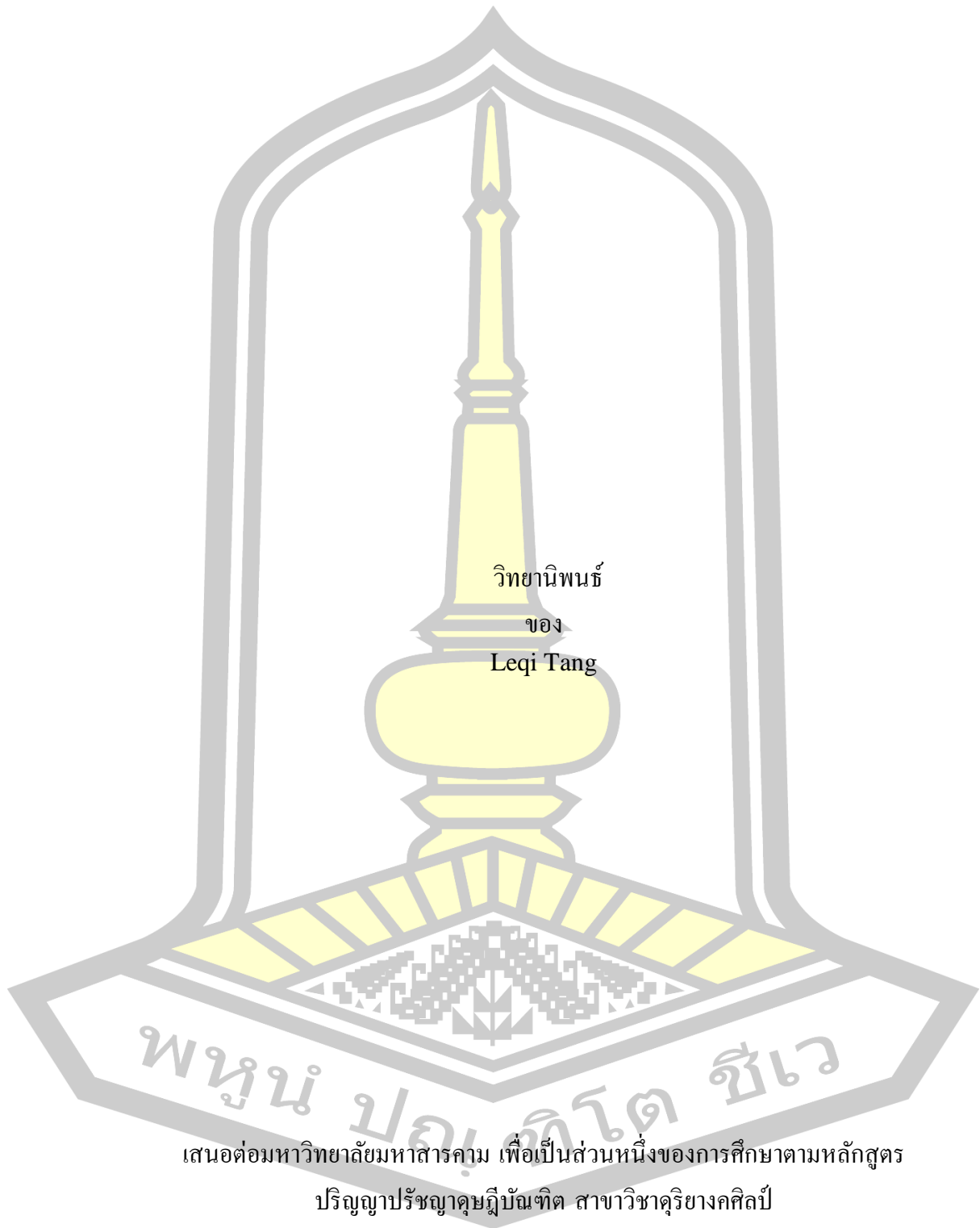
Leqi Tang

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

June 2025

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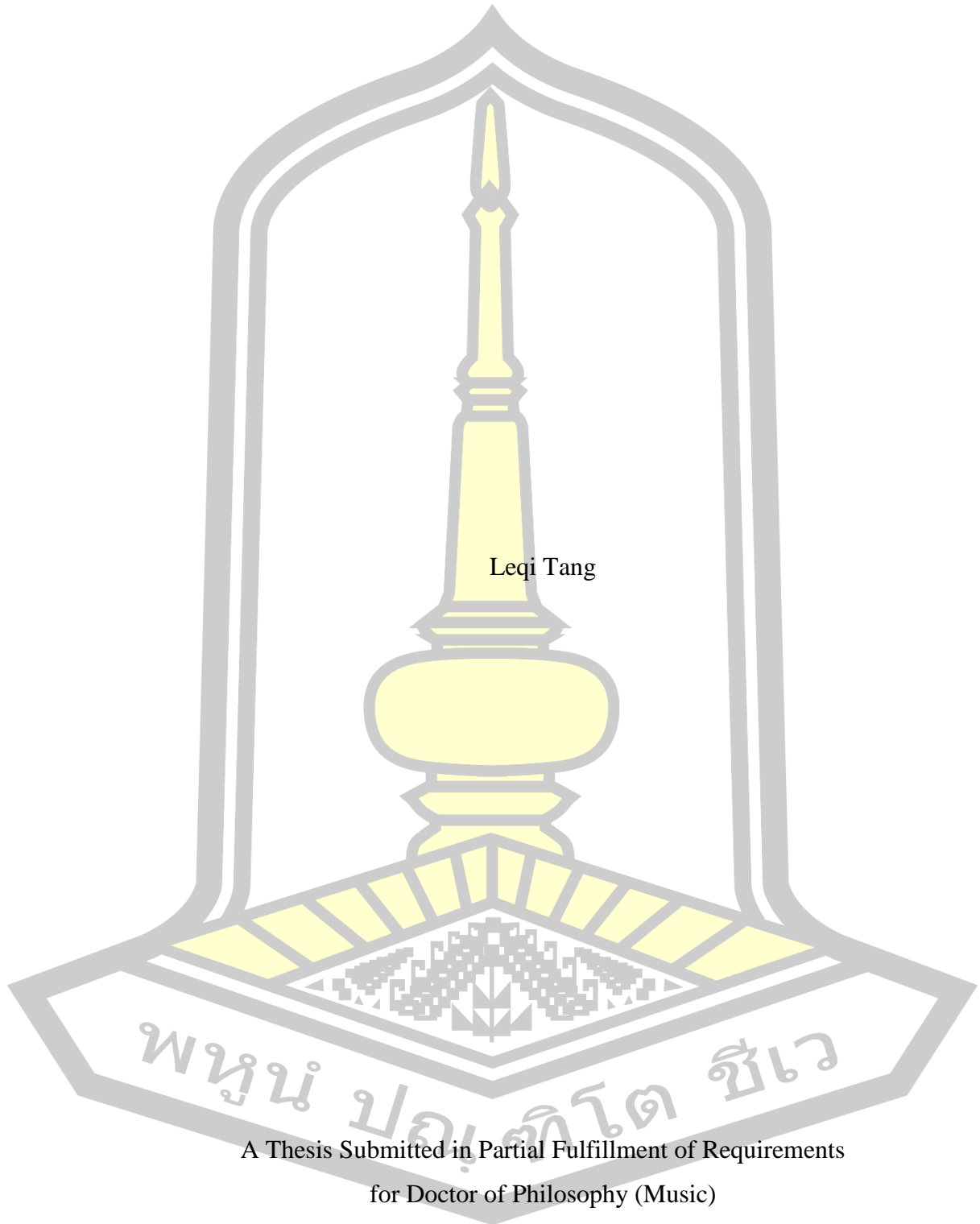


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June 2025

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the contemporary changes, musical characteristics, inheritance and protection strategies of the music of Gezi opera in southern Fujian region of China. Through a comprehensive analysis of historical documents and existing research, this paper first examines the development of Gezi Opera from tradition to modern times, with special attention to its evolution and innovation in different historical periods. Secondly, this paper analyzes the unique characteristics of the music of Gezi Opera in detail, including melody structure, musical form, tone characteristics, rhythm pattern, lyrics content and singing skills. It is found that Gezi opera not only has rich expression in music, but also shows unique cultural value in performance form and social function. Finally, this paper puts forward specific suggestions for the inheritance and protection of the music of Gezi Opera, emphasizing that the government, schools, communities and academia should work together to ensure the continuation and development of this valuable cultural heritage through various means such as policy support, education promotion and digital preservation. The research results of this paper provide a new perspective for understanding and appreciating Gezi Opera, and provide theoretical basis and practical guidance for its future inheritance and protection.

Keyword : Gezi opera, Minnan region of Fujian, Musical characteristics

พหุบัณฑิต ชีวะ

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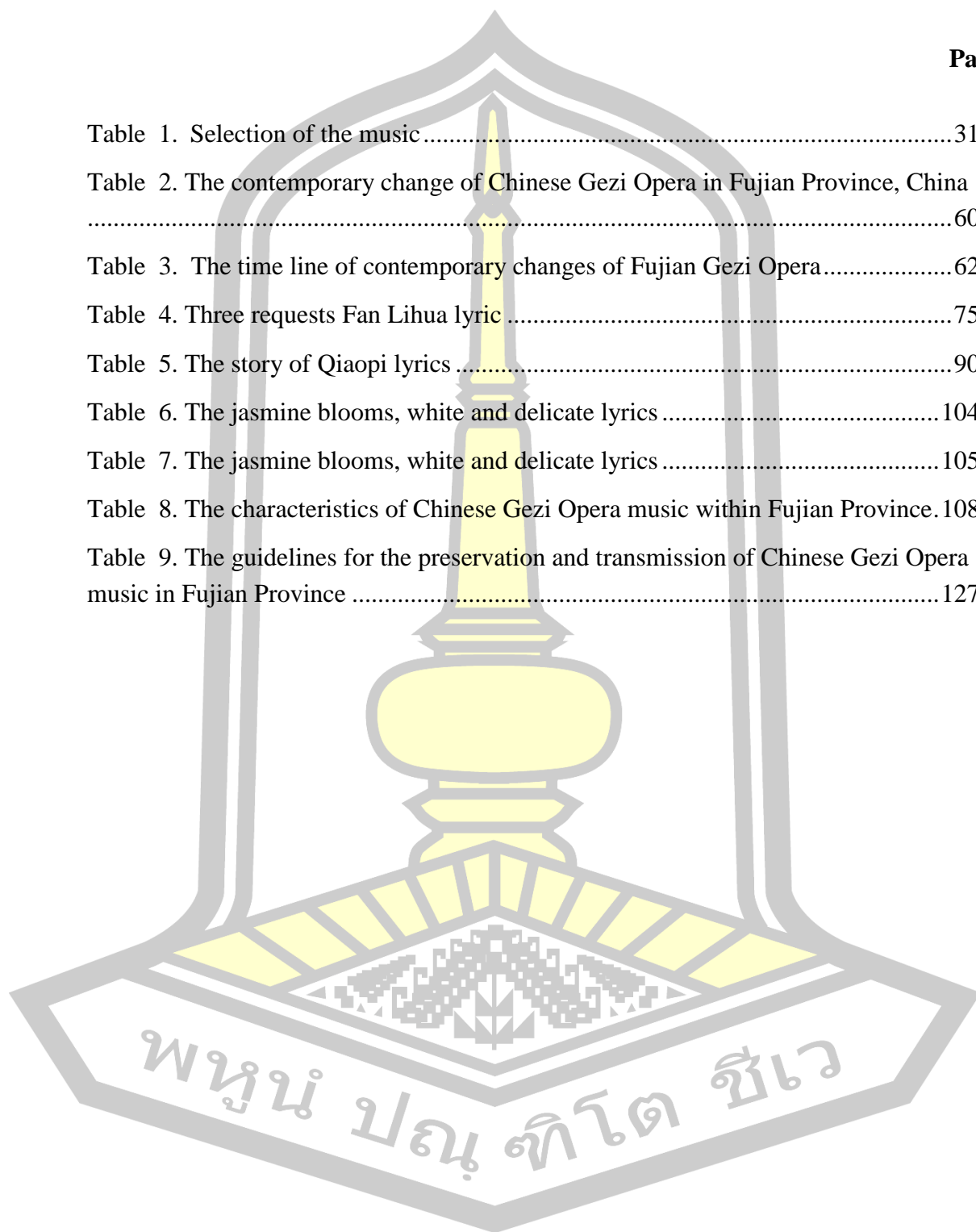
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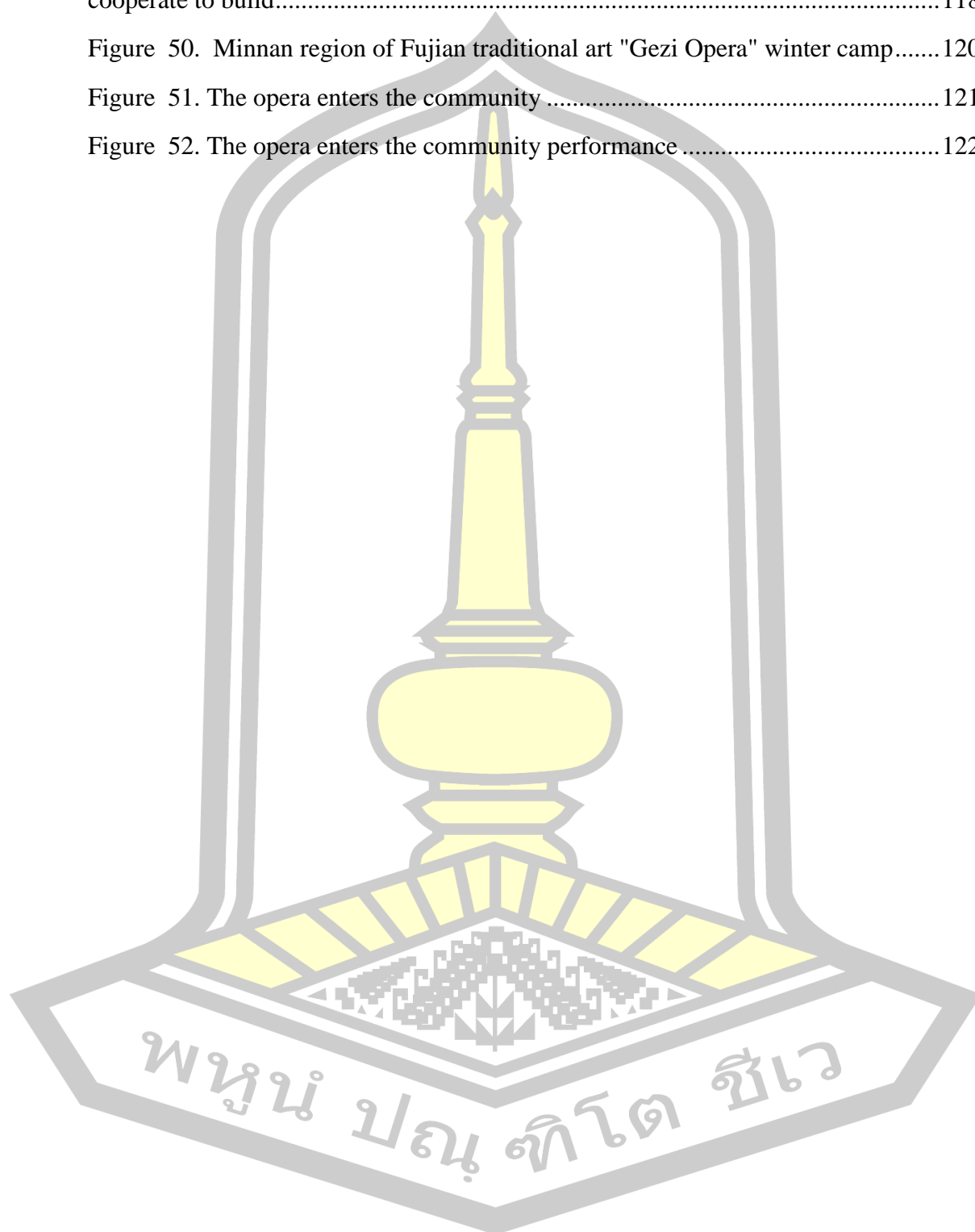
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

1. Background and problem of the research

Gezi opera, originating from Fujian, has thrived in the Minnan region of Fujian province. It is a theatrical genre nurtured by the people of the Minnan region, boasting over a century of history. With the Minnan dialect being widely used in this region, Gezi opera has become the most culturally significant theatrical form within the Minnan dialect family. Rooted in the cultural context of the Minnan region, Gezi opera vividly reflects the cultural development of this area during a specific historical period. This paper, centered on Gezi opera music, studies its similarities and diversities, exploring various aspects of Gezi opera's characteristics and investigating pathways for its inheritance and protection in contemporary contexts. This not only constitutes a study of a local theatrical genre but also exemplifies the development of national musical cultures under different social and historical backgrounds. (Chen Geng, 2003)

The cultural and artistic landscape in the Minnan region manifests both similarities and differences due to the diversity in social environments. This paper focus on Gezi opera, which combines folk songs and music from the Minnan region, collectively known as “Gezi opera tunes,” and integrates elements from other traditional art forms such as the Cheguxi and Cai Tea Song. Additionally, it absorbs influences from other traditional Chinese operas such as Peking Opera and Gaojiaxi. Gezi opera emerged in the early 20th century and was jointly developed by artists from the Minnan region. In the Zhangzhou region of Fujian, it is known as “Gezi opera.” (Chen Shixiong, 2011)

As a cultural phenomenon that grew within the cultural context of the Minnan region, Gezi opera vividly reflects the cultural development of this area during a specific historical period. This paper, centered on Gezi opera music in the Minnan region of Fujian Province, examines the similarities and diversities that have emerged over years of development. (Cai Xinxin, 2014)

Gezi opera is a traditional theatrical form that originated in the early 20th century, combining folk songs and music from the Minnan region, collectively known as “Gezi opera tunes.” It incorporates elements from other traditional art forms such as Cheguxi and Cai Tea Song, while also drawing inspiration from other theatrical arts like Peking Opera and Gaojiayi. In the Zhangzhou region of Fujian, it is known as “Gezi opera.” Existing research on Gezi opera has different focuses: scholars from Fujian emphasize studying the cultural characteristics and historical development of Gezi opera, while other scholars focus on the study of Gezi opera itself. (Yan Yongfu, 2016)

Gezi opera is a traditional theatrical form that originated in the early 20th century, combining folk songs and music from the Minnan region, collectively known as “Gezi opera tunes.” It incorporates elements from other traditional art forms such as Cheguxi and Cai Tea Song, while also drawing inspiration from other theatrical arts like Peking Opera and Gaojiayi. In the Zhangzhou region of Fujian, it is known as “Gezi opera.” Existing research on Gezi opera has different focuses: scholars from Fujian emphasize studying the cultural characteristics and historical development of Gezi opera, while other scholars focus on the study of Gezi opera itself. This paper constructs a unified framework for Gezi opera by examining two representative singing styles from the Minnan region, which help better understand the reasons for the musical unity within these regions. It studies the diverse development of Gezi opera from old to new, analyzes the characteristics of Gezi opera in the Minnan region, and proposes guidelines for the protection and promotion of Gezi opera in the Minnan region. On this basis, it explores more possibilities, further expanding the research methods of Gezi opera music and enriching the theoretical perspectives on the innovation of Gezi opera in the Minnan region.

2. Research objectives

2.1 To investigate the contemporary change of Chinese Gezi Opera in Fujian Province, China.

2.2 To analyze the characteristics of Chinese Gezi Opera music within Fujian Province, China.

2.3 To propose guidelines for the preservation and transmission of Chinese Gezi Opera music in Fujian Province, China.

3. Research Questions

3.1 What is the contemporary status and the contemporary change of Chinese Gezi Opera in Fujian Province, China.

3.2 What is the characteristics of Chinese Gezi Opera music within Fujian Province, China.

3.3 What is the guidelines for preservation and transmission of Chinese Gezi Opera music in Fujian Province, China.

4. Research Benefit

4.1 We explore the contemporary status, the contemporary change of Chinese Gezi Opera and perspective on the history and development of opera music, in this study, we have a deeper understanding of the origins of Fujian Gezi opera.

4.2 We understanding the characteristics of opera music, including a special techniques of opera music performance, instrumentation, and unique musical sound etc. In this study, the overall characteristics of Gezi operas are summarized.

4.3 We found the guidelines for preservation, promotion and spread the culture of Gezi opera, in order to better inherit the opera culture of Gezi opera.

5. Definition of terms

5.1 Gezi opera is a kind of traditional drama art form in Minnan region of Fujian Province. It tells stories and conveys emotions through singing, acting, dancing and music.

5.2 Minnan region refers to the comprehensive title of Xiamen city, Zhangzhou city and Quanzhou city in Fujian Province. Gezi Opera is a kind of drama in these three cities in Fujian province.

5.3 Gezi Opera characteristics refers to singing characteristics, performance techniques, expression of emotions etc.

5.4 The guidelines for the preservation of this art form include cultural heritage, talent cultivation, performances and exhibitions, cultural exchange, and collaboration.

5.5 The guidelines for the transmission of this art form include the use of media and online platforms, government support policies, and introducing traditional operas into schools.

6. Conceptual Framework

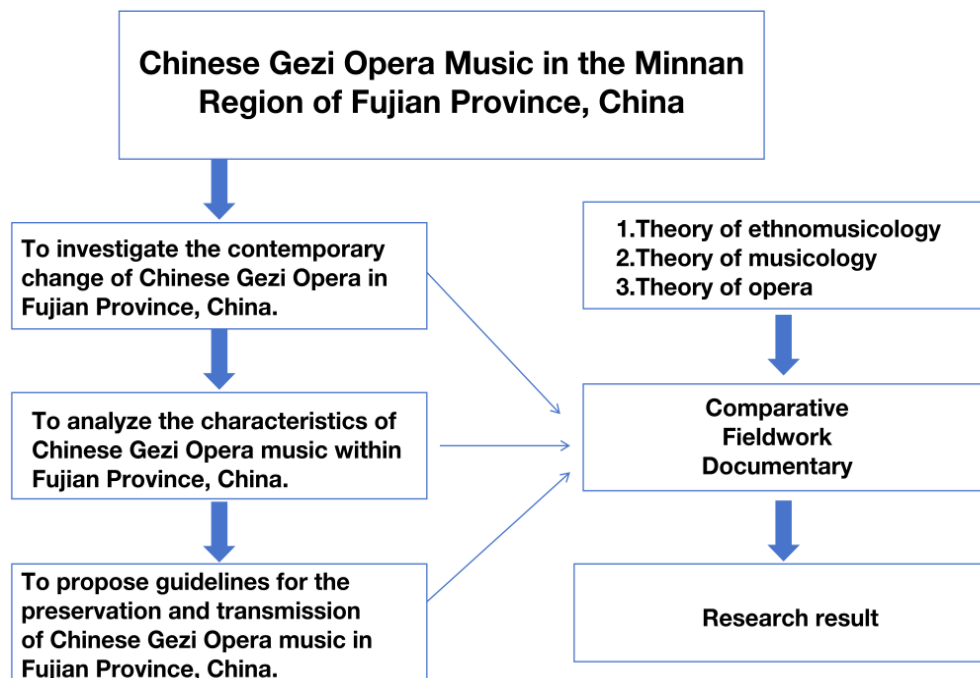


Figure 1. Conceptual Framwork

By: Leqi Tang



CHAPTER II

Literature review

In the course of the research on Gezi opera from the Minnan region, the researcher conducted a comprehensive literature review to obtain the most complete information for this paper. The review covered various topics, including:

1. The research on the formation and local development history of Gezi opera
2. The study of Gezi opera singing styles
3. Research on the reform and improvement of Gezi opera
4. A Study on the Exchange and Cooperation of Gezi Opera in Minnan region of Fujian with Other Regions
5. The theory used
6. Research related

1. The research on the formation and local development history of Gezi opera

1.1 The formation of Gezi Opera

Gezi Opera is a form of opera that originated from Taiwan's development of Gezi Opera. Gezi Opera, on the other hand, is a variant of folk arts including “Jin Ge”, “Cai Cha” and “Che Gu” that were introduced to Taiwan from the Xiangjiang region in Fujian . These various folk art forms blended together to form a type of traditional opera. This initial research conclusion regarding the origin of Gezi Opera has been widely accepted by subsequent generations.(Chen Xiaogao &Gu Manzhuan,1959)

Through a comprehensive analysis of the development overview of Yilan's local Gezi opera and its musical and dance artistic characteristics, this research serves as a starting point to explore the musical features of Yilan's local Gezi opera. Chapter One provides an overview of the development of Yilan's local Gezi opera. It introduces the embryonic stage of the opera through two dimensions: the meaning of local Gezi opera and its development stages. Chapter Two discusses the dance characteristics of Yilan's local Gezi opera, focusing on the performance of combining singing and dancing, the use of folk tunes, playful operatic performances, and the

unique body movements that exude a local and rustic charm. Chapter Three elaborates on the musical features of Yilan's local Gezi opera by analyzing the incorporation of diverse melodies and the structure of vocal performances in this art form. By combining the discourse of these three aspects, the research fully showcases the inclusive nature of Yilan's local Gezi opera, with its core being the amalgamation of Fujian and Taiwan's folk art and culture. (Zheng Yulin, 2016)

This study comprehensively analyzes the development of local gezi opera in Yilan, and explores its unique musical characteristics by taking its music and dance characteristics as the starting point. This paper summarizes the development course of Yilan local gezi opera, introduces the embryonic stage of Yilan local gezi Opera from two dimensions of connotation and development stage, and probes into the musical characteristics of Yilan local gezi opera by analyzing the integration of various melodies and the structure of vocal performance.

1.2 The local development history of Gezi opera

The developmental history of Gezi Opera in Fujian is a vivid chronicle of cultural integration and artistic innovation, which originated in the early 20th century, flourished in Fujian, and quickly became an important carrier of local culture and a beloved art form among the people. Especially in the Minnan area, Gezi Opera emerged and gradually developed its unique performance style. In its early stages, Gezi Opera was mainly focused on singing, with its content often revolving around folk stories and everyday life matters. Due to its familiar dialect and relatable subject matters, it gained immense popularity among the local residents. (Chen Zhiliang, 2012)

Starting with an exploration of the relationship between Gezi opera and folk culture, this research aims to analyze the heritage and development of Gezi opera in Fujian by examining its historical origins and development trajectory. By discussing the contemporary transformation of Gezi opera, it also seeks to contemplate the possibilities for the future development of Gezi opera and other local theatrical forms. Through an analysis of successful cases of transformation in Gezi opera, the research aims to identify strategies for the contemporary transformation of local theatrical forms. Based on multiple field surveys and literature reviews of Gezi opera in Fujian, a comprehensive analysis and summary of its historical development,

its inheritance of Fujian folk culture, and its contemporary transformation has been conducted. By combining theory with practice, the research points out the obstacles and challenges facing the current development of local theatrical forms and proposes corresponding strategies, aiming to provide inspiration for the contemporary transformation and development of traditional theater. (Zhang Mengmeng, 2019)

After thriving in Fujian, Gezi Opera continued to flourish in the region, particularly gaining widespread dissemination and warm welcome in the Minnan area. Through the collision and integration with the local culture, the Gezi Opera not only retained its original music melodies and performance style but also absorbed more artistic characteristics of local operas and folk dances. As a result, it formed a local opera genre that not only preserves traditional features but also possesses modern vitality. (Chen Geng, 2008)

The research examines the process and development of the main singing style, "Zasui Diao," in Gezi opera by focusing on three aspects: the emergence of Zasui Diao, the appearance of new Zasui Diao, and the contemporary development of new Zasui Diao. Through continuous experimentation by renowned opera artists like Shao Jianghai, a new vocal style was created using materials from Fujian Gezi opera in a relatively short period of time. Zasui Diao not only aligns with the cultural background of the Minnan region of Fujian society but also possesses excellent structural and expressive qualities in opera performance, which quickly gained acceptance from the audience. The development of "new Zasui Diao" incorporates traditional flavor while introducing new changes under the influence of contemporary professional music composition. The emergence and development of Zasui Diao could potentially provide valuable insights for musical creation in the field of opera. (Yan Yongfu, 2018)

The development of Gezi Opera in Fujian reflects a rich history of cultural integration and artistic innovation. Originating in the early 20th century, it flourished as a beloved local art form, particularly in the Minnan area, where it developed a unique style. Initially focused on singing and drawing content from folk stories and everyday life, Gezi Opera gained popularity due to its relatable themes and familiar dialect. Research on this topic explores its historical roots, contemporary transformation, and future potential. By analyzing successful cases and combining

field surveys with literature reviews, the study identifies challenges facing local theatrical forms and proposes strategies to inspire their continued development.

After thriving in Fujian, Gezi Opera continued to flourish in the region, particularly gaining widespread dissemination and popularity in the Minnan area. Through integration with local culture, it retained its original music and performance style while absorbing local artistic characteristics, forming a genre that combines tradition with modern vitality. Research on Gezi Opera's main singing style, "Zasui Diao," examines its emergence, development, and contemporary evolution. Pioneered by artists like Shao Jianghai, Zasui Diao incorporates traditional elements while introducing new changes through modern composition techniques. This study highlights its potential to provide valuable insights for future musical creation in opera.

2. The study of Gezi opera singing styles

2.1 The collection, organization, analysis, and research of musical melodies

Comparative Analysis of the Tonal Characteristics of “Qi Zi Diao” in Gezi Opera and Minnan Folk Music: Tracing the Development of Gezi Opera Singing from Minnan Folk Music to Operatic Singing. Based on the developmental patterns of Gezi Opera singing, this paper aims to summarize certain principles and approaches for creating operatic music. Through the analysis and organization of the variations and arrangements of traditional opera music, it is evident that the principle of “one melody with multiple variations” has been creatively combined with the compositional techniques of professional music. This innovative practice expands the expressive forms of music while maintaining the traditional musical elements of this theatrical genre. (Wang Yaohua,1979)

2.2 The diverse development of vocal styles

In the music structure of Gezi opera, one of its traditional musical forms is the “Qi Zi Diao” pattern, which has obtained unique artistic charm with its symmetrical and rigorous syntactic layout. The “Qi Zi Diao” pattern strictly adheres to the format of seven words per sentence. This organized rhythm and phonetic layout give the music melody a balanced and restrained characteristic, resembling a well-crafted

poem. It not only exhibits harmonious and pleasant phonetic aesthetics but also conveys implicit and profound emotional expressions. Listeners can savor the rich flavor of traditional opera through well-structured and orderly musical phrases. However, in the continuous development of Gezi opera, the new fragmented tune breaks free from the constraints of the original seven-word four-sentence norm and showcases a more lively and liberating artistic vitality. The new fragmented tune no longer adheres to fixed word counts and sentence patterns. By breaking the traditional balance and incorporating a more flexible and changeable musical structure, it presents strong tension and dramatic conflict. It retains the unique charm of the colloquial rap style in the Minnan dialect, making it more relatable to the lives of the people and resonating with the audience. At the same time, it cleverly integrates the melodic beauty of lyrical expressions, creating a musical style that balances storytelling and lyricism, passion, and delicacy. This greatly enriches the musical expression techniques of Gezi opera, injecting it with fresh vitality and artistic appeal. (Chen Xinfeng & Chen Xin, 2014)

This research explores two key aspects of Gezi Opera's musical development. First, it examines the tonal characteristics of "Qi Zi Diao" (Seven-Character Tune) in both Gezi Opera and Minnan folk music, tracing the evolution of Gezi Opera singing from its folk roots to operatic form. The study highlights how the principle of "one melody with multiple variations" has been creatively integrated with professional compositional techniques, expanding musical expressiveness while preserving traditional elements. Second, it investigates the diverse development of vocal styles in Gezi Opera, particularly the transition from the traditional "Qi Zi Diao" pattern to the more flexible and dynamic fragmented tune. While the former offers a balanced and restrained musical structure resembling a well-crafted poem, the latter breaks free from fixed patterns, introducing greater tension and dramatic impact. This evolution enriches Gezi Opera's musical techniques, blending storytelling with lyrical beauty and enhancing its artistic appeal.

3. Research on the reform and improvement of Gezi opera

3.1 The Improvement of Gezi Opera in Fujian

Gezi opera has undergone several improvements to adapt to the local cultural and artistic landscape. These reforms aimed to enhance the artistic quality and popularity of the traditional opera form. One significant reform is the incorporation of local dialects, particularly the Minnan dialect, into the performances. This change allows the opera to connect more closely with the local audience, evoking a sense of familiarity and resonance. By using the vernacular language, the opera becomes more accessible and relatable, thus attracting a wider range of spectators. Another notable improvement is the introduction of new musical compositions and arrangements. Composers have experimented with different melodic patterns, harmonies, and rhythms to create a fresh and dynamic musical experience. These adaptations not only infuse the opera with vitality but also appeal to the younger generation who may have different musical preferences. Additionally, there have been efforts to modernize the stage design and costumes. Traditional elements are now integrated with contemporary aesthetics, resulting in visually stunning productions. By embracing modern stagecraft techniques, Gezi opera can captivate audiences with visually compelling performances. Furthermore, there has been an emphasis on expanding the thematic range of Gezi opera. While maintaining its core stories and themes, adaptations of new narratives have been introduced to keep up with changing societal interests and concerns. This diversification ensures the relevance and longevity of Gezi opera as an art form. (Chen Xinfeng, 2001)

Gezi Opera has evolved through several reforms to adapt to local culture and enhance its artistic appeal. One key improvement is the incorporation of the Minnan dialect, making performances more relatable and familiar to the local audience. Additionally, new musical compositions and arrangements have been introduced to create a fresh and dynamic experience, appealing especially to younger generations. Modernized stage design and costumes, blending traditional elements with contemporary aesthetics, further captivate viewers. Lastly, expanding the thematic range to include new narratives ensures the opera remains relevant and engaging, securing its longevity as a traditional art form.

3.2 The Improvement of Gezi Opera in Taiwan

Gezi opera has undergone a series of improvements to adapt to the local culture and artistic environment. These improvements aim to enhance the artistic

quality and popularity of this traditional form of opera. One of the primary improvements is the integration of modern drama elements into Gezi operaperformances. This integration allows Gezi opera to connect with modern audiences, making the storylines more realistic and appealing to a wider range of viewers. By introducing modern characters, dialogues, and plot clues, Gezi opera has been revitalized and modernized to a certain extent. Another significant improvement is the optimization of musical accompaniment. Traditional accompanying instruments are combined with modern instruments to create a more diverse and rich musical expression. This innovation adds layers to the music of Gezi opera, attracting a broader audience. Furthermore, there have been significant changes in stage design and costumes. Modern stage aesthetics and set technology have been introduced, creating visually stunning and artistic performance scenes for Gezi opera. The design and production of costumes have also been improved, focusing more on texture and fashionable elements. Overall, Taiwan's improvements to Gezi opera have made this traditional art form more modern and in line with the times. These enhancements not only contribute to the preservation of Gezi opera's rich cultural heritage but also elevate its artistic quality and popularity. (Huang Yaohua, 2016)

The article focuses on the phenomenon of the new style in the context of Gezi opera and particularly uses the Gezi opera performance "Anping Elegy" as a typical case study. The reason for singling out the new style as a separate aspect of Gezi opera in Taiwan is that, compared to the emphasis on inheriting and promoting tradition in Minnan Gezi opera, Gezi opera in Taiwan incorporates and creates new melodies to a much greater extent. In some productions, these new melodies, especially those influenced by popular songs, can even overshadow the traditional singing style of the opera. Traditional melodies are heard less frequently, and the traditional nature of the opera's music is to some extent diluted or even deconstructed. On the other hand, "Minnan Gezi opera traditionally maintains a clear demarcation between Gezi melodies and popular music, thereby adhering more closely to the traditional structure of Gezi opera and being less receptive to new melodic creations." Therefore, the article explores this musical-cultural phenomenon from two perspectives: the historical inertia of seeking novelty and change, and the new style in the musical compositions of the Gezi opera "Anping Elegy." (Yan Yongfu, 2022)

Gezi Opera has been modernized through a series of improvements to better align with contemporary culture and audiences. These enhancements include integrating modern drama elements into performances, making storylines more realistic and appealing. The musical accompaniment has also been enriched by combining traditional instruments with modern ones, creating a more diverse and layered sound. Additionally, stage design and costumes have been upgraded with modern aesthetics and technology, focusing on visual impact and fashionable elements. These changes ensure that Gezi Opera remains culturally relevant while preserving its traditional heritage and elevating its artistic appeal.

3.3 Comparison of improvements between the two regions

The root of the reform of Gezi Opera in the Fujian region lies in changing people's mindset and improving the social status of Xiangju artists. In Taiwan, on the other hand, the protection and inheritance of Gezi Opera is achieved through script collection, organizing skill competitions among artists, and providing economic support. Although the reform methods slightly differ between the two regions, the essence is to ensure the healthy growth of Gezi Opera as a traditional opera. (Bai Yonghua, 2013)

From 1955 to the present, over the past sixty years, the research on Gezi opera in Fujian and Taiwan has accumulated rich achievements. The research on Gezi opera in Taiwan is centered around the essence of the opera, while also influenced by the trend of "localization" that goes beyond the essence, resulting in a certain dualistic nature. On the other hand, related research in Fujian is influenced by national literary and artistic policies at a macro level, demonstrating a strong sense of cultural kinship and the notion of maintaining and strengthening the traditional artistic characteristics of the opera. From this, it can be seen that the research directions of Gezi opera in both regions are diverse. Academic research on Gezi opera mutually promotes and intermingles with each other. Currently, the research has expanded to focus on micro-targets such as artists, troupes, scripts, and performance programs, delving into various aspects of Gezi opera. This indicates a trend of in-depth and specialized development in research, demonstrating the diversification of research orientations. (Yan Yongfu, 2017)

The reform of Gezi Opera in Fujian focuses on changing mindsets and improving the social status of Xiangju artists, while in Taiwan, its protection and inheritance are achieved through script collection, artist competitions, and economic support. Despite differing methods, both regions aim to ensure Gezi Opera's healthy growth. Over the past sixty years, research on Gezi Opera has accumulated rich achievements, with Taiwan's research influenced by localization trends and Fujian's research emphasizing cultural kinship and traditional artistic characteristics. This diversity in research directions has led to in-depth and specialized studies, focusing on micro-targets such as artists, troupes, scripts, and performances.

4. A Study on the Exchange and Cooperation of Gezi Opera in Minnan region of Fujian with Other Regions

4.1 Performance communication

Through frequent business communication and collaboration, mainland Gezi Opera composers Chen Bin and Jiang Songmin have had a profound and wide-ranging impact on the development of Gezi Opera music in other regions in the field of operatic music composition. With their deep musical foundations and innovative spirit, these two composers have delved into the essence of traditional Gezi Opera music while incorporating modern aesthetic demands and trends in stage art, creating a collection of influential musical works for the cross-regional operatic community. During the creative process, composers like Chen Bin and Jiang Songmin have not only preserved the original musical charm of Gezi Opera but also ingeniously integrated new musical elements and performance techniques. This approach has allowed traditional operatic music to retain its ethnic characteristics while adding a sense of contemporaneity and artistic tension. Their musical works have been well-received by both traditional audiences and the younger generation, injecting fresh vitality into Gezi Opera as an intangible cultural heritage.(Chen Shixiong, 2018)

The performance communication between Minnan region of Fujian and other regions has been significantly enhanced through the efforts of composers like Chen Bin and Jiang Songmin. Their innovative works have not only preserved the traditional essence of Gezi Opera but also introduced modern elements, making the art form more appealing to contemporary audiences.

4.2 Academic communication

Academic exchanges between Minnan region of Fujian and other regions in the field of Gezi Opera have formed a close and continuous interactive relationship since the 1990s. With the gradual opening of regional policies and the frequent organization of cultural exchange activities, scholars, artists, and research institutions from both sides have engaged in diverse collaborations and discussions on this shared cultural heritage of Gezi Opera. These exchanges have fostered a deep and fruitful exchange of knowledge, ideas, and artistic practices, contributing to the preservation and development of Gezi Opera as an important cultural art form in both Minnan region of Fujian and other regions. (Chen Xinliang, 2020)

The academic communication between Minnan region of Fujian and other regions has been instrumental in the preservation and development of Gezi Opera. Through collaborative research and exchange activities, scholars and artists have enriched the cultural and artistic practices related to Gezi Opera, ensuring its continued relevance.

4.3 Personnel training exchange

Both sides have jointly cultivated a new generation of Gezi Opera artists and educators through regular training programs, workshops, and advanced talent research and training projects, effectively promoting the professionalization and standardization of Gezi Opera music education. Close cooperation has been established between art schools in Minnan region of Fujian and other regions, with the exchange and learning of teachers and students, the sharing of educational resources, and the improvement of teaching standards. For example, universities in Minnan region of Fujian and other regions have implemented student exchange programs, allowing students to experience each other's teaching environment and training methods, deepen their understanding of different characteristics of Gezi Opera genres, broaden their horizons, and enhance their skills. Furthermore, the two sides have jointly organized various professional competitions, seminars, workshops, and invited renowned directors, playwrights, actors, and composers to provide guidance, creating platforms for young actors and newcomers to showcase their talent. Through the sharing of practical experience, the development and innovation of Gezi Opera performance art are promoted. (Zhang Zhiwu, 2019)

The personnel training exchange between Minnan region of Fujian and other regions has been crucial in nurturing the next generation of Gezi Opera artists and educators. Through collaborative training programs and educational exchanges, the professional standards of Gezi Opera education have been raised, and young talents have been provided with opportunities to develop and innovate.

5. The theory used

5.1 Chinese Traditional Music Theory

Chinese traditional music is not a traditional term but a new concept that emerged after the reform and opening-up. Today, it has been widely recognized in the music community and encompasses folk music, literati music, court music, and religious music. First and foremost, it is imbued with a strong humanistic spirit, which is not only directly reflected in literary works but also permeates other types of music. For instance, in the folk creation activities of traditional operas, the participation of grassroots intellectuals is quite significant. Whether in festivals, funerals, or celebrations, participants are usually not stratified but determined by village or clan relationships. As a result, philosophical and religious ideas such as Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism are deeply integrated into these musical forms (Li Yuehong, 2016).

In Chinese traditional music theory, the analysis of traditional musical forms is one of the most important analytical paradigms. The characteristic of Chinese traditional music research methods is the specialized study of traditional musical forms. The principle of musical characteristics is akin to musical grammar—a set of natural laws that have evolved into a cultural form through long-term musical practice and summarized as a mode of thinking by humans. These methods can conduct multi-angle, multi-level, and three-dimensional analyses of musical structures and apply them to the broader context of traditional music. Simultaneously, they can also conduct in-depth analyses of micro-musical elements, providing a comprehensive and detailed study of the structure of Chinese traditional music. This approach is essential for understanding the ontology of Fujian Gezi Opera, a form of traditional Chinese opera. It is important to note that no single analytical method is sufficient.

5.2 Musicology Theory

Music analysis, as a means of understanding the laws of musical thinking, has evolved into an interdisciplinary field that bridges music theory and musicology in this century (Zhou Qiru, 1986).

This study is based on the theories of musical performance and composition in musicology and has collected audio and video materials of Fujian Gezai Opera. Through the analysis of vocal techniques, singing styles, and song types, as well as the characteristics of musical elements in music theory, this study examines the singing methods of Gezai Opera in Fujian.

5.3 Ethnomusicology Theory

Wu Guodong noted in his research that ethnomusicology is a science dedicated to investigating and studying the musical characteristics of different nations and regions with varying social systems and levels of development to uncover various musical laws (Wu Guodong, 1997).

Ethnomusicology is a sub-discipline of musicology and is closely related to ethnology and folklore. It involves surveying and researching the musical characteristics of different ethnic groups, nations, and regions, discussing the relationships between these musical forms and geographical environments, history, and other cultural aspects, and drawing conclusions related to music. Ethnomusicology also includes compiling regional or national music studies.

5.4 Anthropological Theory

Music anthropology is a branch of anthropology that has also invigorated the development of anthropology, becoming a relatively independent and distinctive research field. In fact, to adapt to the unique objects of study, music anthropology has explored many unique theoretical and methodological approaches while drawing on the theories and methods of anthropology as a whole. Music anthropology is a special application of anthropology in the field of music research. Therefore, its basic theories and methods primarily originate from anthropological theories and methodologies. From the perspective of fundamental theory, the development of music anthropology is closely related to the development of anthropological theories, and the achievements and updates in anthropological thought are reflected in the field of music research (Yu Renhao, 1997).

Based on the basic theories of anthropology, I have conducted multiple field investigations in Fujian Province. Grounded in anthropological theory, I have gathered foundational data on customs, living environments, historical and cultural contexts, linguistic cultures, song and music, lifestyles, and diets. These data form the theoretical basis of this study.

6. Research related

6.1 Study of the artists of Gezi opera

Taking the renowned opera artist Ye Qing as an example, his personal artistic career significantly reflects the interrelationship between the development of opera, social and cultural changes, historical evolution, political environment, and educational inheritance. Growing up in a theatrical family, Ye Qing, as a shining star in Taiwan's opera industry, was deeply influenced by traditional culture from a young age. He began early exposure and learning of opera art within his family, which largely embodies the hereditary nature of folk art like opera in terms of educational inheritance. By examining Ye Qing's life trajectory and artistic achievements, we can deeply analyze the close connection and mutual influence between opera and its social and cultural context, historical background, political atmosphere, and educational system. This reveals how opera, as a theatrical form with distinct regional characteristics, continues to thrive and maintain profound social influence as it adapts to the flow of time and bridges the past and future. (Yeqing, 2005)

Using the representative figure of Su Yanrong, who embodies the inheritance and innovation of Xiamen Gezi opera in contemporary times, this study takes her multiple identities as a national first-class actress, director, and intangible cultural heritage inheritor as a clue. By employing theories from ethnomusicology, sociology, and history, as well as methods such as oral history, documentary investigation, and field research, it aims to document the inheritance and innovation of Xiamen Gezi opera under different roles Su Yanrong plays. Through a microcosmic approach, it sheds light on the paths of contemporary inheritance and innovation of Xiamen Gezi opera, providing valuable insights for its promotion and development. (Huang Liyi, 2020)

The careers of renowned opera artists Ye Qing and Su Yanrong illustrate the intricate relationship between opera development and broader social, cultural, and historical contexts. Ye Qing, a prominent figure in Taiwan's opera industry, exemplifies the hereditary nature of traditional opera, influenced by his theatrical upbringing and the evolving social, political, and educational environments. His career highlights how opera adapts and thrives over time, maintaining regional significance and social impact. Similarly, Su Yanrong, a leading figure in Xiamen Gezi opera, embodies both inheritance and innovation through her multiple roles as an actress, director, and cultural heritage inheritor. By integrating theories and methods from ethnomusicology, sociology, and history, her story provides insights into the contemporary evolution of Gezi opera, offering valuable lessons for its future promotion and development.

6.2 Study of the noumenon of Gezi opera

6.2.1 Study of script

By comparing different versions of the same opera in Gezi Opera, we can delve into the diversity and changes in this traditional form of opera in terms of script structure, song selection, singing style, backstage orchestra configuration, and performance characteristics. In terms of script structure, although the main plotline of the same opera remains consistent, different directors or writers may innovate and adapt it based on the era, changes in audience aesthetics, and personal artistic pursuits. For example, a traditional version of the script may focus more on intricate plot development and nuanced character portrayal, while a modern version may delve deeper into character psychology or incorporate contemporary theatrical elements to attract younger audiences. (Li Xunlin, 2019)

Comparing different versions of the same Gezi Opera reveals the diversity and evolution of this traditional art form in script structure, song selection, singing style, orchestra configuration, and performance characteristics. While the main plotline remains consistent, variations arise from adaptations by directors or writers, influenced by the era, audience aesthetics, and personal artistic goals. For instance, traditional scripts emphasize intricate plot development and nuanced character portrayal, whereas modern versions may explore deeper character psychology or integrate contemporary theatrical elements to appeal to younger audiences.

6.2.2 Study of "qupai"

When it comes to song selection, the musical characteristic of Gezi Xi lies in its rich melodies and flexible utilization. For the same opera, different versions may opt for different melodies to express emotions or adapt existing singing segments by adding new melodic elements to enhance expressiveness. For example, one version may choose more traditional "qi zi diao" or "za sui diao," emphasizing the classical charm of the opera. In contrast, another version may introduce more popular and colloquial "new za sui diao" to align with the auditory preferences of contemporary audiences. (Cai Shushen, 2017)

In Gezi Opera, song selection showcases its rich melodies and flexibility. Different versions of the same opera may use varying melodies to express emotions or enhance expressiveness by adding new melodic elements. Some versions opt for traditional tunes like "qi zi diao" or "za sui diao" to highlight classical charm, while others incorporate more contemporary and popular "new za sui diao" to appeal to modern audiences.

6.2.3 Study of singing

In terms of singing style, the vocal conditions, singing techniques, and different understandings of the characters by different actors can all affect the performance of the same role in the same opera. Some versions may lean towards passionate and intense interpretations, highlighting the character's personality traits. On the other hand, other versions may employ gentle and understated singing styles to showcase the rich emotional world within the character. (Chen Xinfeng, 2014)

The singing style in Gezi Opera varies based on actors' vocal abilities, techniques, and interpretations of characters. Different versions may adopt passionate, intense styles to emphasize personality traits, or gentle, understated approaches to reveal a character's emotional depth.

6.2.4 Study of band

The configuration of the backstage orchestra is also a crucial factor in influencing the overall effect of Gezi Opera. Traditional versions may strictly adhere to the original instrument combination and accompaniment patterns, such as gongs, drums, the huqin, and flutes. In contrast, innovative versions may incorporate

elements of electronic music or Western orchestral arrangements to create a more diverse sound effect. In certain scenes, they may even experiment with a cappella singing, highlighting the artistic charm of Gezi Opera's vocal performance. (Yan Yongfu, 2018)

The configuration of the backstage orchestra in Gezi Opera significantly impacts its overall effect. Traditional versions strictly adhere to original instrument combinations such as gongs, drums, huqin, and flutes. In contrast, innovative versions may incorporate electronic music or Western orchestral elements to create a more diverse sound. Some scenes might even feature a cappella singing to highlight the vocal artistry.

6.3 Study of the music of Gezi opera

6.3.1 Melodic feature

Gezi Opera integrating folk tunes from the Minnan region of Fujian region with Quanzhou puppetry and Liyuan opera, encompasses a variety of musical elements, thus forming a unique system of musical melodies. Through studying various types of melodies such as "qi zi diao," "za sui diao," "da diao," and "ku diao," one can analyze their melodic characteristics, rhythm variations, and their role in expressing emotions. (Cai Xinxin, 2020)

6.3.2 Singing technique

The singing style of Gezi Opera is rich and colorful, with strong dramatic and expressive qualities. By delving into the distinct singing characteristics of different roles (sheng, dan, jing, mo, chou), one can explore how actors utilize techniques such as breath control, tonal variations, and embellishments to shape character personalities and convey the depth of the plot. (Yan Yongfu, 2016)

6.3.3 Accompaniment art

Gezi Opera orchestras typically consist of instruments such as the erhu, yueqin, dizi, and various percussion instruments. Through studying their accompaniment patterns, improvisational characteristics, and the important role of the seamless coordination between the orchestra and actors in enhancing the atmosphere and driving the plot. (Chen Xin, 2017)

6.4.5 New music creation and innovation practice

By focusing on the personal experiences of famous artists in Gezi Opera, this study examines the interconnectedness between Gezi Opera and various elements such as social culture, history, politics, and the transmission of education ; Through comparing different versions of the same play, this study explore the structural elements of the script, the choice of songs, the singing style, and the performance traits of the backstage orchestra, among other factors. (You Suhuang, 2004)

Gezi Opera integrates diverse musical elements from Minnan region of Fujian, including folk tunes, Quanzhou puppetry, and Liyuan opera, forming a unique melodic system with variations in rhythm and emotional expression. Its singing style is rich and dramatic, with actors using techniques like breath control and tonal variations to shape characters and convey plot depth. The orchestral accompaniment, featuring instruments like erhu, yueqin, and dizi, enhances atmosphere and drives the plot through seamless coordination with actors. Additionally, the study explores new music creation and innovation practices in Gezi Opera, examining its connections to social culture, history, politics, and education, as well as variations in script structure, song choice, singing style, and orchestral performance across different versions of plays.

Summary

The existing research on Minnan Gezi opera focuses on different aspects. Some studies concentrate on historical aspects, reviewing and looking ahead at the development history of Minnan Gezi opera. Others emphasize the fundamental patterns based on the entity, offering a systematic exposition from a macro perspective. Additionally, there are analyses that examine the characteristics of Gezi opera from specific Jues, but most of these analyses tend to focus on singular or concrete aspects, lacking comprehensive results. In particular, there is a lack of systematic research on the development of features of Minnan music and the transmission pathways of Gezi opera music. This study focus on the current state of research on Gezi music in the Minnan region. It utilize methods such as literature review and theoretical analysis to explore the unity between the two. Furthermore, it investigate the development of Gezi music from the perspectives of musical characteristics and performance forms. Through field investigations, the musical features of Minnan Gezi opera summarized. Finally, a detailed study conducted on the inheritance and protection of Gezi opera.

CHAPTER III

Research Methodology

By conducting field investigations in the core areas of Gezi Opera in Fujian, with a focus on Zhangzhou, Quanzhou, Xiamen in Fujian and Yilan and Taipei in Taiwan, key contacts in the Gezi Opera community were identified and in-depth interviews were conducted with Gezi Opera inheritors, Gezi Opera troupes, and Gezi Opera research and training centers in major universities.

The structure of the study is as follows:

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

1. Research scope

1.1 Scope of content

1.1.1 By tracing the origins of Gezi Opera and studying the source of Gezi Opera in the Minnan region, this research aims to explore the diversity of Gezi Opera by examining the innovations and the performances in Fujian Gezi Opera .

1.1.2 Analyzes the characteristics of Gezi opera in Minnan region of Fujian from the aspects of melody, rhythm, singing style and song form analysis. Lastly, efforts made to protect and inherit the Minnan Gezi Opera through

talent cultivation, academic exchanges, theatrical innovation, as well as collaborations across media and film domains.

1.1.3 To purpose the guidance the preservation and transmission of Minnan Gezi Opera.

1.2 Scope of research site

Minnan region of Fujian province. The area marked orange is shown in the following figure :



Figure 2. Map of Minnan region of Fujian province

Source: Chinafolio



Figure 3. Gulangyu Island, Minnan region of Fujian province

Source: Chinafolio

1.3 Timeline of research

January 2023 to October 2024.

2. Research Process

2.1 Selection of the research site

The reasons:

2.1.1 As a theatrical art form deeply rooted in the Minnan culture, Gezi Opera has gained popularity in both Fujian and Taiwan due to its unique dialect expression. It shares a rich folk tradition and artistic commonalities in performance, such as diverse singing styles, lively movements, and locally distinctive script content. However, due to regional environments and cultural backgrounds, Fujian Gezi Opera and Taiwan Gezi Opera have gradually developed their own stylistic characteristics. The former retains more imprints of the local Fujian culture, while the latter possesses distinct Taiwanese charm. This diversity resulting from regional differences makes the study of Gezi Opera particularly representative and significant, as it can reveal the adaptation, evolution, and development patterns of the theatrical art in cross-regional exchanges.

2.1.2 The researcher of this thesis has life in Minnan region of Fujian province, accumulating rich firsthand materials through field investigations, ethnographic surveys, and in-depth interviews. A solid research foundation has been established for the historical origins of Gezi Opera, the inheritance of its schools, and its stage art, while essential scholarly information has been obtained, providing robust support for in-depth exploration of the development and changes of this theatrical genre.

2.1.3 Gezi Opera in Minnan region serves as a mirror that reflects the societal and historical transformations. Its repertoire creation, performance forms, and audience responses deeply imprint the cultural ecology and social realities of different historical periods, they comprehensively record the local people's customs, values, religious beliefs, and aesthetic orientations, becoming important material repositories for studying local development history, ethnic migration and integration history, philosophical ideas, and the evolution of artistic styles. They demonstrate immense potential and value for interdisciplinary research.

2.1.4 Although there are numerous scholars dedicated to systematic studies of Gezi Opera in Fujian, with achievements ranging from literature compilation to theoretical construction, there are relatively few comparative studies specifically focused on Gezi Opera in the two regions. Only a small group of insightful scholars, with foresight, have published a series of articles in academic journals and authored several monographs. Through in-depth analyses of the origins, artistic comparisons, and influence mechanisms of Gezi Opera in both regions, these scholars have not only filled gaps in related research fields but also established innovative theoretical frameworks for future interdisciplinary research on cross-regional theatrical cultural exchanges.

2.2 Selection of the key informants

2.1.1 Research location

Minnan region of Fujian province..

2.1.2 Key informants

The criteria for researcher to select key informants:

- 1) Inheritors of Gezi opera from Fujian, highly reputable and widely recognized within the industry.
- 2) Gezi opera troupe actors with more than ten years of stage performance experience in Gezi opera.
- 3) Head of Gezi opera troupe with over ten years of professional experience, possessing an in-depth understanding of Gezi opera repertoire.

1) Chen Zhiming

National Representative Inheritor of Gaozai Opera, First Class Actor. In 1994, won the fourth session of Fujian Province "narcissus" drama rookie (new seedlings) Grand Prix "outstanding rookie award"; In 1996, won the 20th Fujian Province Drama Festival "Actor Award"; In 1999, won the 21st Fujian Province Drama Festival "Outstanding Actor Award"; In 2001, won the 7th China Drama Festival "Outstanding Actor Award"; In 2002, won the 22nd Fujian Province Drama Festival "Actor Award"; In 2006, won the 23rd Fujian Province Drama Festival "Outstanding Actor Award"; In 2007, won the 8th Fujian Province "Narcissus" Drama Award "Performance Award Gold Award"; In 2009, won the 4th Fujian Arts Festival, 24th Fujian Drama Festival "Outstanding Performance Award"; In 2012, won the fifth

session of the Fujian Arts Festival, the 25th Fujian Provincial Drama Festival "Performance First Prize"; In 2019, he won the "Second Prize for Performance" of the 27th Fujian Provincial Drama Festival and the 7th Fujian Arts Festival.

Chen Zhiming is devoted to the performing arts, and strives to carry forward the inheritance of skills. He regularly visits units such as Xiamen Art School to cultivate new seedlings for Gezi opera, and does his best to guide the new generation of actors in the troupe. Chen Zhiming has actively participated in various cultural exchange activities, contributing significantly to the promotion of art and academic exchanges across different cultural contexts. He attended the academic workshop on "Chinese Food in a Multi-Ethnic and Cultural Perspective" hosted by Sun Yat-sen University, where he engaged with scholars from numerous domestic and international universities and research institutions to explore the relationship between food culture and social change.

In addition to academic conferences, Chen Zhiming has been involved in international events held in Mauritius, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Japan, sharing his research findings on overseas Chinese culture. He has also participated in activities organized by the China Cultural Center in Mauritius, which offers training classes in martial arts, dance, paper-cutting, and other traditional arts to foster cultural interaction and integration between China and Mauritius. Moreover, Chen Zhiming joined the "Mid-Autumn Festival Root-Seeking Journey" organized by the Meizhou Association in Indonesia, leading overseas Chinese and Chinese descendants to visit cultural heritage sites of the Hakka people, thereby enhancing their understanding and identification with their ancestral culture.

These activities not only demonstrate Chen Zhiming's profound academic achievements but also highlight his active contributions to cross-cultural exchanges and cooperation.



Figure 4. interior "Chen Zhiming"

Source: Chen Zhiming



Figure 5. Photo of the heir Chen Zhiming rehearsing with other members of the troupe

Source: Tang Leqi, from research fieldwork in July 2024

2) Su Yanrong

Su Yanrong, Xiamen Gezhi Opera Study Center, first-class actor, under the study of Gezhi opera famous Ji Zhaozhi, Xie Yuechi, Li Xiuhua, Zhang Yaying,

etc., the main work Qingyi, Huatan and Dao Ma Dan, representative of "Shao Jianghai", "Qiao Pii", "Chen Sanwuniang", etc., winner of Chinese drama Plum Blossom Award, Wenhua Performance Award, and advanced individual in grassroots volunteer service activities of Fujian Literature and Art. Su Yanrong spared no effort in inheriting the repertoire and cultivating talents. The two students Yao Qiongnan and Xu Tingting have won many awards, and now they have also played an important role in Xiamen Gezi Opera Troupe; In addition to serving as a professional teacher of singing opera in Xiamen Art School to train reserve talents, she also actively carries out work such as entering the campus. At present, it has carried out community teaching activities in Haicang Yucai Primary School, Yankui Primary School and Jimei Gaopu Primary School. Among them, students Xia Milai played "Shen Yuan Last Song" Tang Wan won the 23rd China children's "Opera Little Plum Blossom Gold Medal". Not only that, she actively participates in various kinds of intangible cultural heritage publicity and exhibition activities, holds personal Gezi opera lectures, opera fans meeting, innovates the "Gezi Opera singing ancient poetry" project integrating Hokkien, Gezi Opera and ancient poetry, and explores new media such as Internet and TV to promote Gezi Opera.



Figure 6. Actor "Su Yanrong"

Source: Su Yanrong



Figure 7. Teacher Su Yanrong is showing the water sleeve dance

Source: Tang Leqi, from research fieldwork in February 2024

3) Zhuang Hairong

Zhuang Hairong is the Party branch secretary and director of the Gezhi Opera Study Center in Xiamen, and also a national first-class actress. She graduated from the School of Art Education of Jimei University. She is good at martial arts, young women and cross-dressing students, and has a solid performance foundation. Zhuang Hairong has made great achievements in the field of song opera, starring in a number of classic plays, such as Shao Jianghai, Love of Butterflies and Qiaopi, and has won several national and provincial drama performance awards. She also actively promotes the inheritance and innovation of Gezi Opera, and is committed to bringing this traditional art form to the campus and cultivating young audiences. In addition, Zhuang Hairong, as the representative inheritor of the national intangible cultural heritage Gezi Opera project at the provincial level, promoted the inheritance and development of Gezi Opera in China through cooperative performances and cultural exchanges.



Figure 8. trouper "Zhuang Hairong"

Source: Zhuang Hairong



Figure 9. Zhuang Hairong interacted with the students when the intangible cultural heritage organized by the unit entered the campus and taught the students basic opera movements

Source:Tang Leqi, from research fieldwork in May 2024

2.3 Selection of the music

With Minnan language as the main performance language, Gezi Opera integrates folk music, rap art and opera performance forms in Minnan region of Fujian, and has distinct regional characteristics. The music of Gezi Opera is based on the pentatonic scale (Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi and Yu), with beautiful melody and smooth rhythm, and often uses decorative techniques such as drawling and trills to enhance emotional expression. The performance pays attention to the combination of singing, reading, doing and playing, and the actors vividly show the characters' emotions through delicate expressions and rich body language. The content of the repertoire is mostly based on folk stories, historical legends and modern life, reflecting the social life and cultural traditions of Minnan region of Fujian. Gezi Opera is not only an important part of Chinese opera culture, but also an important carrier of cultural inheritance and social entertainment in Minnan region of Fujian, showing the wisdom and creativity of working people.

Gezi opera can be classified in a variety of ways, some according to the subject matter of the play, some according to the regional style, this paper classified according to the form of performance, can be divided into traditional Gezi opera and modern Gezi opera. In these two performance styles, the researcher integrate the music collected from the collection and finally sort out three most representative plays, including 1 traditional Gezi opera and 2 modern Gezi opera. The details are as follows:

Table 1. Selection of the music

Category	Total songs	Selected song
Traditional Gezi opera	There are dozens of songs, and still in the process of collecting them	1
Modern Gezi opera	There are dozens of songs, and still in the process of collecting them	2

As shown in Table 1 above, the researcher has selected one traditional Gezi opera piece and two modern Gezi opera pieces as representatives. The reasons for selecting the traditional Gezi opera piece are as follows: Firstly, from the perspective of historical value, this piece is an early representative work of Gezi opera and holds significant historical importance. It reflects the developmental stage of Gezi opera in its early period and provides valuable materials for the study of the origin and evolution of Gezi opera. Secondly, from the perspective of artistic value, this piece possesses high artistic merit in terms of music, performance, and plot content. Its music is melodious and pleasant to the ear, the performance is delicate and vivid, and the plot content is rich and diverse, reflecting the historical culture and social life of the Minnan region. Lastly, from the perspective of cultural heritage, this piece serves as an important carrier of Minnan culture, carrying rich cultural connotations and historical information. Studying this piece helps to protect and inherit the intangible cultural heritage of the Minnan region and promotes the transmission and development of traditional culture. The reasons for selecting the two modern Gezi opera pieces are as follows: The reasons for selecting Piece 1 are: Firstly, this piece is highly innovative. It has made innovations and breakthroughs in music, performance, and plot content, incorporating modern music, dance, and multimedia technology, which enriches and diversifies the artistic expression of Gezi opera. Secondly, it has a significant social impact. This piece has attracted considerable attention and popularity in contemporary society. By studying this piece, we can explore the strategies for the dissemination and development of Gezi opera in modern society. Lastly, it has high artistic value. While retaining the core elements of traditional Gezi opera, this piece has made innovations and breakthroughs, and its music is melodious and pleasant to the ear, the performance is delicate and vivid, and the plot content is contemporary, reflecting the life and values of modern society. The reasons for selecting Piece 2 are: Firstly, this piece has achieved integration and innovation in artistic style and performance form by combining traditional Gezi opera with modern art forms, thus enriching and diversifying the artistic expression of Gezi opera. Secondly, it has significant cultural value. This piece not only retains the cultural connotations of traditional Gezi opera but also incorporates modern cultural elements. By studying this piece, we can explore the cultural value and innovative spirit of Gezi opera in modern society. Lastly, it has important social significance in contemporary society. This piece

reflects the life and values of modern society through the form of Gezi opera, promoting the exchange and development of social culture.

2.4 Research Tools

The research tools include observation form, interview form and questionnaire.

The process of creating a questionnaire survey (based on research objectives)

- 1) Design questions according to the research objectives.
- 2) Design observation forms, interview forms, questionnaires.
- 3) After the design is completed, hand it over to the advisor for inspection.
- 4) Make revisions according to the advisor's comments.
- 5) Modifications were made according to the specialist advice before being used in the investigation.

2.4.1 Observation

During the data collection process, researchers conducted interviews and surveys with Gezi opera performers. They used mobile phones, SLR cameras, video cameras, and voice recorders to document Gezi opera performances in Fujian. They directly observed the performance processes of 10 Gezi opera productions, recorded complete videos, and took relevant photographs, collecting first-hand data. They stored the data using SD cards, computers, and USB flash drives. By watching Gezi opera performances in Minnan region, they analyzed the respective characteristics of Gezi opera in Fujian.

2.4.2 Interview

During the process of collecting data from Minnan of Fujian, the researchers selected three types of informants as interviewees. They were: inheritors of Gezi opera from Fujian, professional Gezi opera troupe actors, professors and scholars from universities, and researchers from Gezi opera research centers.

2.4.3 Questionnaires

It is one of the tools used for field surveys. The types of Gezi opera generated in both regions are different. They can generally be categorized into seven-character tunes and miscellaneous tunes. The researchers distributed pre-prepared questionnaires in the core areas of both regions. They provided representative works for people to choose from and selected popular performances that have a wide reach and are beloved by the public. Finally, they conducted comparative analysis on these selected works to identify

similarities and differences, and summarized the characteristics of Gezi opera in Minnan regions.

2.5 Data Collecting

Including: the collection of literature, the collection of video and audio materials in the field investigation work, and the collection of interview materials of informants.

2.5.1 Literature Collection

Relevant materials for this study were retrieved from Xiamen City Library, Xiamen University Library, Minnan Normal University Library and other sources. Existing literature was thoroughly analyzed and studied.

2.5.2 Collection of Videos and Audios

Starting from January 2023, the researchers conducted multiple field surveys in various locations in Fujian. They actively participated in local artistic activities and collected 25 videos and 45 audios related to Fujian.

2.5.3 Interview Collection

The researchers conducted on-site interviews with three groups of individuals. They included three general informants, five casual informants, and two scholar informants.

2.6 Data Management

All the collected data has been classified and organized.

2.6.1 Interview Transcripts and Recordings

Interview transcripts and audio recordings were converted into written records. The original materials and audio recordings were stored separately. An analysis of the development history of Gezi opera in the Minnan region of Fujian was conducted based on these materials.

2.6.2 Musical Scores and Videos

In accordance with the research objectives, musical scores were categorized and transcribed into staff notation. Promotional materials obtained were sorted and managed systematically. An analysis of the musical characteristics of Gezi opera in the Minnan region of Fujian was carried out.

2.6.3 Literature, music, audio recordings, and academic papers are organized and stored according to their data types, Interviews with relevant people from all walks of

life, which facilitates the transmission and preservation of Gezi opera in the Minnan region of Fujian.

2.7 Data analysis

To conduct theoretical analysis and research, the researchers utilized all relevant methods to gather information. They conducted in-depth research and collected data through methods such as audio recordings, videos, and on-site interviews.

2.7.1 Comparison of two types of Minnan Gezi opera

This paper studies the development history of Gezi opera in Minnan region of Fujian Province through interviews and analysis of existing literature.

2.7.2 Analysis of characteristics of Minnan Gezi Opera

First, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with gezi performers in Minnan region of Fujian to identify the most representative repertoire in Minnan region of Fujian. Secondly, the selected songs are analyzed, descriptive methods are adopted to collect data, and the characteristics of the two regional gezi operas are summarized from six aspects of melody characteristics and instrumental accompaniment.

2.7.3 Analysis of preservation and transmission methods of Gezi opera

Through interviews with the inheritors of Gezi opera, the researchers analyzed the preservation and transmission methods of this art form.

2.8 Data presentation

In this dissertation, the researcher present on 7 chapters:

- 1) Chapter I: Introduction
- 2) Chapter II: Review Literature
- 3) Chapter III: Methods of Research
- 4) Chapter IV: The contemporary change of Chinese Gezi Opera in Fujian Province, China.
- 5) Chapter V: The characteristics of Chinese Gezi Opera music within Fujian Province, China.
- 6) Chapter VI: The guidelines for the preservation and transmission of Chinese Gezi Opera music in Fujian Province, China.
- 7) Chapter VII: Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions.

CHAPTER IV

The contemporary change of Chinese Gezi Opera in Fujian Province, China

This chapter reviews the relevant literature. The development process of Minnan Gezi Opera is described in chronological order. On the basis of literature analysis and interviews, the researchers classified the development and current situation of Gezi Opera according to the classification of time line, and combined with field investigation and observation, the five development periods and current situation of Gezi Opera were summarized and sorted out. These special periods enriched and matured the theme and content of Gezi Opera, formed a unique style and characteristics, and also laid the position of Fujian Gezi Opera in Chinese opera.

The main research and analysis in this chapter:

1. The Origin and Early Development of Gezi Opera (1890-1920s)
2. The Development of opera in Taiwan (1920-1940s)
3. Introduction and Improvement of Gezi Opera to Minnan region of Fujian (1940-1960s)
4. The Golden Age of opera development (1960-1999s)
5. Modern Changes of Gezi Opera (2000-2024s)
6. Summary

1. The Origin and Early Development of Gezi Opera (1890-1920s)

1.1 The origin of Gezi opera

As a unique form of Chinese opera, the origin of Gezi Opera is deeply rooted in the rich folk art tradition of Minnan region of Fujian. Tracing the long history, we can see that in the turbulent era of the late Ming Dynasty and the early Qing Dynasty, an art form called "Song Tsai" was born in Zhangzhou, Fujian Province, which was closely related to the brocade Song and was an indispensable part of local people's life. At the same time, there are performances like drum dance, which are not only a way of entertainment, but also an important way for people to express their emotions and transmit culture. In the new environment, singing boy encountered Taiwan native

folk songs minor, the two blend and influence each other, and finally gave birth to a new form of artistic expression - "singing boy array". In the beginning, this form was mainly composed of singing, and artists told stories and expressed feelings through beautiful singing, which attracted many listeners. Over time, the "Chorus" began to evolve and develop. In order to make the performance more lively and interesting, the artists gradually introduced role playing and simple action elements. This change not only increased the visual appeal of the performance, but also marked an important step toward a mature theatrical form. Actors began to dress up as various characters, imitating scenes in life or plots in legends, supplementing the content that singing could not fully convey with body language, making the whole performance more colorful and laying the foundation for later Gezi Opera to become a complete opera art. (Guo Shaopeng, 2024)

Gezi Opera is a folk song from the Fujian and Taiwan regions, "Gezi", combined with folk arts such as car drums and tea-picking, and absorbs the nutrients of opera arts such as Peking Opera and Gaojia Opera. Gezi Opera is also known as "Xiang Opera" in Zhangzhou, Fujian Province. The local development history of Gugezi Opera developed from two aspects: the development history in Fujian and the development history in Taiwan. Gezi Opera is one of the five major opera types in Fujian and is widely spread in Zhangzhou, Xiamen, Quanzhou, Taiwan and Southeast Asia. Gezi Opera originated in Zhangzhou and took shape in Yilan, Taiwan. It is popular in Southeast Asian countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and the Philippines. It is a local opera sung in Minnan region of Fujian. It is a valuable cultural resource in Minnan region of Fujian that is rich in local characteristics and has international influence. (Li Long, 2014)

In the historical research on Gezi Opera, Chen Xiaogao and Gu Manzhuang's "Drama Types in Fujian and Taiwan--"Xiang Opera" is the earliest. The book believes: "Xiang Opera was developed from Taiwan Gezi Opera; Gezi Opera originated from the Xiangjiang area in Zhangzhou. Various folk art forms such as Jinge, tea picking and drums spread to Taiwan, and they were mixed to form a kind of opera. "This one has The conclusion about the origin of Guan Gezi Opera was later adopted by Lu Weishang's "History of Taiwan Film and Drama". Mr. Zeng Yongyi believes that "Fujian" Xiang Opera" is "an important early work discussing the origin

and formation of Gezi Opera." In "Gezi opera" In the "Form of Gezi Opera" section of "The Development and Changes of Gezi Opera", he also adopted the results of Chen and Gu.

The origin of Gezi Opera is closely related to the folk art in Minnan region of Fujian. At the end of Ming Dynasty and the beginning of Qing Dynasty, the folk art forms such as "Song Zai" and "Song Drum" in Zhangzhou area of Fujian Province were introduced to the local area with Zheng Chenggong's recovery of Taiwan, and gradually developed into "Song Zai Zhen" by combining with Taiwan folk songs. This early form was mainly singing, and later gradually added role play and simple movements, forming the initial prototype of opera.

1.2 The Early Development of Gezi Opera

1.2.1 Singing stage

In the early stage of the development of Gezi Opera, the "singing group" was mainly presented in the form of singing, and the performance content of this period was mostly based on folk stories and daily life trivia. These stories are either old legends passed down by mouth, or ordinary deeds close to the lives of the people, through the songs of the artists told, not only reflect the social landscape at that time, but also carry people's yearning for a better life. This kind of performance usually takes place in public Spaces such as streets and alleys and village squares. There is no gorgeous stage layout, there is no complex set props, only with the enthusiasm and loud voice of the artist, it can attract many passers-by to stop and listen. The audience sat together, standing or standing, swaying gently to the melody, immersed in this simple and pure artistic enjoyment. Such scenes are not only part of the entertainment activities, but also a way of community communication and enhance the emotional connection between neighbors. (Chen Zhiming, 2013)

The reason why the singing stage of Gezi opera is loved by the local people is largely due to the charm of its music. Its melody is beautiful, the lyrics are vivid, often can touch people's hearts, cause resonance. Whether it is a cheerful tune or a sad chant, it can accurately convey the emotional world behind the song. Moreover, because the singers often improvise, each performance is full of freshness and uniqueness, so that the audience always maintains a high level of interest. In addition, it also laid a solid foundation for the later development of Gezi Opera. At

this stage, artists not only honed their singing skills, but also accumulated a wealth of performance experience. They gradually learn how to tell stories with their voices, express emotions, and interact with the audience. All these are important factors for the future Gezi opera to mature. All in all, the choral singing stage is an important milestone in the development of Gezi opera. With its unique artistic charm, it has become an indispensable part of Fujian folk culture, witnessed the life changes of people in Minnan region of Fujian, and left precious cultural heritage for the later generations. Even after the baptism of the years, those melodious melodies and moving lyrics can still evoke deep nostalgia in people's hearts and good memories of the past.(as shown in Figure 10)



Figure 10. The manuscript of the old script of Gezi opera is one of three filial piety

Source: Minnanyu

In the early days, the "singing group" was mainly composed of singing, and the content was mostly folk stories and daily trivia. This form of performance is usually performed in the streets or village squares, and is loved by the local people. Gezi Opera in the singing stage attracts the audience with its beautiful melody and vivid lyrics, and has become an important part of Fujian folk culture.

1.2.2 An early attempt to dramatize opera

In this period of change, the artists of Gezi Opera are no longer satisfied with simply relying on song to tell the story, but have bravely embarked on the road of innovation, skillfully integrating role playing and simple action elements into the performance. This shift marked a big step forward for Gezi Opera from a music-

dominated form of performance to a more complex dramatic art. Artists began to play different characters according to the development of the story. This means that each actor must have a high degree of adaptability and expressiveness, and be able to switch identities in a short period of time to play different characters and backgrounds. Through this "one thousand faces" performance, the audience can witness a variety of vivid characters jumping on the stage - whether it is a brave hero, or a gentle and graceful female; Whether it's a witty clown character, or a dignified old man. Each character seems to have a life, their joys and sorrows, joys and sorrows are delicately depicted, so that the audience has a strong sense of inclusion. (Liziying, 2019)

"Singing, reading and doing" have become the three indispensable pillars of the performance of Gezi opera. "Singing" is not only the singer's self-expression, but also an important bridge of emotional transmission. The beautiful melody, like a silk thread, binds the audience's heart tightly and fluctuates with the ups and downs of the notes. The artists use rich voice changes to properly express the complex emotions of the characters in the play, so that every singing can directly hit the heart. "Reading", that is, reciting lines, is the ultimate pursuit of language art. The actors bring the words to life with their cadence. They accurately convey the meaning behind each sentence through changes in tone, speed and length of pause. Whether it is impassioned oath, or sentimental words, have been interpreted incisively and vividly, so that the audience infatuated. "Doing" is when actors use body language, facial expressions and simple dance movements to enhance the performance. This is not only a test of physical control, but also a challenge to creativity. Through subtle gestures, eye contact, and even the posture of the entire body, the actors succeeded in creating unforgettable images. Even the most subtle actions are given a deep meaning and become one of the key factors driving the development of the plot. For example, when expressing nervous or excited emotions, an actor may increase his pace and wave his hands; When expressing sadness or meditation, they may choose to move slowly and shake their heads gently. These new performance methods not only greatly enriched the artistic connotation of Gezi Opera, but also brought unprecedented viewing experience to the audience. The beauty of music, which could only be enjoyed through hearing in the past, is now combined with wonderful visual

interpretation to form an all-round artistic feast. The audience can not only hear the beautiful singing, but also see the vivid character interaction and feel the real emotion. Each performance is like a dream journey, taking you through time and space to experience those ancient and moving stories. (as shown in Figure 11)



Figure 11. An early still from Gezi opera "Love of Butterflies"

Source:Minnanyu

In addition, with the addition of role-playing and action elements, the performance of Gezi Opera has become more three-dimensional and diversified. It is no longer limited to a fixed pattern, but can be flexibly adjusted according to different scripts and scenarios. Such flexibility enables Gezi Opera to continuously absorb new blood and develop with The Times, and also lays a solid foundation for its later development. In short, by boldly introducing role-playing and simple movements, the artists of early Gezao Opera not only created a new style of performance, but also subtly enhanced the value of the entire art. This period of history has witnessed the growth and transformation of Gezi Opera, and also proved the importance of artistic innovation for the inheritance of traditional culture.

2. The Development of opera in Taiwan (1920-1940s)

2.1. Historical background

Japan's colonial rule over Taiwan began in 1895. After 20 years of using both kindness and force to lay the foundation for the rule of hardware and software, Taiwan society entered a stage of stable development, marked by the pacification of the last armed resistance against Japan in 1915. At this time, theaters also began to become popular with the rise of cities, and the commercial mechanism of drama was developed. Against this background, the Gezi opera, which is representative of the region, entered the theater and formed the appearance it is familiar with today. As for why Gezi opera jumped from a song and dance drama in local festivals to the mainstream of modern popular drama, at this stage, Gezi opera was the product of Taiwan's folk culture absorbed and digested by the theater industry. It provided a transitional space from tradition to modernity for people who had just entered the city, thus reflecting the emotional trends of the emerging citizens in the process of colonial modernization. (Shi Wanshun, 2014)

2.2 "Old Gezi opera"---Transition to "Gezi opera"

During this period, the definition of "old Gezi opera" and "Gezi opera" was mainly based on the period before and after Gezi opera "entered the theater".

The performance form before this was called "old Gezi opera" by contemporary scholars. It was performed in the stage in front of the temple or in a temporary stage built in the open space. After "entering the theater", Gezi opera quickly changed in content, music system, performance movements and performance scale. This change actually stems from the nature of commercial dramas that the troupes must explore in many ways to cater to the audience's appetite in order to survive and make profits under the competition of theaters. From the "old Gezi opera" era when it first took on a dramatic form to the period when it entered the theater and developed a mature and stable system, this article explains the important process of the "rebirth" of Gezi opera through the organic connection between theaters, performances, and audiences. Although Gezi opera gained the opportunity to be performed in theaters in the 1910s, it also had to strive to break away from the bad reputation of "obscene opera", try diversified innovation, and win the support of the general public, and then developed a complete and stable opera system in the 1930s.

During this period, Gezi opera troupes were able to provide most of the "modern" experiences that other types of operas in theaters could provide, and it also developed a more professional and advanced performing art than the period of performing outside the theater. Since the Gezi opera, which is rooted in folk society, reflects the sentimental and self-pitying spirit of the emerging Taiwanese citizens under colonial modernization, it has become a distinctive representation of the urban culture of colonial Taiwan during this period. (Li Ming, 2013)(As shown in Figure 12)



Figure 12. Early Gezi opera theatre

Source:Minnanyu

2.3 The evolution of "locality" and "modernity" after the emergence of theaters

The popular and local nature of the Gezi opera is the nature of the genre, and it is also an advantage when competing in theaters. However, people often only focus on this, and ignore that the modern charm of the new theater is often inseparable from the experience of modernity. Just imagine that when the Gezi opera was reborn in the theater, there were also "open-stage versions" of the Gezi opera performed outside the theater at festivals and temple fairs in big cities and small towns. For the general public, the performances outside the theater are more accessible than the performances in the theater, and they can even be watched without special expenses. However, people still flock to the Gezi opera performed in the theater. It is obvious that the novel modern experience lacking in open-stage performances is one of the main reasons that attract audiences to watch.

"Modernity" is a temporal concept that "distinguishes reality from the past and its various remnants or survivals" and "in a broad sense means being modern, that is, adapting to reality and its unquestionable 'newness'". After the emergence of theaters, for colonial Taiwanese, outdoor performances were a thing of the past, and going to the theater to watch a play could mean a gorgeous adventure, with endless expectations for new experiences. From the early 1920s when Gezi opera entered the theater to 1936, the number of theaters grew from 22 to 104, an increase of nearly five times. This was a critical period for the theater to truly rise from entertainment for a limited population to "mass entertainment". It can be imagined that many audiences were entering a theater for the first time in their lives. At this time, the Gezi opera, along with the brand new and bright theater space, provided people with a novel urban life experience, while reflecting the citizens' realistic feelings of adapting to modern life. The "improvement" actions of the Gezi opera in the theater in the 1920s were carried out in a variety of ways, and the completion of its opera system was the result of constant struggle between uninterrupted aesthetic attempts and audience choices. Music scholar Xu Lisha believes that the development of the record industry in the 1920s played an important role in promoting the rich expression of Gezi opera music. According to her analysis of the singing design, "it was not until the 1930s that the continuous opera form of singing in different roles and accompaniment of civil and military scenes appeared." In other words, the Gezi opera system that we are familiar with today was completed in the 1930s. (Shi Wanshun, 2014) (As shown in Figure 13)



Figure 13. Member of the early Gezi opera troupe

Source:Minnanyu

To sum up, at the beginning of the 20th century, Gezi opera developed rapidly in Taiwan and gradually moved toward specialization and standardization. In the 1920s, Gezi Opera took shape in Yilan, Taiwan, and began to be staged. During this period, Gezi Opera absorbed the elements of Liyuan Opera, Siping Opera, Beijing Opera and other forms of opera to enrich its own performing art. During the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, Gezi Opera was banned by the Japanese colonial authorities, but artists continued to perform by changing their names to "Taiwan New Opera" and other forms.

3. Introduction and Improvement of Gezi Opera to Minnan region of Fujian (1940-1960s)

From 1940-1960s, Gezi Opera was introduced from Taiwan to Minnan region of Fujian Province, where it experienced important improvement and development. This stage not only marked Gezi Opera's roots on the mainland, but also witnessed its gradual evolution from a folk art form to a full-fledged opera type, Xiang Opera.

3.1 Historical Background

In 1928, the artists of Taiwan's Gezi Opera introduced Gezi Opera to Minnan region of Fujian Province in order to escape the colonial oppression of Japan. During this period, Taiwan's gezi opera was relatively mature in terms of art form and performance content, and became an important part of Taiwan's folk culture. However, the Japanese colonial authorities' strict control over Gezi Opera forced many artists to leave Taiwan in search of new development space. Minnan region of Fujian Province, as one of the birthplaces of Taiwan opera, has naturally become an important choice for these artists. After the artists from Taiwan came to Minnan region of Fujian, they quickly introduced this art form to the local area. They performed in villages and towns in Zhangzhou, Xiamen and other places, attracting large audiences. These artists not only brought the performance form of Gezi Opera, but also brought the unique charm of Taiwan folk culture. There is a profound cultural heritage in Minnan region of Fujian, and the local art forms such as Jinge and Gaojia opera provide a good cultural soil for the spread of Gezi Opera. The language, folk customs and religious activities of Minnan region of Fujian are highly compatible with the

performance content of Gezi Opera, which makes Gezi Opera quickly take root in Minnan region of Fujian. (Yan Yongfu, 2018)

3.2 The integration with the local art of Minnan region of Fujian

The Gezi opera in Fujian absorbed local folk songs and formed a new style, which has changed in the tonality and singing style. The first place where Gezi opera spread in Fujian was Xiamen, a commercial port, followed by the neighboring Zhangzhou and Quanzhou. After the July 7 Incident in 1937, Japan launched a full-scale war of aggression against China. In Minnan region of Fujian, the Kuomintang authorities believed that the Gezi opera came from Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule, and that the tunes of the opera were mostly sad and sorrowful and could not inspire morale. Therefore, they regarded it as a "national destruction tune" and banned artists from singing the opera. The Gezi opera suffered a devastating disaster all of a sudden. At first, the artists tried every means to please and curry favor with those who came to ban the opera in order to obtain temporary preservation, which greatly increased the expenses of the troupe, and the artists were miserable. In such a difficult situation, in order to survive, artists such as Shao Jianghai began to think, the authorities banned the "national destruction tune", can we use other tunes? At first, they chose the Peking Opera tune to set the tune for the Gezi opera. The Peking Opera tune is in Mandarin, but the actors' narration is in Minnan dialect, which seems "unsmooth" and "uncomfortable", and the audience not buy it. Later, Gaojia opera was used instead, [Jiangshui] was selected from the play "Baihutang", and "Genggu Diao" was adopted from folk songs. Popular tunes such as "Poor Qiuxiang" and "Mao Maoyu" were added to the singing style. The Taiwanese tune "Yuemengtai" which was rarely used at that time and the Taiwanese tunes "Xiangqi", "Qi Shi Diao" and "Tanbiezi" which had not yet been introduced to the mainland were used for singing. After trying Chaozhou opera, Nanci, popular songs at that time, and northern folk songs, they all felt that they were not suitable, and finally turned their attention to Jin Ge (Ge Zi).

3.3 The emergence of Za Sui Diao

The most remarkable result of the combination of Gezi Opera and the local art of Minnan region of Fujian is the formation of "miscellaneous melody". This new singing style combines the traditional melody of Taiwan Gezi Opera with the musical

elements of Minnan folk song, forming a unique musical style. For example, the combination of "seven-character tune" in Gezi Opera and the melody of Minnan Jin song has produced a richer and more varied musical effect. The 1940s was the period of brewing of Za Sui Diao. In 1947, Shao Jianghai tried to use Jin Ge Za Nian Diao in "Xue Pinggui", but the performance was not ideal because the speed was too slow. By comparing Jin Ge Za Nian Diao with Taiwan Za Nian Diao, he took "four-sentence couplet" as the main body, that is, seven words for one sentence, four sentences for one paragraph, and created the folk song structure form "seven-word four-sentence couplet" with beginning, development, transition and conclusion. From then on, the prototype of Za Sui Diao appeared. (As shown in Figure 14-15)



Figure 14. A poster for the Gezi opera

Source: Minnanyu



Figure 15. Gezi Theater tickets

Source: Minnanyu

3.4 Officially named “xiang” Opera

During the 1940s and 1950s, Gezi Opera was gradually officially named Xiang Opera in Minnan region of Fujian. This name not only marks the formal roots of Gezi Opera in Minnan region of Fujian, but also reflects its unique status as a local opera. In the process of spreading in Minnan region of Fujian, Gezi Opera gradually formed its unique artistic style and performance form. In order to distinguish it from Taiwan's Gezi Opera, and to reflect its local characteristics in Minnan region of Fujian, Gezi Opera is officially named Xiang Opera. The name has been recognized by the local government and all sectors of society. Xiang Opera has developed a unique style in music, performance and repertoire content. Musically, Xiang Opera retains the traditional melodies of Gezi Opera, while incorporating elements of Hokkien folk songs to form new tunes such as "chop suey". At the performance stage, Xiang Opera absorbs the martial arts movements and performance routines of Gaojia Opera, enriching the stage performance. In terms of content, Xiang Opera not only retains the classic repertoire of Gezi Opera, but also creates a large number of shows reflecting the social life of Minnan region of Fujian, such as Chen Sanwuniang. (Yan Yongfu, 2018)

From 1940s to 1950s, Gezi Opera was introduced from Taiwan to Minnan region of Fujian Province, where it experienced important improvement and development. During this period, Gezi Opera combined with the native art of Minnan region of Fujian to form a unique artistic style, which was officially named Xiang Opera. The rapid spread of Gezi opera in Minnan region of Fujian makes it an important local opera form. The development of this stage not only enriched the art

form of Gezi opera, but also laid a solid foundation for its subsequent widespread dissemination and artistic innovation on both sides of the strait.

4. The Golden Age of Gezi opera development (1960-1999s)

From the 1960s to the 1999s, Gezi Opera entered its golden age. With the development of Taiwan's economy, Gezi Opera has spread widely on both sides of the strait, and a large number of classic plays and outstanding actors have emerged. At the same time, Gezi Opera has further expanded its influence through new media such as radio and television.

4.1 Historical background

The 1960s and 1999s were a period of rapid prosperity for the Gezi opera, and large-scale Gezi opera performances on the inner stage flourished for a time. Since the mid-to-late 1960s, with the recovery of Taiwan's economy, entertainment forms have diversified. In addition, with the impact of "new media" such as radio, film, and television at that time, the internal stage Gezi opera has turned to the external stage and announced its disbandment, temporarily ending the internal stage Gezi opera period. At the same time, radio Gezi opera, film Gezi opera, and television Gezi opera have emerged. Among them, film Gezi opera even stimulated the rise of "Taiwanese films". Television Gezi opera reached its peak after the establishment of the "Taiwan Television United Opera Troupe" in 1972, and a group of television Gezi opera stars such as Yang Lihua, Xu Xiunian, Ye Qing, and Tang Meiyun appeared one after another. A large number of Gezi opera actors who retreated to the outer stage gradually gained a firm foothold. From 1970 to 1980, there were still about 300 Gezi opera troupes in Taiwan. Without relying on government subsidies, they survived by absorbing elements of popular culture, even though the survival prospects of these Gezi opera troupes were not optimistic at that time, and they had to face the pressure of "showing movies or performing songs and dances instead of Gezi opera performances during the fundraising activities." (As shown in Figure 16)



Figure 16. Group photo of radio broadcasting staff during the broadcast period

Source:Minnanyu

4.2 The transformation of Gezi opera to film and television Gezi opera

With its sponge-like absorption capacity, Gezi opera has experienced many changes and constants in its development over the past 100 years, and has continuously injected new blood. From the inner stage, television, the outdoor stage, the grassroots culture of the temple, to the theater, on different stages, it has continued to have a strong vitality, which has always been closely connected with the grassroots emotions of the common people and constantly opened up new paths. In order to meet the needs of the times during this period, there appeared a large number of people, a strong cast, and carefully designed luxurious costumes and scenery to attract audiences. The large-scale Gezi opera adopted the recording and singing method to enhance the singing effect, and then gradually evolved to introduce the Gezi opera into radio broadcast in the form of recording, in order to adapt to the need for long-term broadcasting. Then, through the natural scenery and story-telling actions unique to movies, the popular film Gezi opera was formed, which made the artistic image more vivid and realistic. Finally, after experiencing the development needs of black-and-white television, color television and TV series, the Gezi opera gradually formed a TV Gezi opera with realistic characteristics. (As shown in Figure 17)



Figure 17. During the TV period, Yang Lihua and Ye Qing performed on the same stage

Source:Minnanyu

4.3 "Taipei Opera"---The Improvement of "Exquisite Gezi opera"

After the 1980s, the Gezi opera with a strong folk culture color gradually entered the vision of scholars. Many scholars, standing on the intention of protecting local resources, pushed the government to formulate policies to support "Taipei Opera" and give it the symbolic meaning of "traditional culture" and "artistic culture". "Taipei Opera" re-entered the theater in the form of "Exquisite Gezi opera". Many troupes, such as the Heluo Opera Troupe, Minghuayuan Opera Troupe, and Tang Meiyun Opera Troupe, have gradually begun to work hard on scriptwriting techniques, stage presentation, and troupe management, combining the artistic characteristics of opera with the characteristics of urban consumption to carry out industrial transformation and actively manage the relationship between opera and opera audiences. At the same time, the outer stage opera is booming, and the general trend has gradually formed a situation of co-prosperity between the inner stage opera and the outer stage opera. (Ruan Xingyi, 2019)

In the 1960s, Gezi Opera experienced a rapid prosperity, and large-scale performances were popular in the inner stage. However, since the mid and late 1960s, under the influence of Taiwan's economic recovery, diversification of entertainment

forms and new media such as radio, film and television, the domestic opera has gradually moved to the outside, and at the same time, it has given birth to new forms such as radio opera, film opera and television opera, the latter reached its peak after the establishment of the "Radio and Television United Opera Company" in 1972, and has cultivated stars such as Yang Lihua. Despite facing many challenges, such as competitive pressure in fundraising activities, the opera survives by absorbing elements of popular culture. After the 1980s, with the attention of scholars and the support of government policies, Gezi Opera began to transform into "exquisite Gezi opera", with improvements in scriptwriting techniques and stage presentation, and industrialization transformation combined with urban consumer demand, and finally formed a situation of common prosperity of both internal and external Gezi opera.(as shown in Figure 18)



Figure 18. Heluo Opera troupe still

Source:Minnanyu

5. Modern Changes of Gezi Opera (2000-2024s)

Entering the 21st century, Gezi Opera faces the multicultural impact of modern society, but it also actively adapts to the changes of The Times. On the one hand, Gezi Opera attracts young audiences through innovative performance forms and the introduction of modern stage technology; On the other hand, Gezi Opera has

played an important role in the cultural exchanges between the two sides and has become an important bond to maintain the cultural ties between the two sides.

The evolution of Gezi opera from folk art to mature opera is not only the result of the integration of Minnan region of Fujian culture and Taiwan culture, but also a valuable cultural heritage created and passed on by people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

5.1 Historical Background

Since 2000, people cultural and academic circles have conducted in-depth discussions and reflections on traditional culture. It has become a consensus to attach importance to traditional culture and call for enriching the connotation of national life, and they have focused on cultural construction. Therefore, the inheritance of traditional culture has taken a turn for the better. (As shown in Figure 19)



Figure 19. In 2006, Gezi Opera was certified as a national intangible cultural heritage by China

Source: Leqi Tang, from research fieldwork in May 2023

5.2 Innovation in music and singing

On the basis of retaining the traditional singing style such as "seven-character tune" and "miscellaneous tune", Gezi Opera introduces modern musical elements such as symphonic orchestration and electronic music. This fusion not only enhances the layered feel of the music, but also attracts a more youthful audience. For example, the

modern opera Qiaopi makes the traditional music more modern by means of symphonic orchestration. In addition to symphony orchestration, the application of electronic music has also brought unexpected effects to the opera. Electronic music, with its rich timbre changes and infinite possibilities, provides more imaginative space for the music creation of Gezi Opera. It can help create the atmosphere of different scenes, from the mysterious old world of legends to the vibrant modern urban life, can be perfectly represented through electronic music. For example, in some works dealing with future or fantasy themes, electronic music can create surreal sound effects, enhance the visual impact of the drama, and make the entire performance more engaging.(Wang Lu,2019)

The innovation of music and singing has not only changed the artistic appearance of Gezi Opera, but more importantly broadened the scope of its audience. The younger generation is often more receptive to new things, and for those who are used to pop music, the inclusion of modern musical elements in Gezi opera is undoubtedly a very attractive change. This not only helps to break down the barrier between traditional culture and modern society, but also gives more young people the opportunity to come into contact with this precious artistic heritage. At the same time, for the older generation of audiences, such innovation not make them feel strange or rejected, but can feel the atmosphere of The Times in the familiar melody, so as to resonate. Gezi Opera boldly introduces modern music elements on the basis of retaining traditional singing, and realizes the perfect combination of tradition and modernity. Whether it is symphony orchestration or the application of electronic music, it has greatly enhanced the artistic charm of Gezi Opera, making it full of vitality under the background of the new era. This innovation is not only an exploration of the art itself, but also a bridge between the past and the future, so that the ancient art form of Gezi opera can continue to be inherited, and attract more audiences of different ages to enter the theater to witness its brilliance.(As shown in Figure 20)



Figure 20. A photo of Gezi opera performance

Source:Leqi Tang, from research fieldwork in July 2023

5.3 Stage design and technology upgrade

In the stage design of modern Gezi opera, the sound and light technology, multimedia projection and other modern means are fully used to create a more visual impact stage effect. For example, in the Peony Pavilion of Song Opera, the traditional opera is perfectly combined with modern visual art through huge picture scrolls and multimedia technology. The innovation in stage design and technology application of modern gezi opera marks that this traditional art form is stepping into a new era. With the progress of science and technology and the change of the audience's aesthetic needs, the artists of Gequ Opera continue to explore how to improve the performance effect through innovative means, so that the ancient opera can glow with new vitality. The introduction of multimedia projection technology has added infinite possibilities for the stage presentation of Gezi Opera. It not only breaks the space limitation of the traditional stage, but also realizes the seamless connection between the virtual and the reality. Take "Peony Pavilion" as an example, this classic drama combines traditional opera with modern visual art perfectly through the combination of huge picture scrolls and multimedia technology. On the stage, a beautiful ancient picture scroll slowly unfolded, accompanied by the wonderful performance of the actors, the audience seemed to travel back to that poetic era. Multimedia projection can change the background picture at any time according to the needs of the plot, whether it is garden pavilions or landscape scenery, it

can be lifelike in front of the eyes. Not only that, moving images can also interact in real time with the actors' movements, creating an amazing immersive experience. For example, in some scenes, when the heroine gently waves her fan, the flowers on the screen fall; Or when the hero writes a poem and paints, the ink under his pen can turn into a beautiful pattern in the air.(As shown in Figure 21-22)



Figure 21. The upgraded new stage

Source:Leqi Tang, from research fieldwork in August 2023



Figure 22. The upgraded new stage

Source:Leqi Tang, from research fieldwork in August 2023

5.4 The variety of performance forms

In the form of performance, the opera absorbs modern dance, musical and other art forms, and enriches the performance level. For example, Yan's Return to the Nest successfully attracted young audiences by combining traditional singing with modern singing and dancing. In the innovation of performance forms, the introduction of modern dance has injected new vitality into Gezi Opera. The movements in traditional opera are mostly based on the basic techniques of traditional opera, such as body movements, gestures and footwork, which are graceful but relatively fixed. Modern dance, with its free and varied movement forms and strong expression, has brought more abundant body language to Gezi Opera. In Yan's Return to the Nest, the choreographer cleverly integrates the rhythm and fluidity of modern dance into the movement design of the characters, making the characters more three-dimensional and vivid. The dancers not only enhance the emotional transmission of the plot, but also make the whole stage full of movement and vitality through their smooth body lines and strong movements. It is worth noting that the success of Yan Return to Nest is not simply overlaying modern elements on top of the traditional framework, but through careful design, the two naturally blend together. In the play, the director makes full use of the advantages of Gezi Opera in telling stories, with delicate emotional portrayal as the main line, while using modern music and dance to strengthen the dramatic conflict and emotional climax. This treatment not only does not weaken the charm of traditional singing, but makes it glow with a different luster under a new background. In addition, through the modernization of costumes, makeup and stage sets, the whole play presents a unique aesthetic style that is both classical and fashionable, attracting a large number of young audiences to enter the theater and experience this artistic feast that is intertwined with tradition and modernity. (Li Yilin, 2022)

5.5 Participation of academics in various fields

During this period, the participation of academics in various fields has improved the level of collection, organization and research of traditional culture. Although Shi Weiliang and Xu Changhui initiated the "Folk Song Collection Movement" in the 1980s to conduct field recording, notation and research, this period was limited to the research in the field of musicology. By 2000, as the public began to worry about the decline of traditional arts and re-emphasized the maintenance of

traditional culture, scholars from different research fields gathered together and gradually reached an overall consensus on the research of traditional music and arts, and truly began the research of ethnomusicology combining ethnology and musicology. That is to say, for some traditional music and arts, not only from the perspective of education and entertainment, but also from the perspectives of history, society, drama, language, folklore, religion, and faith, so that there is great progress in both breadth and depth.

5.6 The establishment of private foundations and cultural centers

The establishment of private foundations and cultural centers has provided a certain organizational foundation for the inheritance of traditional culture. Since the new century, the Chinese Folk Art Foundation and the Shi Hezheng Folk Art Foundation have played a relatively important role in the inheritance of traditional culture. They promote the inheritance and reproduction of traditional arts by supporting the collection, organization, and research of traditional arts, publishing books and periodicals, and organizing inheritance activities. In addition, the establishment of cultural centers and special arts centers in various counties (such as the Taiwan Drama Museum in Yilan) also plays an important role in promoting the inheritance of Gezi opera.(As shown in Figure 23)



Figure 23. Opening ceremony of Minnan Opera Art Center

Source:Leqi Tang, from research fieldwork in July 2022

Since the 21st century, Fujian Gezi Opera has undergone significant changes in art form, communication mode and social function. Through the innovation of music and singing, the upgrading of stage design and technology, and the diversification of performance forms, Gezi Opera has successfully attracted young audiences. At the same time, through the dissemination of new media technology, Gezi Opera breaks the restrictions of time and space and expands its influence. In addition, Gezi opera is not only a form of entertainment in modern society, but also plays an important role in cultural inheritance, education and cross-Straits cultural exchanges. Despite challenges such as loss of audience and difficulty in inheriting traditional skills, Gezi Opera has successfully adapted to the development needs of modern society through innovation and policy support, demonstrating the strong vitality of traditional opera in modern society.

6. Summary

The development of Fujian Gezi Opera (also known as "Xiang" Opera) spans the transformation from folk art to mature opera, which deeply reflects the integration of Minnan region of Fujian culture and Taiwan culture. The origin of Gezi Opera is closely related to the folk art of Minnan region of Fujian. In the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, the art forms of "Song boy" (Jin Song) and drum lane in Zhangzhou, Fujian Province, were introduced into the local area with Zheng Chenggong's recovery of Taiwan. Combined with Taiwan's folk songs, it gradually developed into the "song Boy Array". This early form was mainly singing, and later gradually added role play and simple movements, forming the initial prototype of opera. At the beginning of the 20th century, Gezi Opera developed rapidly in Taiwan and gradually moved toward specialization and standardization. In the 1920s, Gezi Opera took shape in Yilan, Taiwan, and began to be put on the stage, absorbing the elements of Liyuan Opera, Siping Opera, Beijing Opera and other forms of opera, enriching its own performing art. During the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, although the opera was banned by the Japanese colonial authorities, the artists continued to perform through forms such as renaming it "Taiwan New Drama", so that it could continue. From the 1940s to the 1950s, Gezi Opera was introduced into Minnan region of Fujian Province, and combined with local art forms such as Jin Ge and Gao Jia Opera, forming new singing styles such as

"Zao Diao", which was eventually officially named Xiang Opera. During this period, Gezi Opera spread rapidly in Minnan region of Fujian and became an important local opera form. From the 1960s to the 1980s, Gezi Opera entered its golden period. With the development of Taiwan's economy, Gezi Opera was widely spread across the Taiwan Straits, and a large number of classic plays and outstanding actors emerged. At the same time, through new media such as radio and television, Gezi Opera has further expanded its influence. Entering the 21st century, Gezi Opera is facing the multi-cultural impact of modern society and actively adapting to the changes of The Times. On the one hand, through innovative performance forms and the introduction of modern stage technology, Gezi Opera has successfully attracted young audiences; On the other hand, Gezi Opera has played an important role in the cultural exchanges between the two places and has become an important bond to maintain the cultural ties between the two places. The evolution of Gezi opera from folk art to mature opera is not only the result of the integration of Minnan region of Fujian culture and Taiwan culture, but also a valuable cultural heritage created and passed on by people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

Table 2. The contemporary change of Chinese Gezi Opera in Fujian Province, China

The development time line of Gezi opera in Minnan region of Fujian Province	The change of Chinese Gezi Opera in Fujian Province, China
The Origin and Early Development of Gezi Opera (1890-1920s)	1. Origin: Originating from the folk art of Minnan region of Fujian, Gezi Opera was introduced into Taiwan with Zheng Chenggong's recovery in the late Ming and early Qing Dynasties and combined with local folk songs. 2. Development: From singing to gradually add role play and action, forming an early opera form.
The Development of opera in Taiwan (1920-1940s)	1. Forming: At the beginning of the 20th century, Gezi Opera developed professionally in Taiwan, and took shape in Yilan in the 1920s, absorbing a variety of opera elements. 2. Survival: During the Anti-Japanese War, the opera was banned but continued to perform under the name "Taiwan New Drama".

Introduction and Improvement of Gezi Opera to Minnan region of Fujian (1940-1960s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduced into Minnan region of Fujian: In 1928, Gezi Opera was introduced into Minnan region of Fujian due to Japanese colonial oppression. 2. Integration and development: Combined with local art, the formation of a new singing tune, "shredded tune", and named Xiang Opera, quickly became an important local opera.
The Golden Age of Gezi opera development (1960-1999s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Golden Period: From the 1960s to the 1980s, Gezi Opera entered a golden period with Taiwan's economic development, and a large number of classic plays and outstanding actors emerged. 2. New Media Communication: Through radio, television and other new media forms, the influence of Gezi Opera has greatly expanded.
Modern Changes of Gezi Opera (2000-2024s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adaptation and Innovation: In the 21st century, Gezi Opera attracts young audiences through innovative performance forms and the introduction of modern technology. 2. Cultural ties: Gezi Opera plays an important role in the cultural exchanges between Fujian and Taiwan, becoming a valuable cultural heritage to maintain the cultural ties between the two places.



Table 3. The time line of contemporary changes of Fujian Gezi Opera

1890-1920s	The Origin and Early Development of Gezi Opera	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Origin: Originating from the folk art of southern Fujian, Gezi Opera was introduced into Taiwan with Zheng Chenggong's recovery in the late Ming and early Qing Dynasties and combined with local folk songs. 2. Development: From singing to gradually add role play and action, forming an early opera form.
1920-1940s	The Development of opera in Taiwan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forming: At the beginning of the 20th century, Gezi Opera developed professionally in Taiwan, and took shape in Yilan in the 1920s, absorbing a variety of opera elements. 2. Survival: During the Anti-Japanese War, the opera was banned but continued to perform under the name "Taiwan New Drama".
1940-1960s	Introduction and Improvement of Gezi Opera to Minnan region of Fujian	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduced into Southern Fujian: In 1928, Gezi Opera was introduced into southern Fujian due to Japanese colonial oppression. 2. Integration and development: Combined with local art, the formation of a new singing tune, "shredded tune", and named Hsiang Opera, quickly became an important local opera.
1960-1999s	The Golden Age of Gezi opera development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Golden Period: From the 1960s to the 1980s, Gezi Opera entered a golden period with Taiwan's economic development, and a large number of classic plays and outstanding actors emerged. 2. New Media Communication: Through radio, television and other new media forms, the influence of Gezi Opera has greatly expanded.
2000-2024s	Modern Changes of Gezi Opera	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adaptation and Innovation: In the 21st century, Gezi Opera attracts young audiences through innovative performance forms and the introduction of modern technology. 2. Cultural ties: Gezi Opera plays an important role in the cultural exchanges between Fujian and Taiwan, becoming a valuable cultural heritage to maintain the cultural ties between the two places.

CHAPTER V

The characteristics of Chinese Gezi Opera music within Fujian Province, China

This chapter primarily employs a descriptive methodology, which constitutes my second research objective. Through my second field trip to the Minnan region and in-depth interviews with professional Gezi opera troupes and actors, the researcher collected and organized a substantial amount of audiovisual materials. In terms of performance form, Minnan Gezi Opera can be divided into traditional Gezi opera and modern Gezi opera. The researcher selected 3 particularly unique musical examples from a vast pool of video footage. After analyzing and comparing representative works, the researcher has found that Minnan Gezi opera is highly distinctive, a quality that is fully reflected in its music.

The research structure of this chapter is as follows:

1. The traditional Gezi opera in Minnan region of Fujian Province
2. The modern Gezi opera in Minnan region of Fujian Province
3. Summary

1. The traditional Gezi opera in Minnan region of Fujian Province

Traditional Gezi opera is one of the current popular types of Fujian Minnan region of Gezi opera. It originated from the late 19th century to the early 20th century. After it was introduced into Taiwan from the folk art forms of Zhangzhou area in Fujian Province, such as Jinge and car drum, it was combined with local folk songs to form "Song Zi Zhen", and then gradually developed into a mature opera form. The music of traditional Gezi opera is mainly composed of pentatonic scales, with beautiful melody, lyricism and steady rhythm. The common Qu decks include "seven-character tune", "Miscellaneous tune" and "Crying tune", etc. The accompaniment instruments are mainly traditional instruments such as Erhu, Yueqin, flute, gongs and drums, creating a simple and natural musical atmosphere. The performance form focuses on the combination of singing, reading, acting and playing. The actors show the emotions and personalities of the characters through delicate expressions, rich

body language and beautiful singing. The performance style is simple and natural, focusing on emotional expression. The content of the repertoire is mostly based on folk stories, historical legends and mythological stories, such as Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai, Chen Sanwunniang and the Legend of the White Snake, etc. These plays not only have artistic value, but also carry rich cultural connotations, reflecting the social life and cultural traditions of Minnan region of Fujian.

Through field investigation, the author of this paper takes the traditional opera play "Three requests Fan Lihua" performed by Su Yanrong, the inheritor of Minnan region of Fujian Gezi Opera, as an example to analyze the musical characteristics of the traditional opera play "Three requests Fan Lihua" from multiple perspectives.

The following is an example of the classical repertoire of the traditional opera "Three requests Fan Lihua", as shown in Figure 24:

三请樊梨花
Three requests Fan Lihua

Fujian
Transcription by Leqi Tang

我自己吃苦啊 自己受，
wo zi ji chi ku a zi ji shou

5
不要连累啊 我的娘亲呐。
bu yao lian lei a wo de niang qin

10
从今后咱母女啊 相依为命，
cong jin hou zan mu nv a xiang yi wei ming

14
从此啊 不想选鸳鸯。

Figure 24. Three requests Fan Lihua

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

Three requests Fan Lihua is a classic opera. Its story background and content are loved by the audience. Set in the Tang Dynasty, the drama tells the ups and downs of the love story between Xue Dingshan and Fan Lihua. Xue Dingshan was the son of the famous Xue Rengui of the Tang Dynasty. He had a strong and brave character, but at the same time he had some youthful characteristics. Fan Lihua is the female warrior of Fan Jiazhuang, she is not only strong in martial arts, but also intelligent. She is full of deep feeling and persistence in love with Xue Dingshan, but she also faces the double pressure of family and emotion. The beginning of the story is Xue Dingshan was ordered to go out, met Fan Lihua on the way. Two people fall in love at first sight, but Fan Lihua's mother is firmly opposed to this marriage because of family grudge. Fan Lihua under the pressure of her mother, repeatedly tried to refuse Xue Dingshan, but the heart has always been unable to give up his deep feeling. After many misunderstandings and conflicts, Fan Lihua finally decided to defy her mother's and fight alongside Xue Dingshan. However, Fan Lihua's mother did not give up, she repeatedly designed to frame Xue Dingshan, trying to break up the lovers. Fan Lihua struggles between family and love, showing her tenacity and courage as a woman. In the development of the plot, Fan Lihua goes out to help Xue Dingshan many times, and her wisdom and martial arts play an important role in the battlefield. Despite all the difficulties she faced, Fan never gave up and eventually touched everyone, including her mother, with her sincerity and courage. After experiencing many twists and turns, Fan Lihua and Xue Dingshan love has been recognized by the family, two people eventually married. Three requests Fan Lihua is not only a legendary love story, but also shows the struggle and growth of women in traditional society. Fan Lihua's image is vivid and vivid. She has both the heroic character of a woman and the tenderness of a woman. Her story inspires the audience to pursue true love and freedom. This play shows the unique artistic charm and cultural value of Gezi Opera through rich plot and profound characterization, and becomes a leader in the classic plays of Gezi Opera.

This song is about Fan Lihua defying her mother's and marrying her lover, which is very representative and characteristic in the whole play. The play analyzed from the following six aspects:

1.1 Melody characteristics

The melody characteristics of traditional Gezi opera are smooth and smooth. In this music work, the melody characteristics of traditional Gezi Opera are reflected in the following two aspects:

1) Frequent use of the bass register

The singing style of Gezi Opera is mainly composed of Qupai combination, and its melody can be freely developed in the three areas of high, middle and low. The use of the bass register has an important expressive force in the singing of the opera. The actor can better express the emotional depth and inner world of the role through the bass register. In some emotionally deep passages, the use of the bass register can enhance the weight and impact of the music. It is reflected in the verse of "Three Requests Fan Lihua", as shown in the following figure :



Figure 25. Three requests Fan Lihua

Source:Leqi Tang, 2024

As can be seen from the figure above, starting from the 10th bar, the melody frequently moves into the low register. This design makes the overall atmosphere of the music more profound and sad, as if bringing the audience into a world full of melancholy and heavy emotions. Especially in this passage, the use of the bass register not only enhances the emotional depth of the music, but also delicately reveals the complex emotional state of the character's heart. In the 10th bar and beyond, the frequent singing in the low register makes the music more solemn and subdued. The sound of the low register itself has a natural weight, which can convey deep sorrow and inner struggle. When the melody enters the bass zone, each note is like a sigh in the depths of the character's heart, silently telling the endless pain and helplessness. In particular, the final note stops on the A tone of the small character group, and the choice of this note further strengthens the sad atmosphere of

the music, like a drop of cold tears, quietly slipping in the hearts of the audience, which can not be dissipated for a long time. This way of music processing deeply reflects Fan Lihua's inner pain and contradiction when she goes against her mother's. As a loyal and dutiful daughter, Fan Lihua has to face the conflict between family and personal choices. In this dilemma, her inner struggle and pain are vividly expressed through singing in the low register. Each low note seems to speak of her helplessness and inner tears, so that the audience can deeply feel the enormous pressure she is under while obeying the call of the heart. In addition, the use of the bass register adds layer to the drama. It is not only a sound change, but also an emotional progression. In this passage, the gradual transition from the high register to the low register symbolizes the gradual penetration of emotions from the surface calm to the innermost depths of the heart. This layer of emotional advancement, so that the audience can more truly experience the ups and downs of Fan Lihua's heart. Singing in the bass is not only a catharsis of emotion, but also an in-depth exploration of the character's inner world, so that the audience can more fully understand the complexity of the character.

2) Smooth melodic zone activity line

In traditional opera, a smooth melodic range usually consists of a series of adjacent notes with smaller intervals between them, giving the impression of fluency and coherence. This melodic line changes more gently, there are no large jumps in pitch, so it gives the impression of stability and comfort. This smooth melodic range is usually relatively easy for the singer to master and does not require a particularly high level of skill to perform well. During singing, the actors were able to focus more on expressing the emotions of the characters and the content of the story, rather than focusing too much on the technical challenges of pitch. Smooth melodic registers are often used to convey an emotional atmosphere of peace, tranquility, or tenderness. This melody is often used to express warmth, comfort, nostalgia and other softer emotions, suitable for describing the delicate emotional changes in the heart of the characters in the play or describing some calm and peaceful scenes. In actual performances, the smooth melodic range often acts as a supplement to the main melody, helping to build a more complex musical structure and provide emotional resonance for the audience.

It is reflected in the verse of "Three Requests Fan Lihua", as shown in the following figure :

The image shows a musical score for the song "Three Requests Fan Lihua". It consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff contains the lyrics "我自己吃苦啊" (wo zi ji chi ku a) and "自己受," (zi ji shou ,). The second staff contains the lyrics "不要连累啊我的娘亲呐。" (bu yao lian lei a wo de niang qin na.). Red boxes highlight specific melodic phrases in both staves, and a grey triangle points to the first staff.

Figure 26. Three requests Fan Lihua

Source:Leqi Tang, 2024

From the above examples, it can be seen that the melody presents a series of unique features in the melodic range. Overall, its vocal range is relatively narrow, mainly concentrated in the low cavity part, the specific range of small letters A to C2. The main range of melody activity is more limited, concentrated in the smaller interval A to A1. This design makes the tone change of the whole music relatively smooth, giving people a calm and restrained feeling. Starting with the "Yu" tone (A1), the piece works mainly towards the lower third, a choice that gives the music a deep and introspective quality. Compared with the dynamic changes brought about by a wide vocal range, the narrow vocal range and the melody dominated by a low cavity make the music more dignified and calmer. It seems to take the listener into a quiet and slightly melancholy emotional space, so that every note is filled with profound meaning. The main active register of the melody is concentrated between A and A1, which further strengthens the music's introverted and stable character. The key pitch is the choice of A, D1 and A1. These pitches form the basic framework of the piece, ensuring the continuity of the melodic lines while also providing a solid foundation for emotional expression. Through this stable pitch combination, the music can freely shuttle within the limited vocal area, showing a rich emotional level. It is worth noting that the melodic tone of the song has a small amplitude of movement in both sides, which not only increases the compact feeling of the music, but also makes it more suitable for expressing low and graceful emotions. The shorter distance between each

note makes the melodic lines more smooth and delicate, as if they are whispering a deep inner story. This subtle change can trigger a strong emotional resonance in the audience, making it easier for them to immerse themselves in the emotional atmosphere created by the music. In short, through the design of narrow vocal range and low cavity, the song successfully creates a low and graceful musical atmosphere, deeply demonstrating the emotional depth and delicacy of the work. This artistic technique not only enhances the expression of the music, but also provides the audience with a touching experience of deep emotional world, so that the artistic charm of the whole work can be fully displayed.

1.2 Music structure

The traditional song form structure of Gezi opera is famous for its flexibility and changefulness. It usually adopts Qupai interlocking style, that is, several fixed melody patterns (Qupai) are connected together to form a complete verse. These Qu cards can be freely combined and changed according to the needs of the plot, which not only retains the standardization of traditional music, but also gives the performers a certain space for improvisation. Its melodic range is wide, often with high accent, combined with local unique tunes such as "seven-character tune" and "scattered melody", and through different plate (rhythm pattern) to adjust the emotional expression, so that music and drama closely combined, enhance the expression and appeal.

The structure of Fan Lihua's form follows the structure rules of traditional Gezi opera, highlighting the relatively square and stable characteristics of traditional Gezi opera. The musical structure of the song is as follows:

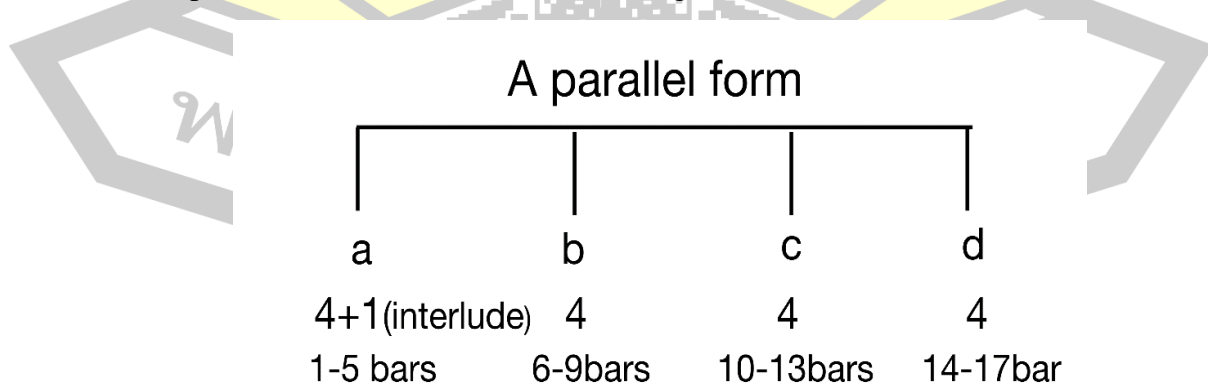


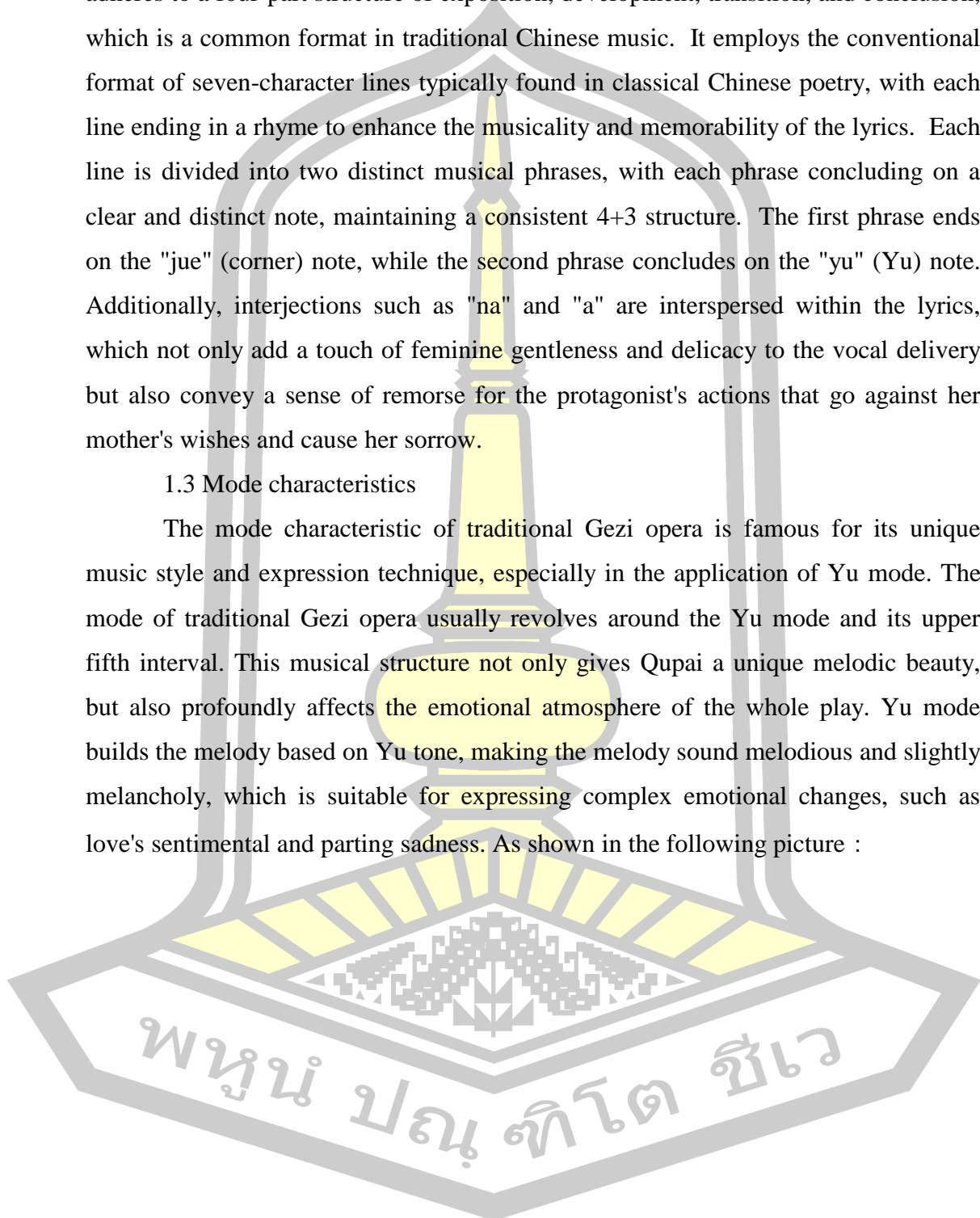
Figure 27. Three requests Fan Lihua

Source:Leqi Tang, 2024

As can be seen from the above example, The vocal segment in question adheres to a four-part structure of exposition, development, transition, and conclusion, which is a common format in traditional Chinese music. It employs the conventional format of seven-character lines typically found in classical Chinese poetry, with each line ending in a rhyme to enhance the musicality and memorability of the lyrics. Each line is divided into two distinct musical phrases, with each phrase concluding on a clear and distinct note, maintaining a consistent 4+3 structure. The first phrase ends on the "jue" (corner) note, while the second phrase concludes on the "yu" (Yu) note. Additionally, interjections such as "na" and "a" are interspersed within the lyrics, which not only add a touch of feminine gentleness and delicacy to the vocal delivery but also convey a sense of remorse for the protagonist's actions that go against her mother's wishes and cause her sorrow.

1.3 Mode characteristics

The mode characteristic of traditional Gezi opera is famous for its unique music style and expression technique, especially in the application of Yu mode. The mode of traditional Gezi opera usually revolves around the Yu mode and its upper fifth interval. This musical structure not only gives Qupai a unique melodic beauty, but also profoundly affects the emotional atmosphere of the whole play. Yu mode builds the melody based on Yu tone, making the melody sound melodious and slightly melancholy, which is suitable for expressing complex emotional changes, such as love's sentimental and parting sadness. As shown in the following picture :



我 自 己 吃 苦 啊 自 己 受 ，
wo zi ji chi ku a zi ji shou ,

5 不 要 连 累 啊 我 的 娘 亲 呐 。
bu yao lian lei a wo de niang qin

10 “yu” note

从 今 后 咱 母 女 啊 相 依 为 命 “jue” mode
cong jin hou zan mu nv a xiang yi wei ming

14 从 此 啊 不 想 选 鸳 鸯 。

Figure 28. Three requests Fan Lihua

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

In the musical example provided, the "yu" and "jue" notes are prominently featured at the conclusion of numerous phrases and musical sections. Notably, the "jue" note is employed to bring the entire composition to a close, effectively encapsulating the musical essence of these two tones. As the actors deliver their vocal performances, they adeptly manipulate the cadence to amplify the emotional resonance of the piece. This nuanced approach allows the audience to more acutely perceive the intricate emotional landscape of the characters. Regarding rhythmic treatment, a deliberate choice of gentle and steady rhythms is made to foster an atmosphere of tranquility and remoteness. The strategic incorporation of grace notes adds a layer of complexity to the melody, enhancing its expressiveness and depth. These embellishments serve to convey the characters' emotional states with greater precision and nuance. The selection of accompanying instruments, such as the erhu and pipa, plays a crucial role in shaping the overall artistic style of the piece. These instruments harmonize seamlessly with the "yu" and "jue" notes, contributing to a melodious, soul-stirring, and slightly melancholic aesthetic. This unique blend of

elements endows the song with a distinctive character, setting it apart and making it a memorable and captivating musical experience.

1.4 Rhythm and beat

The "Seven-Character Tune" stands as the quintessential and most frequently employed melody within the realm of traditional Gezi Opera, firmly rooted in the principal tune variation category. This melody is distinguished by its one-beat-one-eye rhythmic pattern, which, while providing a stable and recognizable structure, inherently restricts its capacity to generate the kind of intense and dynamic dramatic conflicts that can captivate an audience. The rhythmic structure of Gezi Opera music, on the other hand, has long been celebrated for its remarkable ability to propel the narrative forward and accentuate the sharpness of dramatic tensions. This effectiveness has not only solidified Gezi Opera's status in the world of traditional Chinese theater but has also positioned it as a paragon for numerous local operas to study and incorporate into their own musical and dramatic lexicons. The following example is shown :

The image shows a musical score in 4/4 time. The first part, labeled 'Long music sentence', consists of seven notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), and G4 (quarter). Below these notes are the lyrics '我自己吃苦啊' (wo zi ji chi ku a) with a blue arrow pointing to the character '啊'. The second part, labeled 'Short music sentence', consists of two notes: G4 (quarter) and A4 (quarter). Below these notes are the lyrics '自己受' (zi ji shou) with a blue arrow pointing to the character '受'.

Figure 29. Three requests Fan Lihua

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

As can be seen from the example of the upper score, the melody structure of the chorus breaks through the conventional rhythm framework of the traditional "seven-character tone", and adopts the rhythm mode of 4/4 time and one-ban-three eyes (that is, four beats per bar, the relationship between strength and weakness is strong - weak - sub-strong - weak). This transformation not only gives the work a broader and more fluid quality, but also enhances its musical expressiveness and emotional level. The traditional "seven-character tone" usually follows a strict format of seven-character one-sentence and four-sentence segments, with a relatively fixed

rhythm for each sentence. However, in this melody, the composer cleverly introduced the rhythm structure of 4/4 beats and adopted a unique "three eyes" pattern. This change allows the melody to no longer be confined to a fixed rhythmic framework, but to unfold in a freer flow of time, creating a more open and flexible musical atmosphere. The setting of four beats per bar not only maintains a certain stability and regularity, but also brings rich rhythm changes through different strong and weak distribution, so that the audience can feel the ups and downs and flow in the music. In terms of melody design, the work abandons the traditional fixed format of seven words per line and four lines per paragraph, and replaces it with the interweaving of long and short sentence patterns. The alternate use of long sentences and short sentences breaks the original monotony and increases the dynamic and interesting nature of music. Some sentences may contain multiple notes to express a Chinese character, while others are presented in a concise manner. This flexible sentence arrangement not only enriches the expression of music, but also better ADAPTS to the emotional needs of lyrics. Of particular note is the rhythmic design of the passage, which emphasizes the strong contrast between prolonged and short notes. The first section adopts a relatively loose and gentle rhythm, giving the audience a feeling of relaxation and relaxation; In the fourth bar, multiple notes are arranged closely on a single Chinese character to create a tight and intense effect. This design not only highlights the dramatic changes in the music, but also adds depth to the emotional expression. When a character is in a sad or emotional state, dense notes can convey complex feelings within, making it easier for the listener to relate. This particular rhythmic treatment is a typical feature of the "wailing" variant of the seven-character tone. As a kind of artistic technique to express deep emotion, "crying" plays an important role in Gezi Opera. By breaking the normal rhythm and note arrangement, it mimics the sound characteristics of human crying, so as to more realistically convey the pain, sadness or other strong emotions deep inside the character. In this melody, the use of "crying" not only enhances the expression of the music, but also injects a unique emotional color into the whole work, so that the audience can deeply feel the emotional twists and turns experienced by the characters.

1.5 Lyrics characteristics

- 1) The characteristics of one-word and multi-tone lyrics

In traditional Gezi Opera, the characteristic of using multiple notes for a single character (one character corresponding to several musical notes) is one of the significant artistic expressive techniques. This technique not only enriches the musical melody but also enhances the expressiveness and emotional impact of the lyrics. Typically employed in parts where emotional expression is more delicate or dramatic, the extended notes allow performers to convey the characters' inner feelings more effectively through vocal techniques such as melismatic singing and vibrato. These prolonged notes provide performers with the space to showcase their vocal skills and offer the audience a more enriched auditory experience. Additionally, the use of multiple notes for a single character can enhance the rhythmic and melodic qualities of the lyrics, making the entire vocal segment more vivid and varied. In the performance of traditional Gezi Opera, this technique not only reflects the complexity and diversity of the opera's music but also demonstrates the performers' deep understanding and nuanced expression of the characters' emotions. The details are shown in the following figure:

Figure 30 shows a musical score in 4/4 time. The first staff has the lyrics "我自己吃苦啊" (wo zi ji chi ku a) and "自己受," (zi ji shou ,). The second staff has the lyrics "不要连累啊我的娘亲呐。" (bu yao lian lei a wo de niang qin na.). Red boxes highlight the melismatic passages for the characters "zi", "lian", and "niang".

Figure 30. Three requests Fan Lihua

Source:Leqi Tang, 2024

As can be seen from the musical example above, the characters "zi" in the fourth measure, "yao" and "lian" in the sixth measure, and "niang" in the eighth measure all employ the technique of melisma, where a single character is sung over multiple notes. This technique not only adds a layer of complexity and richness to the melody but also serves as a powerful tool for emotional expression. By extending the vocalization of these characters, the performer is able to delve deeper into the emotional nuances of the role, particularly the intricate and multifaceted inner world

of Fan Lihua. The use of melisma allows for a more vivid and detailed portrayal of her emotional state, capturing the subtleties of her thoughts and feelings with greater precision and depth. This method of vocal delivery enhances the overall expressiveness of the performance, making the audience more attuned to the character's inner turmoil and emotional journey.

2) Add lining words to seven-word lyrics

In traditional Gezi Opera, a common lyrical device involves the incorporation of interjections such as "aiyo", "ah", and "le", which are often used to convey a sense of lamentation or sorrow. Additionally, personal pronouns like "you", "I", and "he" are frequently employed. These elements serve to heighten the emotional intensity of the performance, particularly in expressing feelings of sadness and distress. By embedding these interjections and pronouns within the lyrics, the opera is able to evoke a profound sense of melancholy, allowing the audience to more deeply connect with the characters' emotional states. This lyrical strategy not only adds a layer of authenticity to the portrayal of sorrow but also enhances the overall dramatic effect, making the performance more engaging and emotionally resonant. The details are shown in the following figure:

Table 4. Three requests Fan Lihua lyric

lyric
我 自 己 吃 苦 啊 自 己 受 wo zi ji chi ku a zi ji shou
不 要 连 累 啊 我 的 娘 亲 呐 bu yao lian lei a wo de niang qin na
从 今 后 咱 母 女 啊 相 依 为 命 cong jin hou zan mu nv a xiang yi wei ming
从 此 啊 不 想 选 鸳 鸯 cong ci a bu xiang xuan yuan yang

As can be seen from the above example, the lyrics of this song are cleverly incorporated into the words such as "a", "na" and so on. Although these words have no actual semantic content, they play an important decorative role in the song. For example, the "a" in the first line "wo zi ji chi ku a zi ji shou", this "a" uses a word with multiple sounds, which makes the music more sad and increases the rendering power of the sad atmosphere. Through the close combination of these words and melody, the whole song presents a more delicate and euphemistic aesthetic feeling. This special music treatment not only enhances the fluency of the melody, but also enriches the emotional expression of the song, so that the audience can better feel the unique charm of Gezi opera. As a traditional form of local opera, the music style of Gezi opera is usually graceful and low, emphasizing the delicate expression of emotion and the change of voice. The application of contrast words reflects this characteristic just right, and their interspersed use in songs not only increases the melodic layering, but also creates a unique artistic atmosphere. In addition, these words can help the actors better grasp the rhythm and emotional transition, making the performance more vivid and infectious.

On the whole, through the clever use of "a", "na" and other reference words, Fan Lihua's music can be more euphemistic, showing its profound cultural heritage and unique artistic charm, and bringing extremely rich audio-visual enjoyment to the audience.

1.6 Singing characteristics

The seven-character tune in traditional Gezi opera is famous for its unique artistic style and expression techniques. It follows the basic format of seven-character and one-sentence, which is concise and easy to remember. This style of singing emphasizes gentle and soft emotional expression, and the actors convey the inner world of the characters through soft voices and delicate tone changes.

In Fan Lihua's work, Su Yanrong, the artist of Gezi Opera, plays a very vivid part. This part belongs to the "crying tone" of the seven-character key. The singing style is gentle and soft, conveying the sadness, sorrow or pain of the characters through delicate emotional expression and rich musical skills. When singing, Ms. Su Yanrong uses drawl, vibrato and glissando to make the melody more melodious and

infectious. She pays attention to the delicate processing of emotions, and conveys the emotional changes of the characters through soft voices and soft tones. The melody lines of the Cry melody are relatively low and the vocal range is narrow to highlight the deep and depressed emotions, while the rhythm of the song is more soothing, often using a three-eyed beat form, providing sufficient space for the expression of emotions. In addition, the lyrics are interspersed with words such as "na" and "a", which further strengthen the sad atmosphere. This way of singing not only tests the singing skills of the actors, but also requires them to deeply understand the inner world of the characters, and truthfully convey their emotions to the audience, so that the audience can deeply feel the grief and helplessness of the characters.

2. The modern Gezi opera in Minnan region of Fujian Province

Modern Gezi Opera is a kind of opera form developed on the basis of traditional Gezi opera. It inherits the artistic essence of traditional Gezi opera, and integrates modern music, stage technology, performance style and social themes, showing more abundant and diversified artistic charm. This form of opera not only retains the pentatonic scale, beautiful melody and simple performance style of traditional gezi opera, but also enhances the expressive force of music and the visual impact of the stage by introducing modern musical orchestration, electronic music and multimedia projection. In performance, modern Gezi opera combines the performance skills of modern drama, so that the emotional expression of actors is more delicate and vivid, and can better resonate with modern audiences.

The content of the repertoire of modern Gezi opera is no longer limited to traditional folk stories and historical legends, but has expanded to reflect all aspects of contemporary social life, including modern themes such as rural revitalization, stories of young people's entrepreneurship, and family ethics. The diversification of the subject matter makes the opera closer to the reality of modern audiences, reflects the spirit of The Times, and transmits positive energy. At the same time, modern Gezi Opera also pays more attention to modern aesthetics in stage design, and creates a more realistic and shocking stage effect through modern means such as sound and photoelectric technology and stage machinery, which improves the audience's viewing experience.

Through field investigation, the author selected the plays performed by two teachers, Chen Zhiming and Zhuang Hairong, the inheritors of Gezi Opera, for analysis. The details are as follows:

2.1 The story of "Qiaopi"

Qiaopi of Gezi Opera is a modern work of Gezi opera with the background of Qiaopi culture. With the background of the life of overseas Chinese in the south of Fujian Province, the drama shows the humanistic feelings and historical significance behind the unique cultural phenomenon of "overseas Chinese batch" by telling the stories between the people of overseas Chinese hometown and overseas Chinese.

"Overseas Chinese approval" refers to the letters and remittance vouchers sent back to China by overseas Chinese through non-governmental channels. It is not only an economic support, but also an important emotional link between overseas Chinese and their relatives at home. In the drama, "overseas Chinese batch" is not only a material help, but also a symbol of overseas Chinese missing their hometown and caring for their relatives. The drama's creative team dug deep into the story behind "overseas Chinese PI", through field research and interviews, the life scenes, emotional entanglements and historical memories carried by "overseas Chinese PI" into the drama. The characters in the drama have vivid images and sincere emotions. Through delicate singing and vivid performances, the life and spiritual world of the people in the hometown of overseas Chinese are shown. In terms of music and performance, Qiaopi combines the musical style of traditional gezi opera with modern musical elements to make the music more diversified. The play not only retains the traditional singing of Gezi opera, such as "seven-character key" and "scattered key", but also introduces symphonic orchestration and electronic music, which enhances the expression and appeal of the music. In the stage design, the play uses multimedia projection and audio-optical technology to create a strong historical atmosphere and visual impact, making the audience feel as if they are in that era.

In this paper, the song "The story of Qiaopi" performed by Zhuang Hairong is selected for analysis. The specific musical examples are as follows:

侨批的故事
The Story of "Qiaopi"

Fujian
Transcription by Leqi Tang

这 一 双 双 一 对 对 ， 无 助 眼 光 将 我
zhe yi shuang shuang yi dui dui wu zhu yan guang jiang wo

4

望 ， 时 难 年 荒 逼 人 走 。
wang shi nan nian huang bi ren zou

9

夫 妻 相 望 各 西 东 。
fu qi xiang wang ge xi dong

13

谁 怜 厨 里 守 望 人 ，
shui lian cu li shou wang ren

16

瞑 日 等 信 盼 归 鸿 。 谁 怜 南 洋
ming ri deng xin pan gui hong shui lian nan yang

20

飘 零 客 ， 想 家 银 批 寄 何 方 ， 寄 何 方 。
piao ling ke xiang jia yin pi ji he fang ji he fang



Figure 31. The story of Qiaopi

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

The play analyzed from the following six aspects:

2.1.1 Melody characteristics

Combined with my field investigation, the researcher found that the most significant characteristics are the following two aspects:

1) Minor interval sequence within the fifth interval framework (narrow tone sequence)

In music theory, the fifth frame refers to the fifth interval as the basic building unit, while the narrow tone sequence refers to the three note sequences formed within this framework, specifically the combination of the third plus the minor third, or the combination of the second degree plus the pure fourth to carry out melody development. This kind of narrow tone sequence has unique musical characteristics, because the combination of second degree and pure fourth degree produces a tight pitch connection in the melody, making the melody line appear smooth and compact. At the same time, this approach can also create a musical effect full of tension, because the second degree gives a sense of tension, while the pure fourth brings a soft transition. This approach also makes effective use of the interval space within the five-degree framework, ensuring that the development of the melody maintains coherence without losing variation. The melody features of the song "The story of Qiao PI" in Gezi Opera well reflect this point. As shown in the picture below:

The figure shows a musical score in 4/4 time with two staves. The lyrics are in Chinese and Pinyin. Three boxes highlight specific interval sequences:

- Box 1 (top left): Major second interval + Perfect fourth interval. Points to the notes G4-A4 and A4-D5.
- Box 2 (top right): Major second interval + Perfect fourth interval. Points to the notes G4-A4 and A4-D5.
- Box 3 (bottom center): Major second interval + Perfect fourth interval and Minor third interval + Major second interval. Points to the notes G4-A4 and A4-D5.

Lyrics: 这 一 双 双 一 对 对 ， 无 助 眼 光 将 我
zhe yi shuang shuang yi dui dui wu zhu yan guang jiang wo
望 ， 时 难 年 荒 逼 人 走 。
wang shi nan nian huang bi ren zou

Figure 32. The story of Qiaopi

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

The figure above illustrates the thematic melody from the Gezi Opera vocal segment "The Story of Qiaopi." This theme spans eight measures and is characterized by a distinctive five-note motif: A-G-D-G-A. The motif begins with the A note, descending to the G note, creating a major second interval. Subsequently, the G note leaps downward to the D note, forming the first set of a major second interval followed by a perfect fourth interval. This pattern is then repeated in an ascending manner, resulting in a symmetrical melodic structure. The primary tones "yu" (Yu) and "jue" (horn) form a quintessential pentatonic framework commonly found in Gezi Opera, endowing the motif with a distinct musical identity characteristic of the genre. This particular pattern plays a crucial role throughout the musical composition of the entire opera. In the third measure, the motif reappears as a second major second interval followed by a perfect fourth interval. However, due to a shift in musical emotion, the pitch is altered. Measures 5 and 6 return to a melodic contour similar to the original motif, engaging in melodic embellishments that epitomize the melodic traits of Gezi Opera. The dyads and triads within this pentatonic framework are not only central to the musical idiom of Fujian Gezi Opera but also serve as the core melodic foundation for the music of this particular opera. This framework governs the overall musical structure of the entire piece.

2) The melodic range is wide

The range of pitches used in a musical composition. Each part has its own specific pitch, and the melody's pitch refers to the range of pitches covered by the melody line. The wide range of Fujian Gezi Opera means that the melody contains notes in both the low register and the high register, which requires the singer to sing accurately in a wide range of registers.

A wide range of sounds can provide a richer musical expression, making the melody more vivid and interesting. It allows the listener to feel more emotional levels, such as the change from deep to passionate, there is a large interval jump in the melody, that is, the sudden jump from one note to another that is many semitones apart. This jump can be up or down, adding drama and tension to the melody, capable of displaying rich emotional and dynamic effects, while also placing high technical demands on the performer. The melody of Fujian Gezi Opera is mainly composed of high accent and has a wide span.

As shown in the picture below:

The image shows a musical score for 'The story of Qiaopi' in staff notation with Chinese lyrics and pinyin. The score is divided into three lines of music. The first line (measures 9-12) has a red box around the notes for 'bi ren zou' with an arrow pointing to a 'Sixth-degree jump' label. The second line (measures 13-16) has a red box around the notes for 'ge xi dong' with an arrow pointing to an 'Octave jump' label, and another red box around the notes for 'dong' with an arrow pointing to a 'Sixth-degree jump' label. The third line (measures 17-20) has a red box around the notes for 'li shou wang ren' with an arrow pointing to an 'Octave jump' label.

望 , 时 难 年 荒 逼 人 走 。
 9 wang shi nan nian huang bi ren zou

夫 妻 相 望 各 西 东
 13 fu qi xiang wang ge xi dong

谁 怜 厨 里 守 望 人 ,
 shui lian cu li shou wang ren

Figure 33. The story of Qiaopi

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

From the above musical examples, one can clearly observe the distinctive features of melodic range usage in Fujian Gezi Opera. Overall, its pitch range is relatively wide, with a predominant use of high-pitched melodies. The main pitch range extends from A to D2, while the core activity range of the melody focuses between D1 and D2. This broad pitch range not only gives the music of Gezi Opera a unique auditory experience but also provides rich layers for emotional expression. The melody of Gezi Opera typically uses the "jue" tone (A) as its base point, frequently moving within the upper fifth interval (A-E). This characteristic showcases the dynamism and tension inherent in the melodies of Gezi Opera, reflecting the harmonious aesthetics found in traditional music culture. Through this frequent movement within the fifth interval, Gezi Opera successfully constructs a musical framework that is both stable and full of change, making each note vibrant and lively. The primary key tones are D1, A1, and D2, which form the basic structure of the opera's music, allowing the melodic lines to spiral through the mid-to-high register with significant vertical movement. This design not only increases the difficulty of performance but also effectively enhances the dramatic atmosphere of the music, deepening the audience's emotional resonance. Particularly noteworthy are the large

interval leaps seen in measures 7 and 11, where C2 drops down to E1. This type of leap within a single syllable not only tests the performer's vocal technique but also enhances the expressive power of the music through sudden changes in pitch. Such large interval jumps instantly capture the listener's attention, drawing them into the climax of the plot, thereby enriching and deepening the conveyance of emotion. It highlights the unique charm of Gezi Opera music and reflects the performers' exceptional artistic skills. Furthermore, the octave leap between measures 13 and 14 accentuates the music's tension, making the melody more impactful and emotionally stirring. This technique breaks away from conventional melodic progression, creating a strong contrast effect. Each note becomes filled with dramatic turns, enhancing the music's expressiveness and conveying different emotional hues through changes in pitch. As a result, Gezi Opera can express multiple emotional states within a single piece, such as joy, sorrow, anger, or tranquility, thus allowing the audience to delve deeper into the complex emotional world of the characters. Such large-interval melodic designs not only enhance the music's expressiveness but also convey different emotional colors through changes in pitch. For instance, gentle pitch changes in lyrical sections can convey deep emotions, while large interval leaps in intense segments can evoke strong emotional responses. Additionally, this approach enables Gezi Opera to display various emotional states within the same piece, making the emotional expression subtle and diverse. The unique design of melodic range in Fujian Gezi Opera not only elevates its artistic value but also offers an audio-visual feast for the audience. By skillfully utilizing pitch range and carefully arranging large-interval leaps, Gezi Opera not only enhances the expressiveness of the music but also achieves nuanced and diverse emotional expression.

2.1.2 Music structure

In the course of its development, the music of Fujian Gezi Opera has always maintained the absorption and fusion of old and new tones. This kind of open and inclusive characteristic makes its music form move forward to modernization while retaining the traditional charm. At the beginning, the music of Gezi Opera was dominated by the traditional structure of "seven-character tune", which was favored by the audience and spread widely in Minnan region of Fujian due to its simplicity, lightness and ease of transmission. However, with the development of The Times and

the changes of social culture, the music of Gezi Opera is not limited to this traditional form, but actively absorbs musical elements from different regions and different styles, and constantly enriches and expands its musical expression. In this process, the music of Gezi Opera gradually evolved from the original relatively simple "seven-character tone" structure to a more complex and diversified modern form structure. This evolution is not achieved overnight, but gradually realized in long-term artistic practice. On the one hand, composers introduced modern music theory and composing techniques, such as harmony, polyphonic, etc., to make the music of Gezi Opera more diversified in terms of melody, rhythm and harmony. On the other hand, the music of Gezi Opera constantly absorbs elements such as folk music and modern pop music in the performance practice, which makes it more close to the aesthetic needs of contemporary audiences. This change from tradition to modernity is not only reflected in the form of music, but also in the cultural connotation and social function carried by music. Modern Gezi opera music not only retains the cultural value of traditional Gezi opera music, but also shows its artistic charm with The Times, becoming an important bridge between tradition and modern, classic and popular.

In the story of Qiaopi, the structure of the form breaks the regular structure of the traditional opera and gives more possibilities to the music. The musical structure of the song is shown below:

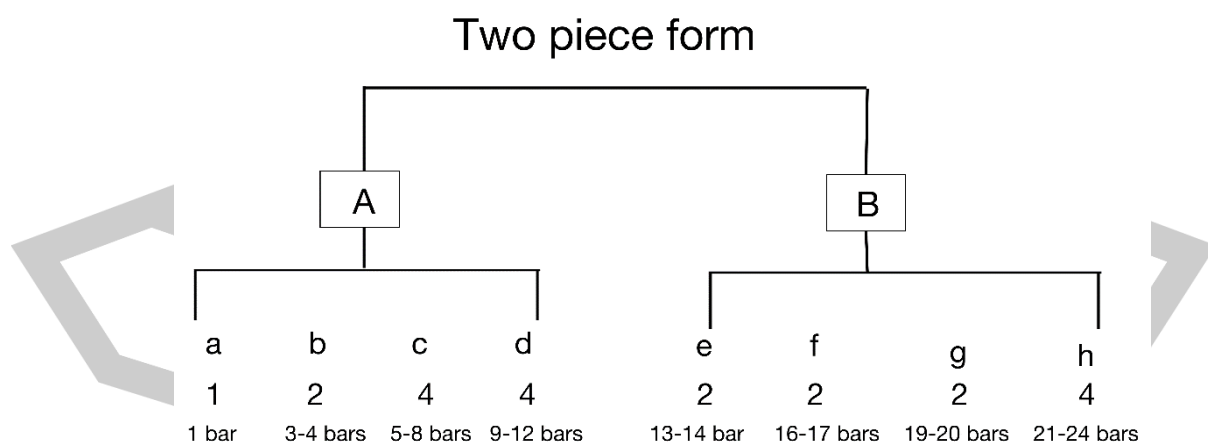


Figure 34. The story of Qiaopi

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

As can be seen from the picture above, This vocal segment is composed of two musical sections, each adhering to the classic structure of exposition, development, transition, and conclusion. In terms of lyrics, the traditional format of seven-character lines is maintained; however, a departure from convention is observed in the phrasing. The once regular 4+4+4+4 phrase structure has evolved into an irregular, non-square form, breaking away from symmetry. Additionally, the character count in the lyrics has shifted from the standard 4+3 pattern to a more flexible and varied arrangement, enhancing the fluidity and expressiveness of the language. Regarding the accompaniment, the erhu takes center stage as the principal instrument. Its melody largely retains the original character of the "seven-character tune" from the "landing sweep" period. Each musical phrase is distinctly separated, with clear boundaries and no overlapping connections. In many instances, an extra measure of interlude is added after phrases to moderate the musical mood, creating a leisurely atmosphere. This distinctive choice of accompaniment instruments and modal usage, combined with the traditional "yu" mode singing style, achieves a unique blend. It maintains a light-hearted feel while incorporating postmodern elements that introduce a novel auditory experience, as if bridging tradition and modernity and offering listeners a fresh artistic charm within a familiar melody.

2.1.3 Mode characteristics

The modal characteristics of modern Gezi Opera reflect a blend of tradition and modernity. On one hand, it retains the core pentatonic scale (Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi, Yu) from traditional Gezi Opera, which endows the music with a distinct regional style and cultural essence. For instance, the Yu mode is often used to convey delicate emotions, while the Zhi mode is typically employed to express cheerful sentiments. On the other hand, modern Gezi Opera incorporates contemporary musical theories, such as harmony and counterpoint, to enrich the musical texture and enhance expressiveness. Composers also flexibly employ modal transitions and even introduce Western modal systems based on the specific plot and emotional requirements of the play, thereby increasing the drama and tension in the music. This innovative approach to modality not only preserves the traditional charm of Gezi Opera but also enables it to better meet the aesthetic demands of modern

audiences, showcasing the vitality and appeal of this traditional art form in the contemporary era.

In this verse, it shows the color of "Yu" mode in Fujian Gezi Opera, which is a unique musical expression technique, which not only reflects in the melody and rhythm of music, but also deeply affects the emotional atmosphere of the whole play. In the "Yu" mode, the melody is usually based on the Yu tone, showing a melodious and slightly melancholy character. The details are shown in the following figure :

Figure 35 shows a musical score for the story of Qiaopi, illustrating the 'yu' mode. The score is written in 4/4 time and consists of six staves of music. The lyrics are in Chinese and Pinyin. The 'yu' note is highlighted in red boxes in the following phrases:

- 这 一 双 双 一 对 对 , (zhe yi shuang shuang yi dui dui)
- 无 助 眼 光 将 我 (wu zhu yan guang jiang wo)
- 望 , 时 难 年 荒 逼 人 走 。 (wang shi nan nian huang bi ren zou)
- 夫 妻 相 望 各 西 东 。 (fu qi xiang wang ge xi dong)
- 谁 怜 厨 里 守 望 人 , (shui lian cu li shou wang ren)
- 瞋 日 等 信 盼 归 鸿 。 谁 怜 南 洋 (ming ri deng xin pan gui hong shui lian nan yang)
- 飘 零 客 , 想 家 银 批 寄 何 方 , 寄 何 方 。 (piao ling ke xiang jia yin pi ji he fang ji he fang)

Figure 35. The story of Qiaopi

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

As illustrated in the figure above, the "yu" note appears 10 times at the key nodes of phrases and sections in this vocal segment, fully showcasing the musical color of the "yu" mode. This type of melodic line is smooth and graceful, resembling a delicate thread of emotion that vividly expresses the emotional changes of the characters in the play, especially in scenes filled with sorrow, longing, or deep affection. Actors skillfully use variations in intonation to enhance emotional

expression, layering their delivery to allow the audience to more profoundly feel the subtle changes in the characters' inner worlds, as if breathing and experiencing fate together with the characters. In terms of rhythm, Fujian Gezi Opera often employs a relatively gentle and stable rhythm pattern. This rhythmic approach, akin to the surface of a calm lake, helps create an atmosphere of distant tranquility, providing ample space for the nuanced expression of emotions. Meanwhile, the judicious use of ornamentation adds richness to the melodic texture. These embellishments act like the finishing touches, not only beautifying the melodic line but also better conveying the characters' emotional states in different contexts, making the transmission of emotions more delicate and three-dimensional. The choice of accompanying instruments is equally crucial. The erhu, with its graceful and slightly melancholic timbre, and the pipa, with its crisp and elastic quality, complement the melody of the "yu" mode perfectly. Together, these instruments create an artistic style that is melodious, deeply affectionate, and slightly melancholic, as if transporting the audience into a poetic world of emotions. Against this musical backdrop, the piece "The Story of Qiaopi" not only showcases the traditional charm of Gezi Opera but also, through the integration of modern musical techniques, presents a unique artistic appeal that distinguishes it from other operatic works.

2.1.4 Rhythm and beat

The rhythm and meter of modern Gezi Opera represent an organic integration of tradition and modernity. While retaining the stable and gentle rhythmic foundation of traditional Gezi Opera—often employing 2/4 or 4/4 time signatures to provide a steady framework for singing and performance—it skillfully incorporates modern musical elements such as syncopation, dotted notes, and triplets to enhance the music's dynamism and expressiveness. The rhythmic treatment is highly adaptable, adjusting according to emotional expression and plot requirements; for instance, the tempo quickens during intense emotional or tense scenes and slows down in lyrical or contemplative moments to create different atmospheres. By layering various rhythmic patterns and emphasizing dynamic accents, modern Gezi Opera creates a rich rhythmic texture and a strong sense of rhythm, adding depth and movement to the music. Additionally, the close alignment of rhythm with the

performers' movements achieves a synchronization of music and performance, enhancing the coherence and visual appeal of the stage presentation. This approach to rhythm and meter not only preserves the traditional charm of Gezi Opera but also caters to the aesthetic demands of contemporary audiences, infusing the art form with new vitality in modern society.

The Story of Qiaopi incorporates many different rhythms and beats from traditional gezi opera, as shown in the picture below:

The image displays a musical score for the piece 'The Story of Qiaopi'. The score is written in 4/4 time and includes Chinese lyrics. It features several annotations highlighting rhythmic elements:

- Traditional four-four beats:** A red box highlights the first measure of the first line, which contains a quarter note followed by three eighth notes.
- Syncopated rhythm:** A red box highlights a measure in the second line where the melody starts on the second beat.
- Syncopated rhythm:** A red box highlights a measure in the third line where the melody starts on the second beat.
- Syncopated rhythm:** A red box highlights a measure in the fourth line where the melody starts on the second beat.
- Syncopated rhythm:** A red box highlights a measure in the fifth line where the melody starts on the second beat.

The lyrics are: 这 一 双 双 一 对 对 ， 无 助 眼 光 将 我 望 ， 时 难 年 荒 逼 人 走 。 夫 妻 相 望 各 西 东 。 谁 怜 厨 里 守 望 人 ，

zhe yi shuang shuang yi dui dui wu zhu yan guang jiang wo wang shi nan nian huang bi ren zou fu qi xiang wang ge xi dong shui lian cu li shou wang ren

Figure 36. The story of Qiaopi

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

The composition adheres to a traditional 4/4 time signature, a rhythmic structure that is quintessential to the heritage of Gezi Opera. This choice of meter provides a solid and familiar foundation for the audience, evoking the traditional charm and cultural depth associated with the genre. However, the composer skillfully infuses modern rhythmic elements into this traditional framework, creating a dynamic interplay between the old and the new. Syncopated rhythms and dotted notes are particularly prominent, adding a layer of complexity and forward momentum to the

music. These modern rhythmic patterns not only invigorate the traditional structure but also introduce a sense of unpredictability and excitement, capturing the attention of contemporary listeners while still honoring the roots of Gezi Opera. Moreover, the piece masterfully employs variations in tempo and rhythmic density to delineate the character's emotional and psychological dimensions. It begins with a slow, deliberate tempo, characterized by a spacious eighth-note rhythm. This initial pacing allows for a contemplative and introspective mood, giving the audience time to connect with the character's inner world. As the piece progresses, the rhythm gradually intensifies, transitioning into a more rapid and intricate flow of sixteenth notes. This shift in rhythmic density not only accelerates the musical narrative but also mirrors the character's evolving emotional state, from calm reflection to heightened intensity. The transition is seamless, with each rhythmic change meticulously crafted to enhance the dramatic arc of the performance. This nuanced approach to rhythm and tempo is particularly effective in portraying the character's multifaceted nature. The initial slow and steady rhythm establishes a sense of stability and tradition, while the subsequent burst of rapid notes introduces a sense of urgency and complexity. The character's emotions are thus vividly conveyed through the music, allowing the audience to experience their journey in a deeply personal and immersive way. The interplay between these rhythmic elements—traditional and modern, slow and fast—creates a rich tapestry of sound that is both engaging and emotionally resonant. Through this intricate rhythmic design, the composition not only pays homage to the rich legacy of Gezi Opera but also pushes the boundaries of the genre, offering a fresh and dynamic interpretation that speaks to modern audiences.

2.1.5 Lyrics characteristics

On the basis of inheriting the traditional Gezi opera, the lyrics of modern Gezi Opera show a more abundant and diversified artistic style. It retains the simple format of the traditional seven-character sentence or cross sentence, while integrating modern life, social hot topics, etc., to make the content more contemporary. In terms of language use, modern Gezi Opera flexibly combines Hokkien and modern Chinese vocabulary, even buzzwords, to enhance the affinity and expression of lyrics. Delicate emotional expression, through rich vocabulary and rhetoric, vividly depict the inner

world of the characters, especially in the expression of complex emotions, can step by step, arouse the audience's resonance. The diversified sentence structure is no longer limited to fixed patterns, but according to the needs of emotions and plots, flexible use of long and short sentences, antithetical sentences, etc., to enhance the sense of rhythm and rhythm. The lyrics often quote traditional poetry and proverbs to enrich cultural connotations while conveying positive values. Closely combined with music, through rhyming and melody coordination, make the singing smooth and natural, enhance the artistic effect. The lyrics of modern Gezi opera fully consider the aesthetic needs of modern audiences, through concise and lively language and vivid emotional expression, close to modern life, attract young audiences, and show the strong vitality of traditional opera in modern society.

The characteristics of the lyrics of modern gezi opera are well reflected in the stories of Qiaopi, as shown in the following table:

Table 5. The story of Qiaopi lyrics

Chinese lyrics	English translation
这一双双一对对	This is a pair
无助眼光将我望	Helpless eyes looked at me
时难年荒逼人走	Times are hard and years are hard
夫妻相望各西东	Husband and wife face each other
谁连厝里守望人	Who keeps watch in the house
瞑日等信盼归鸿	Close the day such as letter Pangui hung
谁怜南洋飘零客	Who pity the South Ocean wanderer
想家银批寄何方	Where to send home the silver batch

The Story of Qiaopi still adopts the traditional sentence structure of seven characters and one sentence in the composition of lyrics of Gezi Opera, but in the choice of subject matter and content expression, it fully demonstrates the distinctive characteristics of modern Gezi Opera. Unlike traditional Gezi operas, which focus on historical stories, myths and legends, the Story of Qiaopi turns its perspective to modern life, focusing on the emotional bonds between overseas Chinese and their

relatives back home, as well as their lives in the changing times. This change of subject matter makes the works closer to the reality of contemporary audiences' lives and arouse wider resonance. In terms of language use, *The Story of Qiaopi* abandons classical Chinese or ancient Chinese words commonly found in traditional Gezi opera, and adopts modern Chinese words instead. This shift in language style not only makes the lyrics more accessible and enhances the affinity of the work, but also enhances the expression of the lyrics, enabling them to more directly convey modern emotions and life experiences. For example, when describing the yearning of overseas Chinese for their hometown, the lyrics use a modern Chinese expression such as "moonlight shines at the window, and the shadow of my hometown lingers in my heart", which is concise and poetic, so that the audience can quickly feel the nostalgia across the mountains and oceans. In terms of emotional expression, the lyrics of the *Story of Qiaopi* are delicate and subtle, and vividly depict the inner world of the characters through rich vocabulary and various rhetorical devices. Especially in the performance of complex emotions, lyrics can skillfully use layers of progressive techniques to show the emotions of the characters from shallow to deep, so as to trigger the emotional resonance of the audience. For example, when describing the scene of the separation of overseas Chinese from their families, the lyrics go from "gently waving goodbye to the familiar streets" to "tears blur my eyes, the pain in my heart is indescribable", and then to "May this overseas Chinese batch return to my hometown with my love". Through the layers of advance from external actions to inner feelings, and then to emotional support, the inner reluctance and concern of overseas Chinese are exquisitely displayed. Let the audience can deeply feel the emotional power across time and space.

In general, *The Story of Qiaopi* successfully integrates the traditional art form of Gezi Opera with modern life by integrating modern themes, modern language and delicate emotional expression on the basis of traditional sentence patterns, which not only makes the traditional Gezi Opera full of new vitality, but also presents an excellent work with profound emotional connotation and significance of The Times for the modern audience.

2.1.6 Singing characteristics

1) The delicacy of emotional expression

This piece of music sung by Zhuang Hairong pays attention to the delicate expression of emotions. Through rich timbre changes, cadence and subtle handling of rhythm, Zhuang Hairong vividly displays the emotional levels of the characters in the play. For example, when expressing the yearning of overseas Chinese for their hometown, they adopt a relatively soft and low timbre, and convey a deep and restrained nostalgia through slow rhythm and delicate trill processing. In the performance of the character's excitement or sadness and anger, the tone become brighter and louder, the rhythm accelerated, and the vocal range expanded to enhance the emotional explosive power.

2) A combination of traditional singing and modern techniques

In the singing, the traditional singing style of Gezi opera is retained, and the traditional Qupai provides a strong regional cultural atmosphere for the repertoire. At the same time, the composer cleverly incorporated modern musical techniques, such as harmony, polyphony and modern rhythm patterns, to make the music richer and more diverse. Thus, the combination of traditional singing and modern harmony enhances the three-dimensional and hierarchical sense of music. When dealing with these passages, teacher Zhuang Hairong not only retains the charm of traditional singing, but also makes the singing more modern and appealing through the use of modern techniques.

The Story of Qiaopi, as a modern gezi opera, not only inherits the essence of traditional Gezi opera in music and performance, but also integrates modern elements through innovative methods, making it show a unique artistic charm in melody, structure, rhythm, tone, lyrics and singing. The melody of the work is smooth and expressive, retaining the pentatonic scales commonly found in traditional Gezi opera, such as Gong, Shang, Jiao, Zheng and Yu, while subtly introducing the harmonic and melodic trends of modern music to enrich and diversify the music. In terms of musical structure, The Story of Qiaopi adopts the traditional four-sentence structure, but on this basis, it is flexible. Musical changes in different paragraphs promote the development of the plot, making the overall structure more compact and hierarchical. In terms of rhythm, on the basis of maintaining the steady rhythm of traditional opera, the play timely adds modern rhythm elements, such as syncopation, dotted notes, etc., adding dynamic and modern sense to the music. Tonally, the work

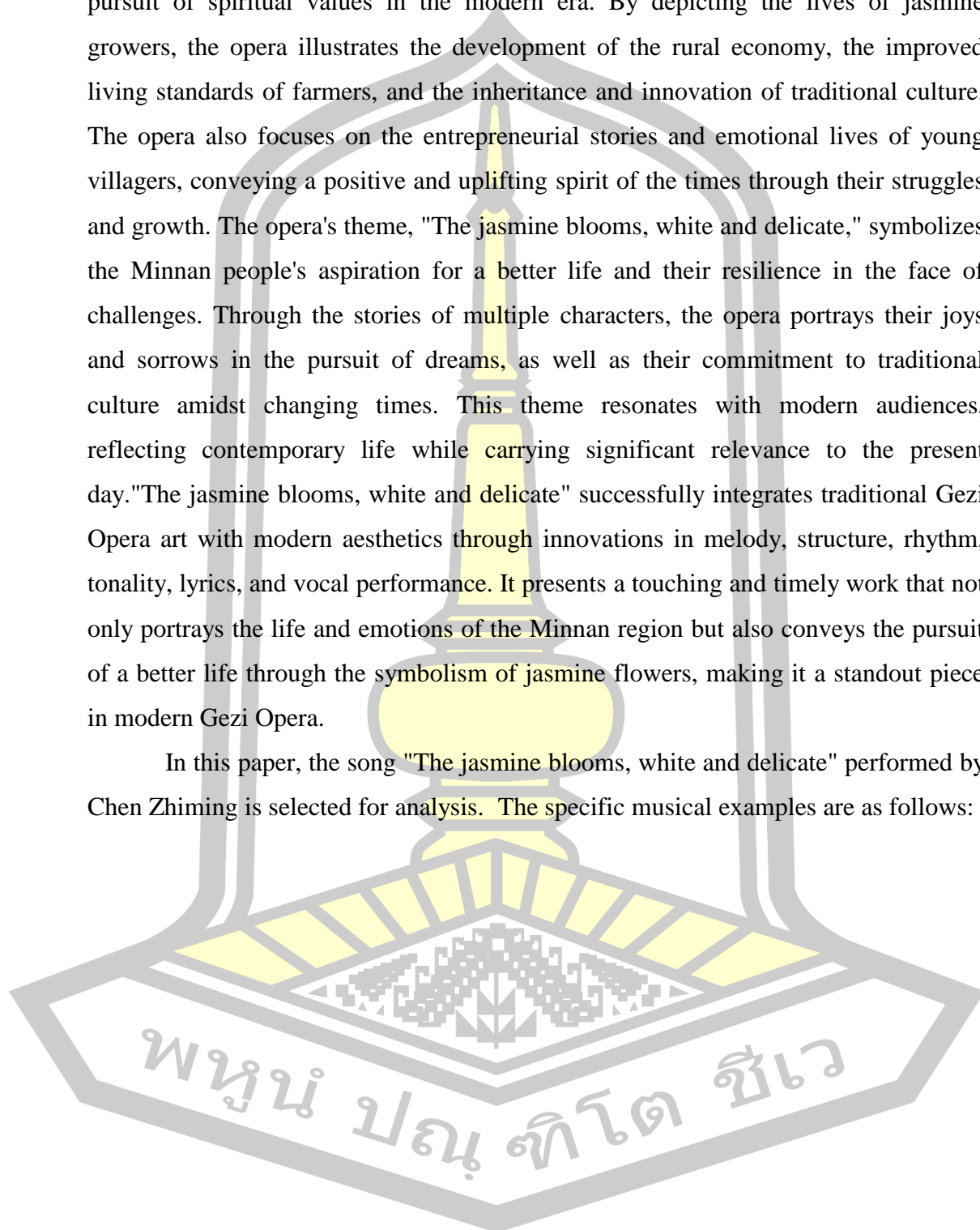
is dominated by Yu mode, creating a slightly melancholy and affectionate atmosphere, while subtly shifting the tone in some passages to enhance the tension of emotional expression. In terms of lyrics, although the traditional format of seven characters and one sentence is followed, a large number of modern life elements are integrated into the content, and modern Chinese vocabulary is used to make the lyrics more close to the reality of modern audiences' lives, and enhance the affinity and expression. In singing, the actors not only show the singing skills of traditional Gezi opera, but also vividly depict the inner world of the characters through delicate emotional processing and rich timbre changes, so that the audience can deeply feel the emotional changes of the characters. On the whole, through the innovation and integration of melody, structure, rhythm, tone, lyrics and singing, the Story of Qiaopi successfully combines the traditional opera art with modern aesthetics, presenting an excellent work with profound emotional connotation and significance of The Times for the audience.

2.2 The jasmine blooms, white and delicate

"The jasmine blooms, white and delicate" is a modern Gezi Opera work set against the backdrop of the Minnan region in Fujian, China. It uses the delicate jasmine flower as a symbol to portray the life emotions and cultural characteristics of the Minnan people. The story unfolds in a Minnan village, characterized by its mild and humid climate and distinct seasons, which are ideal for the growth of jasmine and other flowers. Jasmine, not only an important cash crop but also a cultural symbol of purity, elegance, and resilience, forms the core imagery of the opera. Through scenes of jasmine cultivation, harvesting, and processing, the opera showcases the pastoral landscapes of Minnan villages and the hardworking nature of the local people. Culturally, the Minnan region boasts a long history and rich traditions. Gezi Opera, as an important local opera form in Minnan, carries the emotions and memories of the local people. In the creation of this opera, the production team fully explored the folk music, dance, and customs of the Minnan region, combining traditional Gezi Opera artistry with modern musical techniques. This blend ensures that the opera retains its traditional charm while meeting the aesthetic demands of modern audiences. The opera incorporates both traditional Gezi Opera vocal styles and modern harmonies and melodies, enriching the musical texture. Set in a contemporary Minnan village,

"The jasmine blooms, white and delicate" reflects the changes in rural life and the pursuit of spiritual values in the modern era. By depicting the lives of jasmine growers, the opera illustrates the development of the rural economy, the improved living standards of farmers, and the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture. The opera also focuses on the entrepreneurial stories and emotional lives of young villagers, conveying a positive and uplifting spirit of the times through their struggles and growth. The opera's theme, "The jasmine blooms, white and delicate," symbolizes the Minnan people's aspiration for a better life and their resilience in the face of challenges. Through the stories of multiple characters, the opera portrays their joys and sorrows in the pursuit of dreams, as well as their commitment to traditional culture amidst changing times. This theme resonates with modern audiences, reflecting contemporary life while carrying significant relevance to the present day. "The jasmine blooms, white and delicate" successfully integrates traditional Gezi Opera art with modern aesthetics through innovations in melody, structure, rhythm, tonality, lyrics, and vocal performance. It presents a touching and timely work that not only portrays the life and emotions of the Minnan region but also conveys the pursuit of a better life through the symbolism of jasmine flowers, making it a standout piece in modern Gezi Opera.

In this paper, the song "The jasmine blooms, white and delicate" performed by Chen Zhiming is selected for analysis. The specific musical examples are as follows:



茉莉开花白丝丝
(The jasmine blooms, white and delicate)

Fujian
Transcription by Leqi Tang

嘿 茉莉开花白丝丝， 半夜做梦
hei mo li kai hua bai si si lei ban ye zuo meng

5
想抱伊， 想抱伊。 茉莉
xiang bao yi xiang bao yi mo li

10
开花白丝丝， 白丝丝白丝丝， 半夜做梦
kai hua bai si si lei bai si si lei bai si si ban ye zuo meng

13
半夜做梦 做梦想抱伊。 嘿啰嘿 嘿啰嘿
ban ye zuo meng zuo meng xiang bao yi lei hei luo hei hei luo hei

16
嘿啰嘿 嘿啰嘿 茉莉
hei luo hei luo hei luo hei mo li

21
开花白丝丝， 白丝丝白丝丝， 离乡最苦， 离乡
kai hua bai si si lei bai si si bai si si li xiang zui ku li xiang

25
最苦想妹伊呀。 伊呀伊呀伊 伊伊啰嘿 伊啰嘿
zui ku xiang mei yi ya yi ya yi ya yi ya yi luo hei yi luo hei

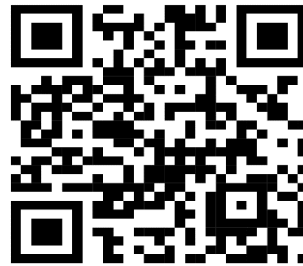


Figure 37. The jasmine blooms, white and delicate

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

The play analyzed from the following six aspects:

2.2.1 Melody characteristics

The melody of this piece spans a wide range of pitches, which is a notable characteristic that contributes to its rich expressiveness. This broad melodic range allows the music to convey a spectrum of emotions, from the deepest sorrow to the highest exuberance. The composer skillfully navigates through various registers, creating a dynamic interplay between high and low notes that keeps the listener engaged. The use of wide leaps and sustained high notes adds a sense of drama and intensity, while the lower register provides a grounding and reflective quality. This expansive melodic range also showcases the vocal capabilities of the performers, requiring a high level of technical skill and emotional depth to execute the demanding vocal lines. The wide pitch range is not merely a technical feature; it is integral to the narrative of the music, enhancing the storytelling aspect by mirroring the emotional highs and lows of the characters.

The details are shown in the following figure:

The figure shows two lines of a musical score in 4/4 time, with lyrics in Chinese and Pinyin. The first line contains the lyrics: 嘿 茉莉 开花 白 丝丝 嘞, 半夜 做梦 (hei mo li kai hua bai si si lei ban ye zuo meng). The second line contains: 想 抱 伊, 想 抱 伊。 茉莉 (xiang bao yi xiang bao yi mo li). Annotations include: 'High pitch' pointing to a high note in the first line; 'Broad interval' pointing to a wide interval between notes in the second line; 'Big jump in continuous interval' pointing to a large interval between notes in the second line; and another 'High pitch' pointing to a high note in the second line.

Figure 38. The jasmine blooms, white and delicate

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

As illustrated in the musical example above, the motivic theme of this piece is characterized by its high pitch range and broad interval. Specifically, the melody frequently ascends to the upper register, creating a sense of soaring and

expansive musical expression. This is particularly evident in measures 3-4 and 5-7, where the melody features successive large intervallic leaps. These leaps not only add a sense of dynamism and urgency to the music but also reflect the characteristics of traditional Chinese labor chants. The high-pitched sustained notes in the upper register evoke the spirit of collective effort and determination often found in labor songs, where the high notes might symbolize the exertion and unity of the workers. This thematic motif, with its wide-ranging and high-pitched nature, serves as a powerful musical device that captures the essence of hard work and perseverance, making it a distinctive and memorable element of the piece.

2.2.2 Musical structure

The formal structure of this piece departs from the traditional structure of Gezi Opera. In conventional Gezi Opera, the musical form is essentially regular and orderly, typically characterized by a seven-character-per-line structure in the lyrics. This regularity provides a sense of stability and predictability, aligning with the traditional aesthetic values of the genre. However, in this modern rendition of Gezi Opera, while the lyrics still adhere to the seven-character-per-line format, the division of musical phrases is not confined to this rigid structure. Instead, the phrasing follows the natural flow of the melody, resulting in a non-square, fluid structure. This approach allows for greater flexibility and expressiveness in the music, as the phrasing can expand or contract according to the demands of the melodic line. This fluidity in phrase structure not only adds a layer of complexity to the piece but also enhances its emotional depth and dynamic range, making it a more engaging and contemporary interpretation of the traditional Gezi Opera form. Moreover, this fluid structure enables the music to better capture the nuances of human emotion and dramatic tension. By allowing the phrases to follow the natural contours of the melody, the composer can create moments of tension and release that are more organic and less formulaic. This, in turn, allows the performers to deliver a more nuanced and emotionally resonant performance. The result is a piece that, while still rooted in the traditions of Gezi Opera, feels fresh and relevant to contemporary audiences. It bridges the gap between the past and the present, offering a new perspective on a beloved art form while still honoring its rich cultural heritage.

As shown in the following picture:

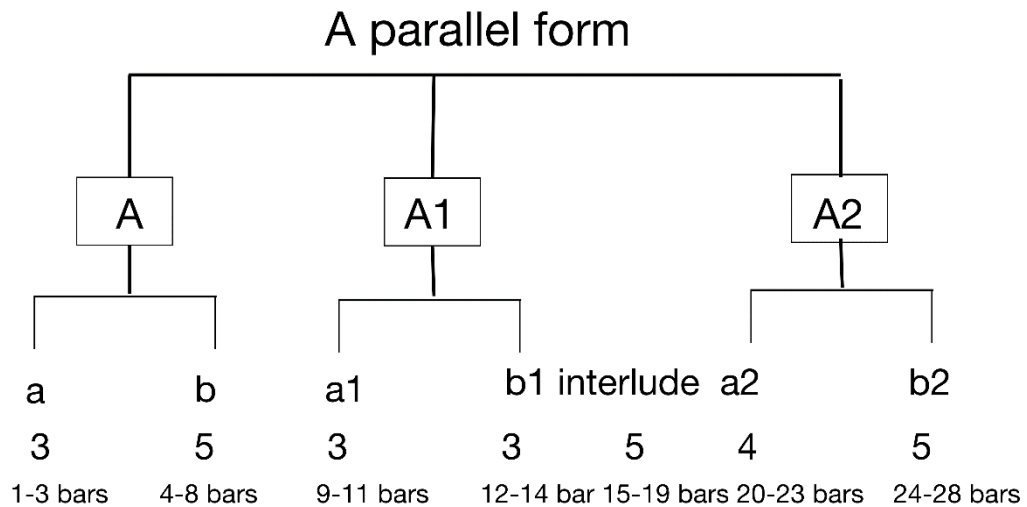


Figure 39. The jasmine blooms, white and delicate

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

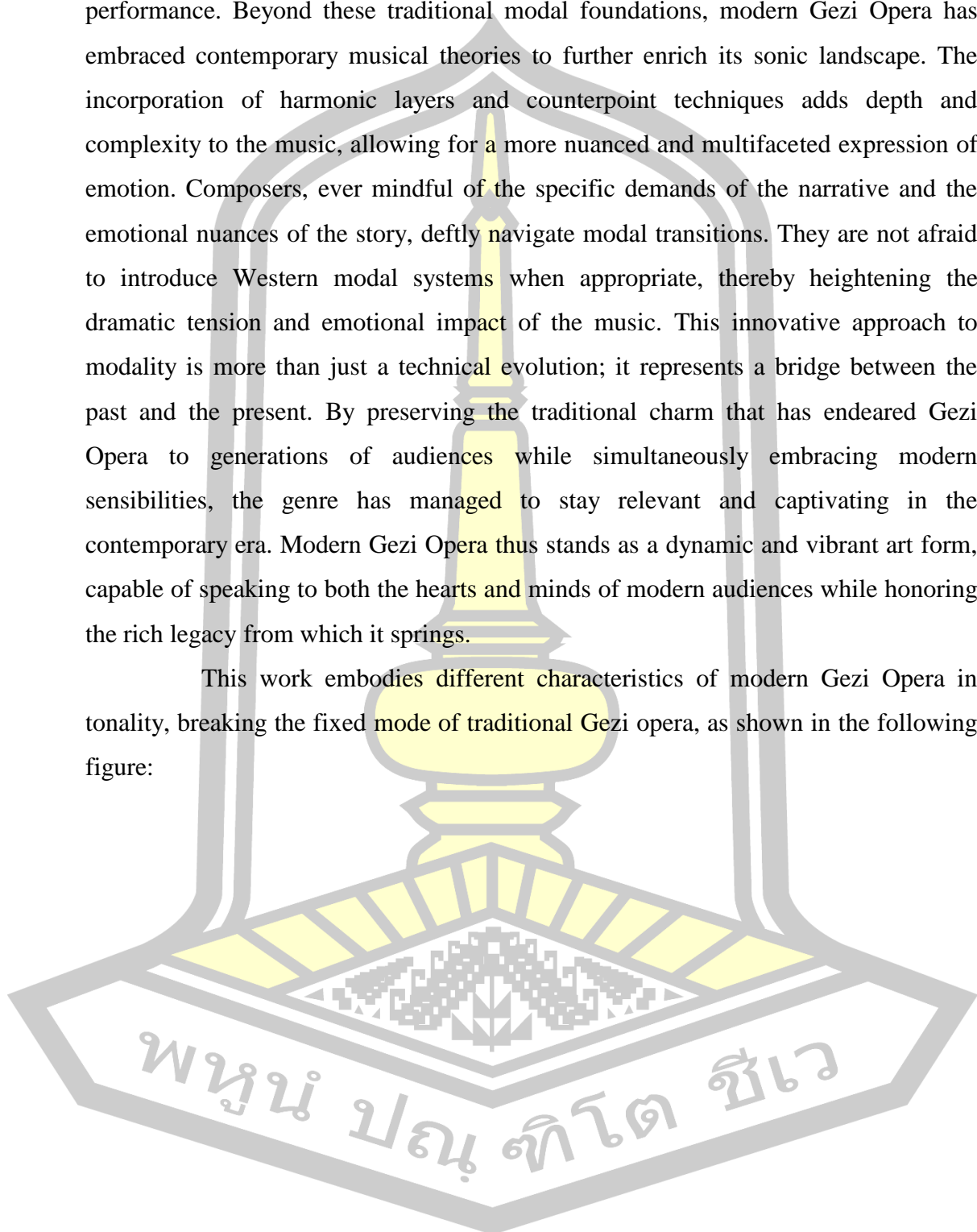
As can be seen from the musical example above, this particular part consists of three parallel musical passages, each composed of two different musical sentences. In terms of lyrics, the traditional seven-word format remains, but the once regular 4+4+4+4 structure has evolved into an irregular, non-square form, breaking the previous symmetrical structural features. In addition, the melody now consists of only two sentences instead of the traditional four. The second and third phrases serve as different repetitions of the first phrase, reinforcing the subject material and deepening the listener's impression. The last two sentences also reflect the musical characteristics of traditional labor chants, adding a layer of cultural and historical depth to the work.

2.2.3 Mode characteristics

The tonal characteristics of modern Gezi Opera serve as a testament to the seamless integration of time-honored traditions and contemporary innovations. Rooted in the foundational pentatonic scale (Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi, Yu) that has long defined traditional Gezi Opera, this musical form preserves the essence of a regional sound and cultural heritage that resonates deeply with its audience. The Yu mode, with its gentle and introspective qualities, is often employed to evoke a sense of delicate emotion, capturing the subtleties of the human experience. Conversely, the Zhi mode, characterized by its brighter and more uplifting tones, is typically selected

to convey feelings of joy and exuberance, bringing a sense of liveliness to the performance. Beyond these traditional modal foundations, modern Gezi Opera has embraced contemporary musical theories to further enrich its sonic landscape. The incorporation of harmonic layers and counterpoint techniques adds depth and complexity to the music, allowing for a more nuanced and multifaceted expression of emotion. Composers, ever mindful of the specific demands of the narrative and the emotional nuances of the story, deftly navigate modal transitions. They are not afraid to introduce Western modal systems when appropriate, thereby heightening the dramatic tension and emotional impact of the music. This innovative approach to modality is more than just a technical evolution; it represents a bridge between the past and the present. By preserving the traditional charm that has endeared Gezi Opera to generations of audiences while simultaneously embracing modern sensibilities, the genre has managed to stay relevant and captivating in the contemporary era. Modern Gezi Opera thus stands as a dynamic and vibrant art form, capable of speaking to both the hearts and minds of modern audiences while honoring the rich legacy from which it springs.

This work embodies different characteristics of modern Gezi Opera in tonality, breaking the fixed mode of traditional Gezi opera, as shown in the following figure:



嘿 茉莉 开花 白丝丝 嘞， 半夜 做梦
 hei mo li kai hua bai si si lei, ban ye zuo meng

5 想抱伊， 想抱伊。 茉莉
 xiang bao yi xiang bao yi mo li

10 开花 白丝丝 嘞， 白丝丝 嘞 白丝丝， 半夜 做梦
 kai hua bai si si lei bai si si lei bai si si ban ye zuo meng

13 半夜 做梦 做梦 想抱伊 嘞。 嘿 嘞 嘿 嘞 嘿
 ban ye zuo meng zuo meng xiang bao yi lei hei luo hei hei luo hei

16 嘿 嘞 嘿 嘞 嘿 嘞 嘿 嘞 茉莉
 hei luo hei luo hei luo hei luo hei mo li

21 开花 白丝丝 嘞， 白丝丝 白丝丝， 离乡 最苦， 离乡
 kai hua bai si si lei bai si si bai si si li xiang zui ku li xiang

25 最苦 想妹伊 呀。 伊呀伊呀伊 呀 伊 伊 嘞 伊 嘞 嘿
 zui ku xiang mei yi ya yi ya yi ya yi ya yi luo hei yi luo hei

Figure 40. The jasmine blooms, white and delicate

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

As illustrated in the musical example above, this composition is distinguished by its adherence to the Zhi mode, which represents a significant divergence from the conventional reliance on the Yu mode in traditional Gezi Opera. In the traditional framework, the Yu and Jue notes typically form the melodic nucleus, weaving a tapestry of sound that is both characteristic and emotionally evocative of the genre. However, this particular piece takes a bold and innovative turn by foregrounding the Zhi note, thereby redefining the melodic and emotional landscape

of the music. This strategic emphasis on the Zhi note is not merely a stylistic choice; it is a fundamental shift that permeates the entire composition. The Zhi note is consistently utilized as a pivotal point of resolution, appearing frequently at the cadential points where the music seeks to rest or conclude. This recurring use of the Zhi note as a concluding pitch imparts a sense of stability and finality, grounding the listener in a new tonal center that feels both familiar and refreshingly novel. Moreover, the prominence of the Zhi note throughout the piece creates a unique tonal identity that sets it apart from traditional Gezi Opera. By choosing to center the music around the Zhi mode, the composer has crafted a soundscape that is rich in emotional depth and dynamic range. This innovative approach not only challenges the traditional modal conventions but also expands the expressive capabilities of the genre, allowing for a more nuanced and varied emotional narrative. In essence, this piece transcends the boundaries of traditional Gezi Opera by reimagining its modal foundation. The consistent use of the Zhi note as a dominant and resolving pitch not only redefines the melodic structure but also infuses the music with a new sense of purpose and direction. This bold departure from tradition, while still honoring the genre's rich cultural heritage, results in a composition that is both a tribute to the past and a bold step into the future. It stands as a testament to the evolving nature of Gezi Opera, demonstrating its capacity to adapt and innovate while remaining true to its core essence.

2.2.4 Rhythm and beat

The rhythmic and metrical framework of contemporary Gezi Opera exemplifies a harmonious blend of traditional and modern elements. It maintains the steady and soothing rhythmic base characteristic of traditional Gezi Opera, typically utilizing 2/4- or 4/4-time signatures to offer a consistent structure for vocal delivery and performance. Simultaneously, it adeptly integrates contemporary musical components like syncopation, dotted rhythms, and triplets, thereby augmenting the music's vitality and expressiveness. The rhythmic manipulation is highly versatile, tailored to the emotional nuances and narrative demands of the performance; for example, the tempo accelerates during moments of high tension or intense emotion, and decelerates during more reflective or lyrical passages to evoke varied moods. By interweaving diverse rhythmic patterns and accentuating dynamic accents, modern

Gezi Opera constructs a complex rhythmic tapestry and a pronounced rhythmic drive, enriching the music with depth and fluidity. Moreover, the precise synchronization of rhythm with the performers' movements ensures a seamless integration of music and stage action, enhancing the overall coherence and visual impact of the performance. This rhythmic approach not only upholds the traditional allure of Gezi Opera but also aligns with the evolving tastes of contemporary audiences, breathing new life into the art form within the context of modern society.

There are two levels of variation in this song, which show contrast in rhythmic performance, as shown in the figure below:

嘿 茉莉开花白丝丝嘞, 半夜做梦
hei mo li kai hua bai si si lei ban ye zuo meng

10
开花白丝丝嘞, 白丝丝嘞白丝丝, 半夜做梦
kai hua bai si si lei bai si si lei bai si si ban ye zuo meng

Figure 41. The jasmine blooms, white and delicate

Source: Leqi Tang, 2024

As illustrated in the musical example above, the piece begins with a series of extended rhythmic long notes, which are reminiscent of the characteristics of Chinese folk songs, particularly mountain songs. These long, sustained notes are characterized by their bright and resonant timbre, creating a sense of spaciousness and freedom that is often associated with the open landscapes of mountainous regions. This opening section sets a reflective and expansive mood, drawing the listener into the world of the music with its soaring melodies. Transitioning into the second section, the rhythm shifts dramatically to a regular and rapid flow of eighth notes. This change in rhythmic texture is emblematic of another genre within Chinese folk music: the labor chant. Labor chants are typically characterized by their steady, driving rhythm, which mirrors the repetitive and rhythmic nature of physical labor. The quick, even flow of eighth notes in this section not only evokes the energy and

determination of workers but also adds a dynamic and propulsive quality to the music. This juxtaposition of the reflective, extended notes of the opening with the energetic, rhythmic drive of the second section highlights a significant innovation in modern Gezi Opera. Unlike traditional Gezi Opera, which often maintains a more consistent rhythmic and melodic approach, modern Gezi Opera embraces a broader range of musical styles and techniques. By incorporating elements from various genres of Chinese folk music, modern Gezi Opera enriches its musical vocabulary and enhances its expressive capabilities. This fusion of styles not only pays homage to the rich traditions of Chinese music but also brings a fresh and contemporary feel to the art form, making it more engaging and relevant to modern audiences.

2.2.5 Lyrics characteristics

Building upon the foundation of traditional Gezi Opera, the lyrics of its modern counterpart exhibit a richer and more varied artistic style. While preserving the straightforward structure of the traditional seven-character line or cross-line format, modern Gezi Opera incorporates elements of contemporary life and current social issues, thereby making the content more relevant to today's audience. In terms of language, modern Gezi Opera adeptly blends Hokkien with modern Chinese vocabulary, and even includes trendy slang, to boost the relatability and expressiveness of the lyrics. The lyrics are marked by their nuanced portrayal of emotions, achieved through a rich lexicon and rhetorical devices, which vividly lay bare the inner worlds of the characters. Particularly in the expression of complex emotions, the lyrics are able to build up layer by layer, thus resonating deeply with the audience. The sentence structure is no longer confined to set patterns but instead flexibly employs a mix of long and short sentences, parallel structures, and more, to enhance the rhythmic feel and musicality. Traditional poetry and proverbs are often woven into the lyrics to add cultural depth while conveying positive values. Closely aligned with the music, the lyrics are crafted with attention to rhyme and melodic coordination, ensuring a smooth and natural delivery that enhances the overall artistic impact. Fully attuned to the aesthetic preferences of contemporary audiences, modern Gezi Opera lyrics use concise and lively language, coupled with vivid emotional expression, to connect with modern life and attract younger viewers, thereby demonstrating the enduring vitality of traditional opera in today's society.

In The song "The jasmine blooms, white and delicate", the lyrics are quite different from the traditional opera, which is reflected in the following aspects:

- 1) The lyrics are changed from 4 sentences to 2 sentences

Table 6. The jasmine blooms, white and delicate lyrics

Chinese lyrics	English translation
茉莉开花白丝丝	The jasmine blooms, white and delicate
半夜做梦想抱伊	Dream of holding you in the middle of the night

As can be seen from the lyrics in the musical example above, the structure has been simplified from the traditional four-line format to just two lines. At first glance, the content of the lyrics appears to be a sweet expression of longing for a loved one, filled with tender emotions and romantic yearning. However, upon closer examination, it becomes clear that these lines are actually sung by the male protagonist on the brink of facing death. The high-pitched and resonant quality of his voice, with its penetrating power, not only conveys the intensity of his emotions but also serves as a powerful prelude to the subsequent choral section featuring labor chants. This transformation in lyrical structure and content is a deliberate artistic choice. By condensing the lyrics into two lines, the composer creates a sense of urgency and immediacy, reflecting the protagonist's dire circumstances. The sweetness of the words contrasts sharply with the gravity of his situation, adding a layer of poignancy to the scene. The protagonist's voice, soaring and clear, cuts through the silence, capturing the audience's attention and setting the stage for the communal strength and resilience that the labor chants evoke. This juxtaposition of personal emotion and collective spirit is a hallmark of modern Gezi Opera, blending individual narratives with broader themes of community and perseverance.

- 2) The lyrics use a lot of onomatopoeia words

The most common sentence pattern in modern opera is to add words such as "ouch", "ah" and "ya" in the lyrics to reflect the drama of the opera, as shown in the table below :

Table 7. The jasmine blooms, white and delicate lyrics

嘿	嘞	啰	伊	呀
hei	lei	luo	yi	ya

As illustrated in the table above, this song features five onomatopoeic words that serve various functions within the lyrics. Some of these onomatopoeic words, such as "bái sī sī lēi" , are used as decorative elements immediately following the main lyrics. Although these onomatopoeic words do not carry specific semantic meanings, they play a crucial role in embellishing the song. The close integration of these interjections with the melody adds a layer of delicacy and subtlety to the overall musical texture. This unique musical treatment not only enhances the fluidity of the melody but also enriches the emotional expression of the song, allowing listeners to more fully appreciate the distinctive charm of Gezi Opera. In addition to their decorative function, onomatopoeic words are also employed as labor chants, particularly in measures 15-16 and 26-27. In these instances, the onomatopoeic words take center stage as the main lyrical content, highlighting the industrious and courageous spirit of the working people. By incorporating these onomatopoeic elements in multiple ways, the song effectively conveys a range of emotions and narratives. The interplay between the decorative use of onomatopoeia and its role in labor chants creates a dynamic and multifaceted listening experience. This approach underscores the versatility of onomatopoeic words in music, demonstrating how they can be utilized to evoke different moods and convey various aspects of human experience.

2.2.6 Singing characteristics

1) Loud and clear singing voice

In the solo section of this song, performed by Teacher Chen Zhiming (measures 1-8), the vocal characteristics are marked by a rugged and resonant quality. The song demands a wide vocal range and extensive tessitura, making it extremely challenging to perform. However, Teacher Chen Zhiming delivers an exceptional interpretation. His voice effortlessly navigates the broad range, showcasing his

remarkable vocal control and expressive power. The way he handles the high and low notes with such precision and emotion truly highlights his mastery of the art form.

2) Collectivity and interactivity

Beginning from measure 9 of the song, the musical style shifts to that of a labor chant, a distinctive feature that emerges in modern Gezi Opera. From this point, the composition incorporates the characteristic "call and response" pattern, where a lead singer initiates a phrase and is followed by a chorus. The rhythm becomes more intricate and the tempo accelerates, infusing the music with a sense of urgency and tension. This dynamic change not only quickens the pace but also heightens the emotional intensity, drawing listeners into the lively and spirited atmosphere that labor chants are known for.

3. Summary

In this chapter, the author makes an in-depth analysis of the musical characteristics of Minnan Gezi Opera from two dimensions of tradition and modernity. In order to comprehensively explore the development of this opera form and its artistic characteristics, the author chooses three representative works as the research objects: the traditional Gezi opera focuses on Su Yanrong's *Sanplease Fan Lihua*, while the modern Gezi Opera chooses the *Story of Overseas Chinese* by Zhuang Huirong and the *Jasmine Flower as white as Snow* by Chen Zhiming. Through the detailed analysis of these three works, the author not only reveals their unique charm, but also shows the evolution process of Gezi opera from tradition to modern times and its inherent continuity. As for the traditional opera, the author focuses on the analysis of Su Yanrong sang the classic play "Three please Fan Lihua". This work is not only a classic in Gezi opera, but also an important cultural heritage passed down to the present day. The author reveals the artistic essence of traditional gezi opera through the detailed interpretation of its melody characteristics, song form structure, tone characteristics, rhythm and beat, lyrics content and singing skills. For example, in terms of melody, "Sanplease Fan Lihua" adopts the characteristics of broad vocal range and high accent, combined with local unique tunes such as "seven-character tune" and "miscellany tune", so that the music is full of changes without losing stability. In terms of singing skills, Su Yanrong successfully created a deep and complex female role image with her exquisite voice control and emotional

expression. In the part of modern Gezi Opera, the author respectively discusses the Story of Overseas Chinese PI starring Zhuang Hairong and the Jasmine Flower blooming white as snow sung by Chen Zhiming. These two works represent the innovative development of Gezi opera in the context of contemporary society. Through the application of modern musical elements such as symphonic orchestration, "Qiaopi Story" makes traditional music more modern and attracts more young audiences; Jasmine Blossoms As White as Snow skillfully blends modern dance and musical elements to enrich the performance, and has won widespread praise through its delicate emotional portrayal. By analyzing six key aspects of the two works, the author shows how modern Gezi opera can make bold innovations while retaining the essence of tradition, satisfying both the expectations of the older generation of audiences for traditional art and the curiosity of the younger generation.

The author's analysis covers six key aspects: melodic characteristics, musical structure, tonal characteristics, rhythm and beat, lyric content, and singing technique. Each aspect is explored in detail, aiming to reveal the unique musical qualities of these works and the cultural connotations behind them. For example, in terms of melody characteristics, the author points out that traditional Gezi operas pay attention to broad vocal range and high voice performance, while modern works are more flexible; In the structure of musical form, the traditional opera follows the strict mode of transition, while the modern works are more inclined to free combination and improvisation. In terms of tone characteristics, traditional works mostly adopt fixed qupai interlocking style, while modern works incorporate more diversified musical styles. The design of rhythm and beat has also developed from the traditional three eyes to the modern diversified rhythm pattern; In terms of the content of lyrics, traditional works mostly tell historical stories and folklore, while modern works pay more attention to hot topics in contemporary society. Finally, in terms of singing skills, traditional opera emphasizes solid basic skills and deep emotional expression, while modern works pay more attention to actors' diversified performance ability. Through this comprehensive and in-depth investigation, the author not only provides a detailed insight into these three works, but also reveals the evolution path of Gezi Opera from its traditional roots to its modern adaptation and its internal continuity. Traditional Gezi opera has laid a solid music foundation and formed a unique artistic style. On this basis, modern Gezi opera has carried out bold innovation,

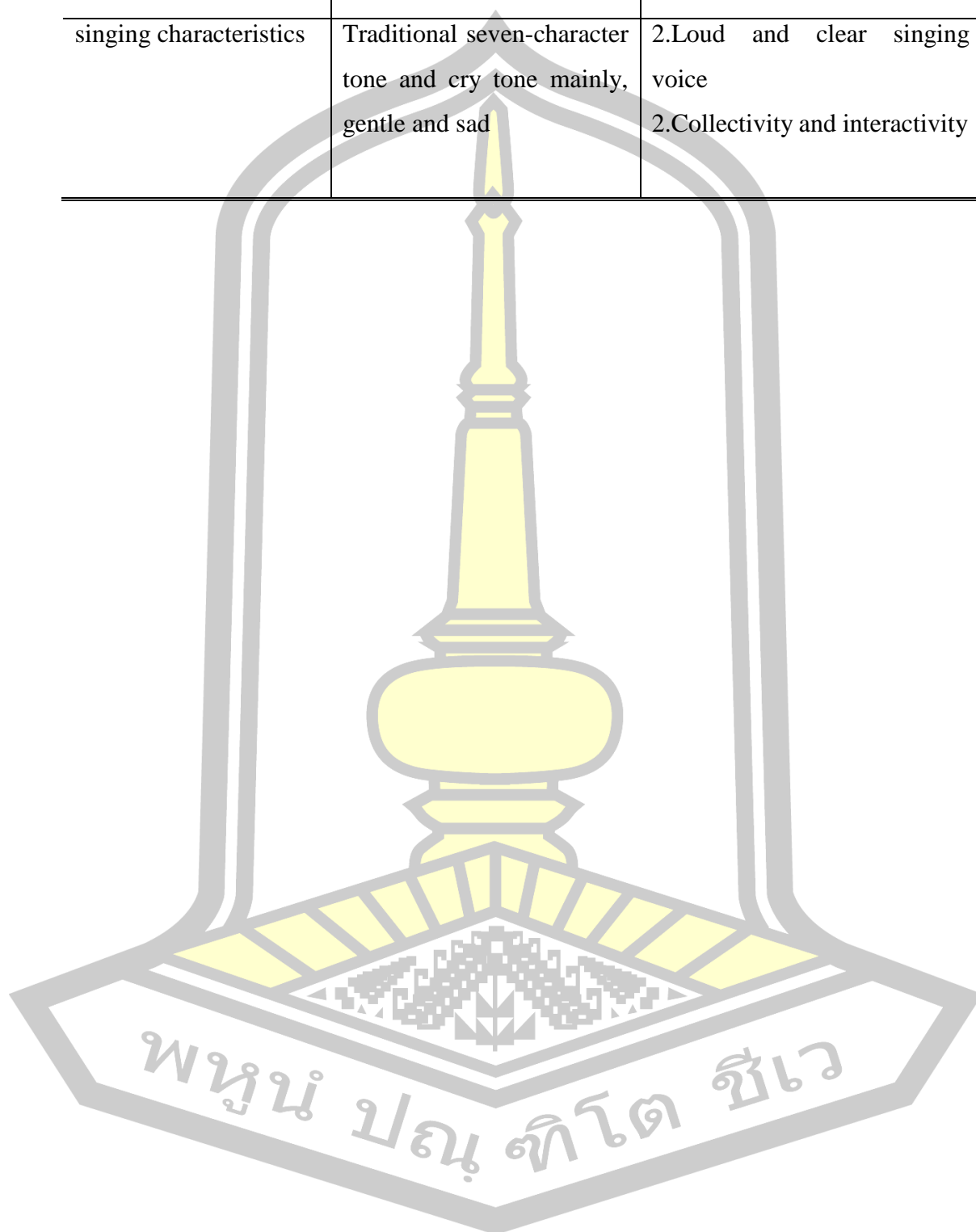
absorbed new musical elements and technical means, and made it more in line with the needs of modern society. The connection and difference between the two not only reflect the change of the art form of Gezi Opera, but also reflect the inheritance and development of traditional culture in the new era. This evolution process not only enhances the artistic expression of Gezi opera, but also brings a new viewing experience to the audience.

In a word, through a comprehensive analysis of six aspects of the three works, Sanplease Fan Lihua, The Story of Overseas Chinese Pippa and Jasmine Flower as white as Snow, the author not only shows their respective artistic characteristics, but also reveals the evolution of Gezi Opera from tradition to modern times and its internal continuity, providing a valuable perspective for understanding and appreciating this valuable art form.

Table 8. The characteristics of Chinese Gezi Opera music within Fujian Province

Characteristics	The traditional Gezi opera	The modern Gezi opera
Melody characteristics	Frequent use of the bass register Smooth melodic zone activity line	Minor interval sequence within the fifth interval framework (narrow tone sequence) The melodic range is wide
Music structure	Starting, bearing, turning, and integrating the stable and regular structure	Non-square structure with free, non-fixed pattern
Mode characteristics	"Yu" and "Jue" mode color	On the basis of the "yu" mode, the western size tonality color is added
Rhythm and beat	It's a three-eyed rhythm plate	Rhythm is not obvious, follow the music flow
lyric characteristics	The characteristics of one-word and multi-tone lyrics Add lining words to seven-word lyrics	1.The lyrics are changed from 4 sentences to 2 sentences 2. The lyrics use a lot of onomatopoeia words

singing characteristics	Traditional seven-character tone and cry tone mainly, gentle and sad	2.Loud and clear singing voice 2.Collectivity and interactivity



CHAPTER VI

The guidelines for the preservation and transmission of Chinese Gezi Opera music in Fujian Province, China

In this chapter, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with different informants of the Gezi opera in Fujian and Taiwan, including students, senior actors, troupe leaders, scholars and cultural workers, to fully understand the current survival status of the Gezi opera and the challenges it faces in inheritance and protection. Through a detailed analysis of these interview materials, the researcher summarized the main problems facing the Gezi opera in contemporary society, as follows.

1. Preservation and transmission of the Gezi opera by schools in Fujian
2. Preservation and transmission of Gezi opera by professional troupes in Fujian
3. Preservation and transmission of the opera by academic researchers in Fujian
4. Summary

1. Preservation and transmission of the Gezi opera by schools in Fujian

In this section, the researcher divided it into in-depth research on primary and secondary schools and universities, because the researcher think they are different promotion paths.

1.1 Protection and promotion of the Gezi opera by primary and secondary schools in Fujian

During my field investigation, the researcher interviewed four informants from primary and secondary schools in Fujian and obtained relevant information on the dissemination of the Gezi opera in Fujian in primary and secondary schools.

The first interviewer was Zhang Min, the principal of Xiamen Primary School, When the researcher asked her about the current promotion of Gezi opera in schools, she said: "Gezi opera is a kind of opera art unique to the Minnan region of Fujian region. It not only records the life of the people of Minnan region of Fujian, but also carries the long history of Minnan region of Fujian. With the development of society and the popularization of modern music education concepts, learning traditional music culture has become a necessity, which can improve the comprehensive quality of students. Our

school has already set up a student Gezi opera Troupe, and there are special teachers in charge, and it is gradually being standardized. However, there are also some problems. After all, we have nine years of compulsory education, and we certainly pay more attention to cultural courses, so we can only use the break time to rehearse Gezi opera. We have very limited time in terms of rehearsal.

The second interviewer was Wang Li, the music teacher of Xiamen Primary School, When the researcher asked her about the current promotion of Gezi opera in schools, she said: "Because we are in the Minnan region of Fujian region, our school currently has a special Gezi opera troupe. It is gradually being standardized and complete. The school leaders are also very supportive, but after all, we have nine years of compulsory education, so most students still have heavy cultural pressure, so the time for rehearsal of Gezi opera is very limited. Secondly, because our music teacher is not a professional in opera, there is still a certain lack of knowledge reserve, and we are also constantly learning.

The third interviewee was Du Hanyang, a student at Xiamen Primary School. When the researcher asked him how he learned Gezi Opera at school, he said: I am a native of Minnan region of Fujian. At present, our school also has a special troupe for Gezi opera, and I have joined it. I feel very happy during the rehearsal process, because I can perform the Taiwanese dialect that we usually speak at home with our family in the song, which is a very different experience for me. However, there are also some difficulties in rehearsal. First of all, the pressure of schoolwork makes our rehearsal unable to be regular, and it is often suspended because of exams.

The fourth interviewee was Qiu Yuejia, a student at Xiamen Primary School. When the researcher asked him how she learned Gezi Opera at school, she said: " I did not join the school's Gezi opera Club because my parents were not particularly supportive of my participation in the club's rehearsals. They felt that this was a waste of time and hoped that we would spend more time on learning cultural subjects.

From the interviews with the four informants, it can be seen that primary and secondary schools in Fujian attach a certain degree of importance to Gezi opera. However, due to many subjective or objective factors, the protection and inheritance of Gezi opera cannot be further promoted. Therefore, the researchers have the following plans and suggestions:

1) Incorporate the study of Gezi opera into the compulsory courses of nine-year compulsory education

Due to the great pressure of our students' cultural studies, although the school is vigorously popularizing Gezi opera and has also opened a series of club activities, it can still be ranked behind the main courses. Once there is an exam or special situation, it is suspended or shelved and cannot receive regular training. Therefore, incorporating the study of Gezi opera into the compulsory courses of nine-year compulsory education so that every student can be exposed to Gezi opera and like Gezi opera is the best way to protect this opera.(As shown in Figure 42-43)



Figure 42. Ms. Gezi teaches regular classes to the first graders at Yuannan Primary School

Source:Leqi Tang, 2024

พหุบัณฑิต ชีวะ



Figure 43. The teacher of Gezi Opera provides individual guidance to the first grade students of Yuannan Primary School

Source:Leqi Tang, 2024

2) Actively carry out Gezi Activities of bringing opera into campus

Because many students and teachers do not know about this opera. Therefore, it is very necessary to frequently carry out the introduction of the opera into the campus of primary and secondary schools. For example, inviting famous troupes or community troupes to frequently come to the campus for exchanges and cooperation can not only achieve the popularization of the opera, but also enable the opera troupe of the school to have the opportunity to perform and exercise, which of great benefit to the promotion and inheritance of the opera.(As shown in Figure 43-44)

พหุบัณฑิต ชีเว



Figure 44. Xiamen Gezhi Opera Study Center actors into the campus

Source:Leqi Tang, 2024



Figure 45. Xiamen Gezhi Opera Study Center actors with school leaders and students

Source:Leqi Tang, 2024

3) Establish an alliance of opera troupes between schools and hold joint performances or competitions regularly

School leaders should take the lead in strengthening the connection between schools. Establishing an alliance of opera troupes between schools, regularly holding performances and competitions of opera, promoting learning through performances and

competitions, greatly increase students' confidence and improve students' recognition of their own traditional opera culture. Improving national self-confidence is believed to be of great help to the promotion of the opera.(As shown in Figure 46-47)



Figure 46. Fujian primary and secondary school children's drama performance

Source:Leqi Tang, 2022

第五届福建省中小學生(少兒)戲劇展演
暨中国少兒戏曲小梅花荟萃福建选拔赛
結果公示

表演獎(个人项目业余组)

序号	单位	节目(唱段)名称	参演 演员	最终 成绩	排名	等次
1.25	厦门市海沧区青礁小学	歌仔戏《信义亭·投江》	顾芯	95.9	1	一等獎
1.18	福建省漳州市实验小学	歌仔戏《三家福》	曾子芮	94.7	2	
1.15	莆田市第二实验小学	莆仙戏《赠伞行·留店》	林小唯	94.0	3	
1.12	晋江市晋江市戏剧家协会	高甲戏《跨驴探亲》	曹旭森	93.1	4	
1.20	泉州师范学院第二附属小学	高甲戏《送水饭》	王修齐	93.1	4	
1.1	石狮市第二实验小学	高甲戏《公子游》	陈宜楠	92.4	6	
1.2	厦门市海沧区北阳学校	梨园戏《玉美行·岭路特魁》	吴祉莹	92.4	6	
1.17	福建省漳州市实验小学	歌仔戏《三家福》	杨可敏	91.0	8	
1.3	福建省龙海第一中学	芩剧《下金山》	陈苏瑶	91.0	8	
2.21	福州市象顶小学	闽剧《赵氏孤儿·说孤》	林仁和	90.4	10	
2.23	闽侯县白沙中心小学	闽剧《牡丹亭》	刘佳琦	90.4	10	
1.21	泉州师范学院第二附属小学	高甲戏《送水饭》	黄若霖	90.3	12	
2.18	福州市教场小学	闽剧《潘凤鸣·盘关》	刘舜青	90.3	12	
2.6	东山县文昌小学	潮剧《春香传·爱歌》	王祉莹	90.0	14	

Figure 47. Announcement of the results of the 5th Fujian primary and secondary School children's drama performance

Source:Lin Xin, 2022

1.2 Protection and promotion of opera by universities in Fujian

During my field investigation, the researcher interviewed three informants from universities in Fujian and obtained relevant information about the spread of opera in universities in Fujian.

The first interviewer is He Jiawen, a student from Xiamen University, When the researcher asked her about the current promotion of Gezi opera in schools, she said: We are professional opera learners of Fujian Gezi Opera in school. I think the artistic atmosphere of the school is very strong, and the teachers are very good and professional. They teach us by example and give us great help in learning opera. Overall, I think the learning experience is very good. The only shortcoming is that we lack some larger stage practice, because most of us perform in some activities held in the school, but I think if we want to become professional opera talents in the future, we need a bigger and broader stage, which have a greater improvement in our professional ability.

The second interviewer is Lin Xiaoyue, a Gezi opera teacher from Xiamen Arts University, When the researcher asked her about the current promotion of Gezi opera in schools, she said : The learning platform provided to students in our school is very good. I think the basic hardware facilities and teachers are very complete. Overall, it is good. There are two shortcomings. I think we do lack some opportunities to take students "out". Most of the time, they are entertaining themselves on campus. Second, I think students should strengthen the systematic study of theoretical knowledge about opera theory in addition to practice.

The third interviewer is Chen Boliang, a student from Xiamen University, When the researcher asked him about the current promotion of Gezi opera in schools, he said: I have heard of Gezi Opera in Fujian, and there are related clubs in our school, but I am not interested in it. Because I don't know what it is specifically and what it is talking about, I'm not very clear, sorry.

From the interviews with the three informants, it can be seen that universities in Fujian are divided into two categories, one is art universities and the other is ordinary universities. In art universities, both students and teachers attach great importance to the opera of Gezi opera, and the inheritance and protection of Gezi opera are very well done, but in ordinary universities, most people do not know enough about Gezi opera, and some

people have never heard of this opera. Therefore, in response to this polarized situation, the researchers have the following plans and suggestions:

In response to the current situation of the dissemination of Gezi opera in universities in Fujian and its polarization, the following are three suggestions:

1) Strengthen inter-school exchanges and cooperation:

In order to narrow the gap in the understanding of Gezi opera between art universities and ordinary universities, it is recommended to establish more inter-school exchanges and cooperation projects. For example, cooperation activities between art universities and ordinary universities can be organized, such as Gezi opera performances, academic lectures, seminars, etc. Through these activities, students from ordinary universities can more intuitively understand the charm of Gezi opera, while students from art universities can also share their learning experiences and practical results. This can promote cultural exchanges and mutual learning between the two types of universities, and enhance the interest and cognition of ordinary university students in Gezi opera.(As shown in Figure 48-49)



Figure 48. Fujian Normal University signed a contract with Zhangzhou Gezi Opera Heritage Protection Center

Source:Tang Leqi, 2023



Figure 49. Minnan Normal University and Zhangzhou Experimental Primary School cooperate to build
 Source: Tang Leqi, 2020

2) Introducing practical opportunities and stage experience:

In response to the problem of insufficient practical opportunities mentioned by students and teachers in art universities, it is recommended to strengthen cooperation with all sectors of society and provide more practical performance opportunities. By cooperating with theater troupes, cultural institutions, local governments, etc., more opera performances and promotion activities can be organized to enable students to show their talents on a larger stage and improve their practical experience. In addition, it is also possible to consider holding tours to give students the opportunity to perform in different cities and regions to broaden their horizons and practical experience.

3) Enriching the opera courses and publicity of ordinary universities:

For ordinary universities, it is recommended to add courses or lectures related to Gezi opera to enhance students' interest through systematic theoretical learning and interactive teaching methods. At the same time, the relevant knowledge and cultural connotations of Gezi opera can be promoted through on-campus clubs, interest groups, etc. For example, organizing opera appreciation activities, inviting opera experts to give lectures, and producing opera culture promotional materials can all help increase the

knowledge and interest of ordinary university students in the Gezi opera. Through such measures, the knowledge of the Gezi opera can be effectively popularized to more student groups.

2. Preservation and transmission of Gezi opera by professional troupes in Fujian

During my field research, the researcher interviewed three informants from professional Gezi opera troupes in Fujian and obtained relevant information on the spread of Gezi opera in the troupes.

The first interviewer was Zhuang Hairong, director of Xiamen Gezi Opera Study Center and the inheritor of Gezi Opera. When the researcher asked her how she should inherit and promote the opera as an inheritor, she said: Since its establishment 20 years ago, the troupe has played an important role in the inheritance and promotion of Gezi opera in Fujian. The troupe actively promotes Gezi opera through regular performances, education and training, and innovative adaptations. However, it is currently facing some challenges, including a limited audience group, difficulty in attracting young audiences, and constraints on funding and resources, which have affected the troupe's innovation and performance scale. In order to cope with these problems, the troupe plans to expand the scope of cooperation, strengthen publicity, and hope to obtain more government and social support.

The second interviewer is Su Yanrong, the inheritor of Gezi Opera. When the researcher asked her how she should inherit and promote opera as an inheritor, she said: It is a great pleasure to work in the troupe. I can do what I like. The atmosphere in the troupe is very good, and I can continuously improve my acting skills and explore new forms of expression. However, there are also some difficulties, such as limitations on performance venues and equipment, which affect the performance effect and audience experience. It is suggested to increase interactive performance forms, such as open rehearsals and audience meetings, to enhance audience participation and interest in Gezi opera.

The second interviewer is Chen Zhiming, the national gezi opera inheritor. When the researcher asked him how he should inherit and promote opera as an inheritor, he said: My work in the troupe is meaningful, but it also faces the challenge of a weak audience base. I think more social awareness and publicity are needed to enhance the influence of Gezi opera. The troupe's shortcomings in performance technology and facilities also affect

the performance effect. It is suggested to introduce modern technology and facilities to improve the performance quality and audience experience.

From the interviews with the three informants, it can be seen that the troupe has achieved certain results in promoting Gezi opera, but it faces challenges such as limited audience groups, difficulty in attracting young audiences, and funding and resource constraints. The informants mentioned that the lack of performance venues and equipment has affected the audience experience, insufficient publicity and lack of modern facilities. Therefore, in response to the above situation, the researcher has the following plans and suggestions:

1) Strengthen publicity and expand cooperation

Establish close cooperation with local governments, cultural institutions and mainstream media, and jointly plan and organize large-scale publicity activities and special reports, such as opera festivals and cultural exchanges, to enhance the popularity of the troupe. Use social media platforms (such as Weibo, WeChat, Douyin, etc.) and online advertising (such as search engine marketing and display advertising) to promote the troupe's performances and activities in a targeted manner and expand the audience. Carry out cooperative projects with universities, such as jointly hosting opera lectures, performances and seminars, to attract and cultivate young audiences and increase their interest and participation in Gezi opera.(As shown in Figure 50)



Figure 50. Minnan region of Fujian traditional art "Gezi Opera" winter camp

Source:Tang Leqi, 2023

2) Improve performance conditions and equipment

Actively apply for government cultural funds and corporate sponsorship to invest funds in upgrading performance equipment and venue facilities. Specifically, it includes updating the sound system, stage lighting and scenery to improve the performance effect and audience experience. Regularly inspect and maintain existing facilities to ensure the stability of performance quality. Consider renting or building more modern performance venues to provide a more comfortable and professional viewing environment, so as to attract more audiences and improve the overall level of performances.

3) Improve interactivity and audience participation

Regularly organize open rehearsals and opera workshops to give audiences the opportunity to experience the rehearsal process and artistic creation of Gezi opera in person, and enhance their understanding and interest in opera. Regular audience meetings are held to invite audiences to communicate with actors face to face, share performance experiences and behind-the-scenes stories, and enhance the interactivity of opera. Audience-participatory activities, such as role-playing experiences and script writing workshops, are held to allow audiences to participate in the creative process, enhance their sense of involvement and participation, and further stimulate their enthusiasm for the opera.(as shown in Figure 51-52)



Figure 51. The opera enters the community

Source:Tang Leqi, 2023



Figure 52. The opera enters the community performance

Source:Tang Leqi, 2023

3. Preservation and transmission of the opera by academic researchers in Fujian

During my field research, the researcher interviewed four informants who are academic researchers of the opera in Fujian and obtained relevant information circulated in the academic research circle of the opera in Fujian.

The first informant (Researcher at the Institute of Opera) said: I am currently working at the Institute of Opera, mainly responsible for the research on the history, evolution and artistic characteristics of the opera. We are working hard to organize and preserve relevant literature and materials, and carry out academic exchange activities. However, insufficient funds and staff shortages are the main challenges we face, which limit our ability to research and promote. I hope to solve these problems by seeking more external funding and strengthening cooperation.

The second informant (Researcher at the Institute of Opera) said: My research focuses on the performance skills and script analysis of Gezi Opera, especially the integration of traditional and modern Gezi Opera. We are conducting a survey on the skills of Gezi Opera actors with the goal of systematically recording and passing on these artistic skills. However, we have encountered some problems, such as the incompleteness and difficulty in obtaining relevant materials, which have affected the

comprehensiveness of the research. I suggest establishing a more complete data collection and sharing mechanism to solve these problems.

The third informant (University Gezi Opera Researcher) said: In colleges and universities, I am mainly responsible for the teaching and research of Gezi Opera. I believe that integrating Gezi Opera into course teaching and academic research is crucial to cultivating a new generation of opera talents. Although students have shown great interest in Gezi Opera, we still face shortcomings in teaching resources and academic support. I call on colleges and universities to pay more attention to the protection and inheritance of opera culture and provide richer academic resources and practical opportunities.

The fourth informant (University Gezi Opera Researcher) said: In my academic research on Gezi Opera, I mainly analyze its music and stage art. I found that the resources and facilities in this field in universities are relatively limited, which affects the breadth and depth of research. Interdisciplinary cooperation and international exchanges are very important for improving the level of research, but there are resource and communication barriers in actual operation. I suggest strengthening cooperation with other academic institutions and promoting more interdisciplinary and international exchange projects to promote the in-depth development of research.

In the interview with four academic researchers of the Gezi opera in Fujian, we learned that the research work of the Gezi opera faces some common challenges. Scholars from research institutes and universities pointed out problems such as insufficient funds, shortage of resources and difficulty in obtaining materials, which have affected their research and promotion work. Although they have made great efforts to promote the preservation and development of the Gezi opera, these practical difficulties still need to be solved to further improve the level and influence of research. In response to the above situation, the researchers have the following plans and suggestions:

1) Increase financial support and resource allocation:

Specific measures: strive for funding from the government and enterprises, and apply for special funds for the improvement of Gezi opera research and teaching resources. Special funds can be established to fund research projects, purchase equipment and maintain facilities. At the same time, explore cooperation with cultural

foundations and public welfare organizations to obtain additional financial support. Strengthen resource allocation to research institutes and universities to ensure the modernization of infrastructure and scientific research equipment.

2) Establish a sound data collection and sharing platform:

Create a centralized digital database to collect documents, audio and video materials and research results of the Gezi opera. This can be achieved through cooperation with local archives, museums and private collectors. Establish an open online platform to allow scholars and the public to access these materials and promote the sharing and exchange of materials. Regularly hold seminars and academic exchange activities to promote the dissemination and discussion of research results.

3) Promote interdisciplinary cooperation and international exchanges:

Specific measures: Promote cooperation with other academic fields, such as musicology, stage art and cultural studies, and improve the academic level of the Gezi opera through interdisciplinary research. Strengthen ties with international academic institutions and strive for international academic exchange opportunities, such as jointly hosting international academic conferences and exchanging researchers. Through these cooperation and exchanges, learn from international advanced experience and enhance the international influence and academic status of the study of the Gezi opera.

4. Summary

In today's rapidly changing cultural environment, the Gezi opera, as an important traditional art form in Fujian, faces the dual challenges of protection and promotion. In order to ensure the inheritance and development of this precious cultural heritage, we need to start from the three core aspects of professional talent training, deepening academic research, and audience and market cultivation, and formulate effective strategies. Through systematic training, expansive research and innovative market promotion, we can better cope with current challenges, achieve the sustainable development of the Gezi opera, and lay a solid foundation for its future development.

1) Training of professional talents

There are some difficulties in the training of professional talents in the opera troupes and research institutions. Due to the shortage of funds and limited resources, the training system is not perfect, especially in the training of young actors and the lack of systematic support for the inheritance of skills. Existing training focuses on traditional skills, with insufficient attention to modern needs and innovative applications. It is necessary to establish a more complete training system that covers both traditional skills and modern applications, while strengthening cooperation with universities and art colleges to train a new generation of talent in Gezi opera. Although some local opera colleges and training institutions have made certain efforts in training actors in Gezi opera, the overall talent training mechanism is not mature enough. In particular, the lack of attracting and cultivating young actors has affected the sustainable development of Gezi Opera. Fujian needs to strengthen the opera curriculum in basic education, encourage social capital to invest in the training of opera talents, and further improve the quality and coverage of professional training.

2) Academic research needs to be deepened

At present, the academic research of Minnan Gezi Opera mainly focuses on traditional skills and historical documents, and lacks the discussion of modernization and internationalization. The research field is relatively simple, and it fails to pay full attention to the adaptation of Gezi opera in contemporary society and the effect of global communication. Future research should be extended to the modern interpretation of Gezi opera, social and cultural influences and international exchanges, so as to enhance the diversity and depth of its academic research. The academic research on Gezi opera in Fujian is relatively weak, especially in the aspects of innovation and the needs of modern audiences. Although there are some traditional research results, there are few researches on the modern application and marketization of Gezi Opera. It is necessary to strengthen the research on the development and innovation of Gezi opera in contemporary society, enhance the comprehensiveness and foresight of academic research, and promote the combination of theory and practice.

3) Cultivation of audience and market

The audience base of Zhangzhou Opera in Minnan region of Fujian is relatively stable, but the market expansion and audience cultivation still need to be strengthened. Performance opportunities and promotion activities are relatively limited, which makes the influence of the opera and the audience can not be effectively expanded. It is necessary to attract more audience's attention by increasing performance opportunities, holding community activities and cultural festivals, while using modern media and digital platforms to enhance the exposure and market influence of the opera. However, the market of Xiamen Gezi Opera also faces the problems of narrow audience base and insufficient market cultivation. Although there is a certain traditional audience, how to attract young audiences and expand market influence is still a challenge. Fujian needs to enhance the popularity and appeal of Gezi Opera by strengthening publicity and promotion, conducting opera education and community interaction activities, while encouraging local governments and enterprises to invest resources to support the market development and audience cultivation of Gezi Opera.

In summary, Gezi Opera in Minnan region of Fujian faces many challenges in the process of protection and promotion, and the training system and education mechanism need to be further improved in the training of professional talents to ensure the skill inheritance and innovation of Gezi Opera. In terms of academic research, although there have been some achievements, there is an urgent need to expand the research horizon and deepen the discussion of modern development and global communication. The cultivation of audience and market is another important link, which not only needs to enhance the market influence and audience base of Gezi Opera, but also needs to strengthen audience attraction and market promotion. In general, only through strengthening talent training, deepening academic research and active marketing can we ensure that Gezi Opera can find a new development path between tradition and modernity, local and international, and achieve sustainable inheritance and innovation.

Table 9. The guidelines for the preservation and transmission of Chinese Gezi Opera music in Fujian Province

preservation and transmission people	The guidelines of preservation	The guidelines of transmission
School teachers, students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teachers and students collect and digitize Gezi opera materials for long-term preservation. 2. Teachers promote Gezi opera through school channels, and students engage in community outreach. 3. Students provide feedback on Gezi opera preservation, and teachers adjust teaching methods accordingly. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gezi opera is integrated into the school curriculum with elective courses and professional lectures. 2. "Opera in Campus" activities and Gezi opera clubs provide practical opportunities for students. 3. Teachers and students participate in community activities to expand the audience base.
Actor and inheritor of Gezi opera	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actors and inheritors document traditional plays and digitize audiovisual materials. 2. Traditional skills are passed down through mentorship and regular workshops. 3. Old scripts and audiovisual materials are collected and organized into archives. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actors and inheritors engage in "Opera in Campus" activities and establish school partnerships. 2. Young actors are trained through troupe programs and given performance opportunities. 3. Community performances and training activities attract young participants and refine inheritance efforts.
Academic researcher of Gezi opera	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Researchers collect Gezi opera materials and create a digital database for preservation. 2. A digital database is established to facilitate the sharing and research of Gezi opera materials. 3. Academic studies are published to raise social awareness of Gezi opera's value. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Researchers collaborate with schools to provide professional guidance and hold lectures. 2. Interdisciplinary research explores innovative development paths for Gezi opera. 3. Professional talent is cultivated through academic projects and training courses.

CHAPTER VII

Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

1. Conclusion

This paper takes the Gezi Opera in Fujian as the research object, focusing on the unity and diversity of Gezi Opera in the two places, the musical characteristics of Gezi Opera in the two places, and the inheritance, protection and promotion of Gezi Opera in the two places. The specific research conclusions mainly include the following aspects:

1.1 The contemporary change of Chinese Gezi Opera in Fujian Province, China

The contemporary change of Minnan Gezi Opera in Fujian, China reflects a complicated and far-reaching interweaving process of historical context and regional characteristics. This variety of forms of expression, musical styles and changes in the content of the repertoire are the result of the joint action of time and culture, which reflects the richness and diversity of the art form of Gezi opera. In the land of Fujian, the development of Gezi Opera has been nourished by the local culture, and its script theme, performance style and audience response have been deeply imprinted with the imprint of Fujian region. Whether in the Spring Festival temple fair or in the city's theaters, Gezi opera attracts the audience with its unique artistic charm. This kind of art not only inherits its core artistic essence, but also adapts to the changes of modern society through continuous innovation, such as the reform of singing and the modernization of stage design, and enhances its attraction and market competitiveness. However, like all traditional art forms, Fujian Gezi Opera also faces challenges in modern society. How to maintain its local characteristics in the context of globalization and modernization, while carrying out the necessary innovation, has become a problem that every artist must face. In this process, Fujian Gezi Opera has shown its flexibility and adaptability. It not only carries out artistic innovation under the premise of maintaining tradition, but also actively uses modern technology such as television, Internet and other new media to expand the audience and market. In addition, the exchange and cooperation between Fujian Gezi Opera and Taiwan Gezi

Opera is particularly important. Although the two places are different in details, they share a root - the original art form of Gezi Opera. Through regular cultural exchange activities, artists can share experiences and learn from each other, which can not only strengthen mutual understanding and respect, but also jointly face the challenges of modern society and promote the prosperity of the art form of Gezi Opera.

In summary, the contemporary change of Fujian Gezi Opera is not only the development process of the art form, but also the reflection of the interaction between local culture and modern society. Driven by the dual forces of inheritance and innovation, Fujian Gezi Opera not only shines under the nourishment of regional culture, but also keeps growing under the challenges of modern society, showing its solid historical foundation, unique artistic charm and infinite possibilities for future development. By deepening the understanding and protection of this traditional art form, Fujian Gezi Opera surely play a more important role in the cultural diversity and artistic inheritance in the future.

1.2 The characteristics of Chinese Gezi Opera music within Fujian Province, China

This chapter deeply analyzes the musical characteristics of Fujian Gezi Opera from six aspects: melody characteristics, musical structure, pattern characteristics, rhythm and beat, lyrics characteristics and singing characteristics, and provides a comprehensive perspective for the artistic connotation and expression forms of the two places.

Through the analysis of melody characteristics, we can find that Fujian Minnan Gezi opera has various melody styles. The melodies of some Gezi operas are often more graceful and delicate, revealing a strong local color, while some Gezi operas show a richer emotional level, the melody is varied and expressive. In terms of musical structure, although Minnan Gezi Opera follows a similar traditional framework, it is different in the specific form arrangement and paragraph division. Some traditional musical structures pay more attention to the standardization of traditional opera, while modern Gequ Opera has carried out moderate innovation on this basis to meet the aesthetic needs of modern audiences. This shows that the artist is actively exploring new forms of expression while maintaining tradition. The analysis of pattern characteristics shows the difference in the use of scales and the

choice of mode. Some Gezi operas mostly use scales of local folk music, while others incorporate more modern elements, making their modes show a more diversified trend, and this diversity has injected new vitality into the Gezi operas of Minnan region of Fujian. In the application of rhythm and beat, Minnan Gezi opera also has different characteristics. Some Gezi operas have a relatively stable rhythm, focusing on the unity of rhythm and timbre, while others are more flexible and the rhythm changes frequently, making the performance more vivid and energetic. This difference in rhythm precisely reflects the unique cultural psychology and aesthetic orientation of Minnan region of Fujian. In terms of lyrics, Minnan Gezi Opera has its own different characteristics in the use of language and the theme of expression. Some lyrics tend to be more elegant, focusing on the inheritance and expression of traditional culture, while some lyrics are more close to life, involving a wide range of social topics and emotional experience, which makes Fujian Minnan region of Songjia different in emotional level, to meet the needs of different audiences. Finally, as for the comparison of singing characteristics, Minnan Gezi Opera has great advantages in singing skills and expression modes. Some opera singing style is relatively stable and restrained, emphasizing lyricism, while others show more passion and vitality, singing with strong appeal. This diversified singing style not only enriches the expressive force of Gezi Opera, but also provides the audience with a variety of artistic enjoyment.

In conclusion, the analysis of this chapter reveals the richness and diversity of musical characteristics of Minnan Gezi Opera. Although Minnan Gezi Opera has a common origin, it has formed its own unique musical style in the course of development in different cities. This not only reflects the diversity of local culture, but also provides important guidance for the inheritance and development of Gezi opera in the modern environment. In the future development, further digging and carrying forward these musical characteristics play an active role in promoting the protection and dissemination of Minnan Gezi Opera.

1.3 The guidelines for the preservation and transmission of Chinese Gezi Opera music in Fujian Province, China

This chapter summarizes the current survival status of Gezi opera in Fujian region through field investigations and interviews with informants in different

positions, and gives some protection and promotion guidelines based on the current situation, providing a specific action framework for the sustainable development of this traditional art form. These guidelines not only cover basic measures for protection and inheritance, but also propose strategies to promote innovation and market expansion of the Gezi opera. Overall, the conclusion of this chapter points out that the sustainable development of the Gezi opera in Fujian can be effectively promoted through systematic protection, innovative promotion strategies and policy support. These measures help the Gezi opera maintain its unique cultural value in modern society, while also laying a solid foundation for its global dissemination and cultural exchange. Only through multi-faceted efforts can we ensure that this precious traditional art form continue to be revitalized in the future and contribute to cultural diversity and artistic inheritance.

2. Discussion

2.1 Investigating Contemporary Changes of Chinese Gezi Opera in Fujian Province

According to the first research objective, this paper aims to investigate the contemporary changes of Chinese Gezi Opera in Fujian Province. Through a literature review, it was found that Zhang Li (2015) in her article "The Historical Evolution and Contemporary Development of Gezi Opera" primarily analyzed the formation and development of Gezi Opera, representative plays, and their artistic value. However, she did not classify and summarize the evolution of Gezi Opera across different historical periods. (Zhang Li, 2015)

In exploring Gezi Opera music, the author introduces the origin, development, and evolution of Gezi Opera and its characteristics at various historical stages from multiple perspectives. The relationship between literature, music, performance, and Gezi Opera is elaborated in detail. Additionally, based on existing issues with Gezi Opera, the author provides specific suggestions for its transmission and preservation. (Li Hua, 2018)

However, in this paper, researchers have made detailed classifications and summaries of the developmental forms of Gezi Opera during different periods. Gezi Opera is closely linked to local folk life, deeply reflecting the aesthetic tastes and

customs of the local people. It possesses educational, entertainment, and aesthetic functions and serves as a form of folk art for cultural transmission, becoming one of the significant musical forms in the region's cultural life.

2.2 Analyzing the Characteristics of Chinese Gezi Opera Music within Fujian Province

According to the second research objective, this paper aims to analyze the characteristics of Chinese Gezi Opera music within Fujian Province. Wang Ming (2010) in his article "An Exploration of the Musical Features of Gezi Opera" mainly analyzed the basic musical methods of Gezi Opera and its unique treatment in singing. Stylistically, Gezi Opera differs from other folk songs in Minnan region of Fujian. However, he did not cite specific songs as examples. (Wang Ming, 2010)

Taking Gezi Opera as the research object, this paper delves into its regional cultural characteristics, musical features, and singing analysis. Understanding the culture and nature that shape this folk music art, the study examines the structure, rhythm, meter, and melody of the music in depth. This paper explores the general characteristics and grasp of singing Gezi Opera from four aspects: analysis of singing lyrics, singing techniques, handling of melodic lines, performance forms, and accompanying instruments. With Liang Mei as a representative inheritor, this paper discusses the current development of Gezi Opera. (Chen Xiao, 2020)

In this paper, researchers not only study the basic singing methods and special singing techniques of Gezi Opera but also conduct detailed analyses from aspects such as breath control, resonance, and singing lyrics. Through five representative songs of Gezi Opera, a detailed analysis of singing techniques is performed word by word. Through meticulous analysis, people gain a deeper understanding of singing Gezi Opera, and these singing techniques can serve as references for singing other types of songs.

2.3 Proposing Guidelines for the Preservation and Transmission of Chinese Gezi Opera Music in Fujian Province

According to the third research objective, this paper aims to propose guidelines for the preservation and transmission of Chinese Gezi Opera music in Fujian Province. The transmission and preservation of Gezi Opera can promote its further development. Through a literature review, it was found that Zhao Wenbo

(2021) in his study "Research on Problems and Countermeasures for the Transmission and Development of Gezi Opera in the New Era" explored the current situation and problems of Gezi Opera's transmission and development and proposed corresponding countermeasures. However, he did not delve into the implementation details of the proposed policies. (Zhao Wenbo, 2021)

This paper studies the transmission and development of Gezi Opera and finds that despite being listed as a national intangible cultural heritage, it still faces the danger of being lost. Activities related to Gezi Opera lack the participation of young people, and its content has gradually become out of step with modern times. The current survival status depends solely on people's subjective initiative. Teacher Wang Qing's enthusiasm for Gezi Opera and his identity as an inheritor have also enhanced his sense of crisis regarding the continuation of Gezi Opera. Therefore, without individuals like Wang Qing who are passionate about Gezi Opera, it is uncertain whether the activities can continue, making the survival status of Gezi Opera very fragile. (Zhang Li, 2013)

Researchers agree that, first and foremost, the government should play a leading role in the transmission and preservation of Gezi Opera. The state should establish Gezi Opera research demonstration bases and transmission and preservation centers to lay a fundamental foundation for the transmission of Gezi Opera. Secondly, integrating Gezi Opera into schools is an important method for transmission and preservation, serving the dual purpose of education and cultivation. Finally, combining online and offline approaches further expands the audience base for Gezi Opera. Therefore, to effectively transmit and preserve this folk-art form, it is necessary to further explore, organize, research, innovate, and cultivate Gezi Opera art, ensuring it can be transmitted and preserved at a higher level, in line with the aesthetic habits of modern audiences.

3. Suggestions

3.1 Suggestions on the application of research results

According to the research results of Gezi Opera in Fujian Province, it is suggested that all places can learn from the experience and promote the further development of Gezi opera. We can learn from Xiamen's successful experience in the

application of modern media and technology to preserve and disseminate traditional plays through digital means. For example, the establishment of online platforms and virtual performance systems has enabled the classic works of Gezi Opera to be spread across a wider range, while attracting the attention of young audiences. In addition, Fujian can also strengthen cooperation with Taiwan to jointly organize exchange activities and share best practices in promoting and protecting traditional arts, thereby enhancing the overall influence and social recognition of Gezi Opera.

3.2 Suggestions for further academic research

In terms of academic research, it is suggested to further explore the historical development and cultural adaptation process of Gezi opera in Fujian and Taiwan. The research can focus on the evolution of Gezi opera in different social environments, especially how to maintain the combination of traditional characteristics and innovation in the process of modernization. Specifically, an in-depth comparison can be made of the changes in the repertoire, performance styles and musical forms of the two places to explore how they incorporate modern elements while retaining the essence of tradition. In addition, the change of audience groups can be studied to analyze the acceptance and preference of people of different age groups and social backgrounds to Gezi opera, so as to provide data support and theoretical basis for future promotion strategies.

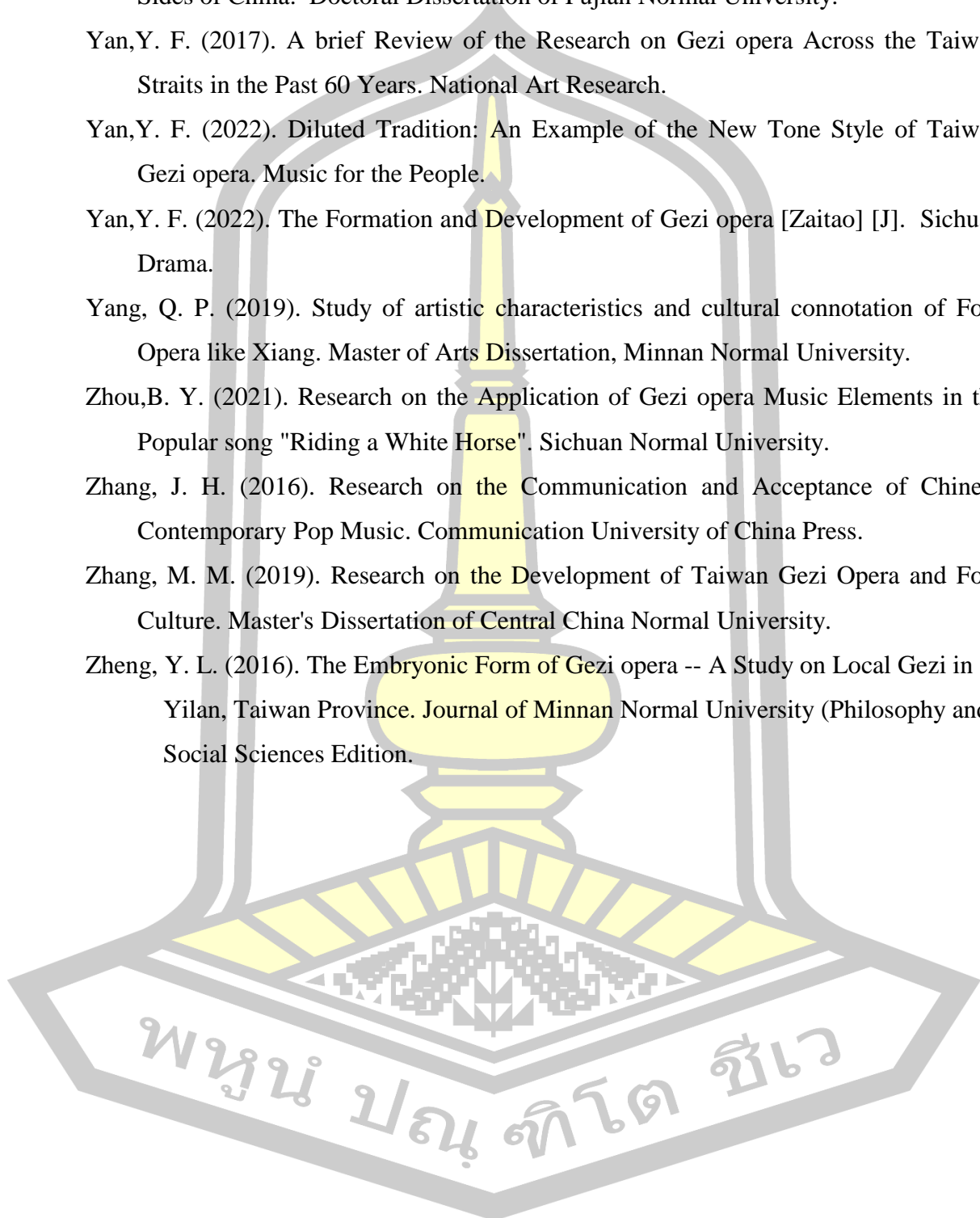
3.3 Suggestions for further development of innovation

In terms of innovation, it is suggested to further promote the cross-border integration and diversified development of Gezi Opera. Collaborations with other art forms, such as dance, theatre and digital arts, can be explored to create novel performance forms and interactive experiences. In addition, it is suggested to introduce more modern elements, such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology, on the basis of maintaining the tradition, to enhance the audience's sense of immersion and participation. Some successful experiences show that combining modern technology can greatly expand the expression and influence of art forms. The three regions in Minnan region of Fujian can jointly develop innovative projects to explore the market opportunities and cultural transmission paths of Gezi opera in the context of globalization, so as to achieve the sustainable development and widespread dissemination of the traditional art form.

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APPENDIX

Appendix I Main interview log

Time	Site	interviewer	Interview content
December 2023	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	Zhang Min (Principal of primary school)	Do you have a specific policy or program to support the inheritance and promotion of Gezi Opera? What important role do you think schools can play in promoting the inheritance of opera?
December 2023	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	Wang Li (Primary school teacher)	How do you incorporate the content of opera into your daily teaching? What do you think is the biggest challenge in promoting opera in schools?
December 2023	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	Du Hanyang (Primary school student)	Is there anyone in your family or community who sings opera? What role do you think family and community play in the legacy of opera?
May 2024	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	Qiu Yuejia (Primary school student)	Do you think the opera is interesting? Which part of the opera do you like best?
July 2024	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	Zhuang Hairong(Gezi opera actor)	How do you combine traditional opera with modern elements in your performances? How does this innovation help attract a younger audience?

August 2024	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	Su Yanrong (Gezi opera actor)	How do you see your career development as a song opera actor? What do you see as your role in the legacy of opera?
August 2024	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	Chen Zhiming (Gezi opera actor)	What do you think is the cultural value and social influence of opera in modern society?
September 2024	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	He Jiawen (College student)	How did you come into contact with opera? What do you think of young people's interest in opera?
September 2024	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	Lin Xiao Yue (Scholar)	How do you focus on opera in your academic research? What do you think the academic community can do for the inheritance of Gezi Opera?
September 2024	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	Liu Shuai (Scholar)	How do you integrate traditional elements into modern performances in your practice? What do you think the performing arts community can do to support the innovation and development of Gezi Opera?
September 2024	Xiamen City, Fujian Province	ChenBoliang(College student)	Is there a singing club in your school? If so, what activities do you usually carry out? If not, do you think it is necessary to set one up?

Appendix II Fieldwork Pictures



Figure 1. The researcher interviews Su Yanrong, the inheritor of Gezi Opera

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



Figure 2. The researcher interviews Zhuang Hairong, the inheritor of Gezi Opera

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



Figure 3. Researchers and Heritage Center staff
Source: Leqi Tang (2023)



Figure 4. Researcher visits troupe
Source: Leqi Tang (2023)



Figure 5. Researcher visits troupe

Source: Leqi Tang (2023)

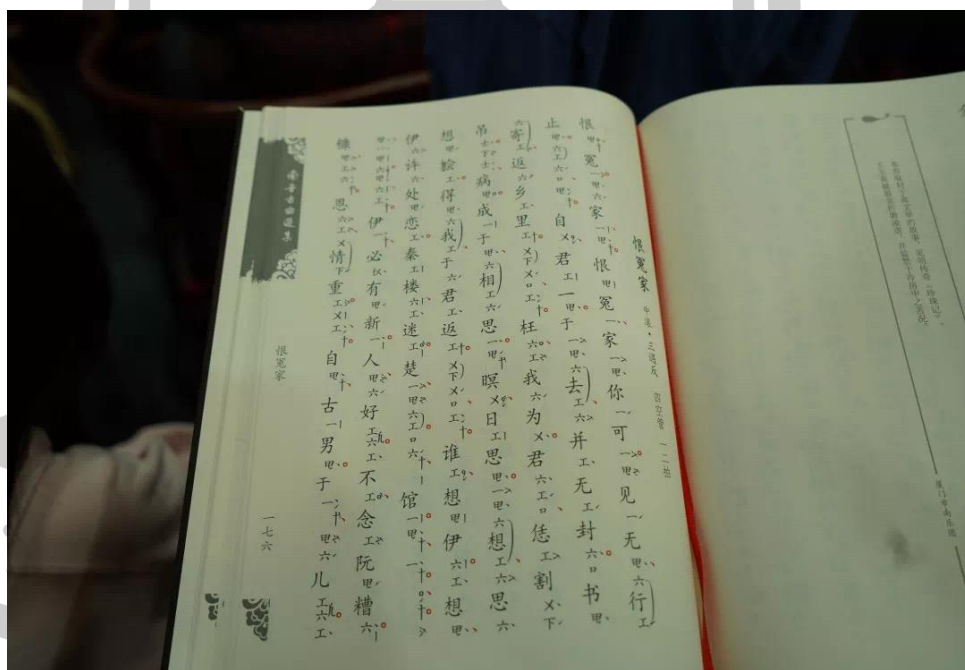


Figure 6. The researchers took music scores

Source: Leqi Tang (2023)



Figure 7. The researcher visited the Gezi Opera Museum

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



Figure 8. The researcher visited the Gezi Opera Museum

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



Figure 9. The researcher visited the Gezi Opera Museum

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



Figure 10. The researcher followed the performer into the campus lecture performance

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



Figure 11. The researcher followed the performer into the campus lecture performance

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



Figure 12. The researcher followed the performer into the campus lecture performance

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



Figure 13. The inheritors of Gezi Opera introduced the accompaniment instruments of Gezi Opera

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



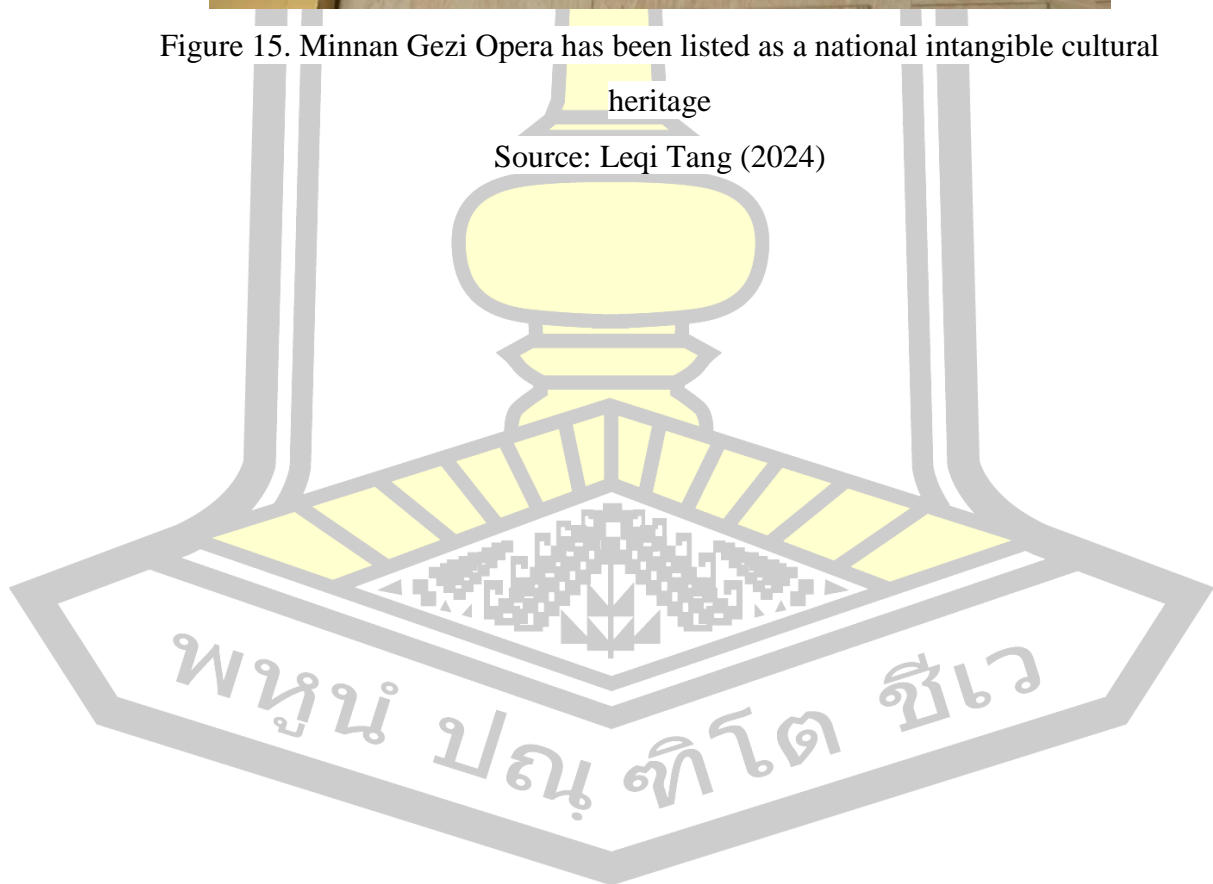
Figure 14. Minnan Opera heritage center

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



Figure 15. Minnan Gezi Opera has been listed as a national intangible cultural heritage

Source: Leqi Tang (2024)



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