

Studying Samo Ali Yi Ethnic Music in Wadie, Yuanjiang for Preservation

Li Yuhui and Panya Roongruang

Bangkokthonburi University, Thailand

Corresponding Author, E-mail: 578599554@qq.com.com

Abstract

The purposes of this study were:(1) To study Samo Ali Yi Ethnic music in Wadie, Yuanjiang .(2) To write a *Samo Ali Yi Ethnic Music Handbook* .(3) To use the *Samo Ali Yi Ethnic Music Handbook* for preservation .

The research method of this paper is a qualitative study of ethnomusicology. The researchers interviewed three important information providers and four inheritors.

The results show that: (1) According to the form of expression on Samo Ali music, it was divided into two types: lyrical Ali and narrative Ali. The main verse style of the Yi people's ali is five words per sentence. (2)There are some problems in the inheritance process of Samo Ali music such as the aging of the inheritors and the phenomenon of fault in the inheritance. (3) Most of the Yuanjiang Yi nationality Ali is recorded in the Yi language documents. The inheritors of Yi literature are few. There are few high-quality studies of Samo Ali music.

Keywords: Culture; Yi People; Ali Music; Preservation; Wadie; Yuanjiang

Introduction

Yi is one of the ethnic minorities in China with a long history, splendid culture, large population and wide distribution. The Yi nationality is mainly distributed in five provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) in southwest China: Yunnan, Sichuan, Guizhou, Guangxi and Chongqing. There are 26 ethnic groups living in Yunnan, and the Yi is one of the most populous ethnic groups in Yunnan. The Yi people in Yunnan are mainly distributed in Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture in central Yunnan, Honghe Hani Yi Autonomous Prefecture in southern Yunnan, and the northeast of Yuanjiang County. These areas are the most concentrated areas of the Yi people in Yunnan. The Yi people have their own language and writing. Tiger worship, black worship, fire worship, love of martial arts are several distinctive characteristics of Yi culture (Fang, 1984).

The Yi people are one of the minorities in China who are good at singing and dancing, and their music is an important part of the music of the ethnic minorities in China. The life style, natural environment, social and historical forms of the Yi people have a profound influence on the development and transmission of traditional tunes. Due to the historical and practical reasons, there is relatively little research on Yi music in China. This is not only reflected in the theory of Yi music, but also reflected in the carrier of Yi music transmission, resulting in the general public's ignorance of Yi music. In the past few decades, there are only a handful of Yi singers in the music industry, especially in the pop music industry, and few songs with elements of Yi music are added. As a result, Yi music can only be spread within the ethnic group, without effective inheritance, protection and development, and some traditional elements of Yi music gradually die out. Therefore, the research and protection of Yi music is

urgent, and the research of Yi music must first grasp the progress and hot spots in this field (He, 2014).

The basic theoretical research in the field of Yi music is embodied in ethnomusicologists, song and dance music, music culture, art forms and so on. Influenced by many factors, such as social and historical forms and natural environment, the music of Yi nationality shows different characteristics. Therefore, only by understanding the social and geographical environment of Yi music can we understand the musical characteristics and musical forms of Yi music. To sum up, the research of Yi music mainly focuses on Liangshan Yi, Yunnan Yi, folk activities and Yi culture. According to the existing literature, the main research focuses on the inheritance of Yi music in the aspects of national music college, cross-cultural teaching, cultural inheritance, music education, etc. The research focuses on the content and form of Yi music mainly include mode, left foot dance, improvisational music, three strings, folk instruments, singing forms, ritual activities and so on.

In short, the research content of Yi music is very extensive, among which, the research on folk music, music culture, Yi music, Yi folk songs, music forms and other fields is relatively concentrated (Li, 1995).

There are many achievements in the study of Yunnan Yi music, mainly focusing on the analysis of the form of Yunnan Yi music, the analysis of the connotation of Yi music culture, the exploration of the teaching practice of Yi music and the study of Yunnan Yi musicians. Among them, the research results on the analysis of the music form of the Yi nationality in Yunnan are the most. The areas involved are mainly Chuxiong, Dali, Honghe and other places.

Yuanjiang is a Hani and Yi and Dai Autonomous county, in which Yi people mainly live in Wadie Township in the northeast of Yuanjiang. However, the music of Yi people in Wadie of Yuanjiang has rarely been paid attention by scholars. In fact, the Yi people in Wadie of Yuanjiang County are good at singing and dancing and versatile, and folk artists play four-string and sing "Ali". With simple performances and beautiful tunes, the "Ali" culture continues to these days through oral transmission (Yang, 2010).

Ali is Yi music of Yuanjiang Wadei, which is named after Yi tunes. It is rich in content and diversified in forms, and it is an artistic genre created by Yi Samo people in the production, life and social practice activities of Yuanjiang wadei. The Yi Samo use this genre as a medium to express their feelings and tell the stories of the Yi Samos, reflecting all aspects of Samos life.

"Ali" is used in the Yi Samos' long history of social development to educate their customs, and is an encyclopedia of the Yi Samos' standardized life. In 2016, Yi "Ali" was selected into the third batch of municipal intangible cultural heritage protection list of Yuxi City. In 2017, it was announced by the People's Government of Yunnan Province as the fourth batch of provincial intangible cultural heritage list.

However, there are few studies on Samo Ali music, and the research results are only in two general journals, where a brief analysis is made on the basic situation and artistic characteristics of the Wadie Samo people (Zhang, 2006), did not carry out the notation and ontology analysis of the existing living music of Samo Ali, nor did he carry out in-depth research on the living state and inheritance mode of Samo Ali music under the impact of Han culture in the process of modernization. Therefore, in this paper, the author will use ethnomusicological participatory observation and other methods to go deep into Wadie village, live with Samo people, record the existing Ali music, and conduct ontological analysis to

understand the inheritance status of Ali music, so as to compile a guide book of Wadie Samo Ali music, with the application of this book in academic conferences, so that more people can understand the art value of Samo Ali music, call for more people to protect Samo Ali music culture.

Research Objectives

1. To study the history and development of Samo Ali music.
2. To compile the Samo Ali music Guidebook .
3. To use the Samo Ali music Guidebook for preservation

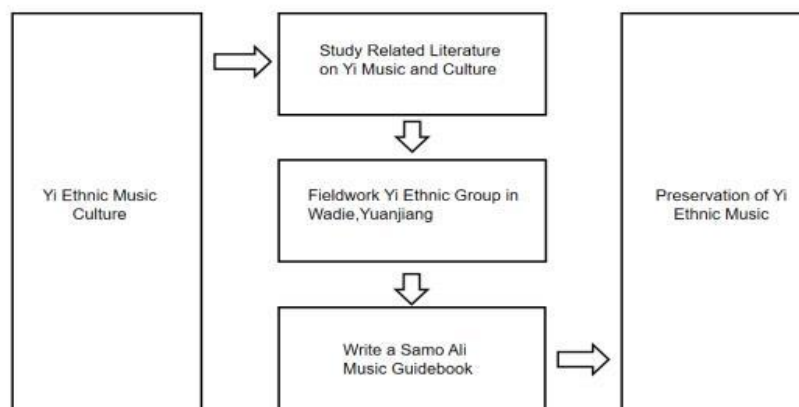
Research Methodology

The author takes the Samo Ali music of Wadie Township in Yuanjiang County as the research object, uses the main research methods of ethnomusicology to study qualitatively, and uses the questionnaire of quantitative research to study the research object.

In this study, the qualitative research mainly used the method of participative observation to go to the field site, Wadie Township, Yuanjiang County for many times, to go deep into the living environment of the Samos people, to eat, live and work with them, and to establish a good relationship of trust with the culture holders. To further understand their music culture, the researcher interviewed three key informants who have been engaged in the music research of the Yi people in Yuanjiang for a long time, and five Samo Ali inheritors who grew up in Yuanjiang Wadie and made important contributions in the inheritance of Samo Ali music culture to obtain a large number of first-hand materials. Afterwards, the researcher conducted interviews with field data classify and organize, and then conduct an in-depth analysis of the history, musical characteristics, and representative works of Samo Ali music.

Quantitative research mainly adopts the method of questionnaire survey, and more than 300 people who participated in two academic conferences are randomly selected to do questionnaire survey, so as to demonstrate the feasibility of holding academic conferences and promoting the use of guide book.

Conceptual Framework



Research Findings

1. Samo Ali Yi ethnic music: The Ali of the Yi (Samo) people mainly fall into two categories: narrative and lyrical. They are very rich in content and have a wide range of themes, covering the origin of heaven and earth, the creation of all things, human reproduction, monstrous floods, witty characters, loyal love, ancestors' achievements, etc. The Ali of the Yi people (Samo) come in various forms, including long narrative epics with as many as four to five thousand lines, and as few as more than a thousand lines. The main characteristics of narrative Ali are strong pertinence, specific events, long length, and complete stories, including time, place, characters, events, and results; the storyline is beautiful and touching, with magical colors, and the characters are vivid; the plot is twists and turns, and the story is vivid, fascinating. Most of the modes of Samo Ali music are the traditional Chinese national pentatonic modes. The rhythms are mostly 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4. The narrative Ali is not very melodic. The dances include cigarette box dance, three-step string, and four-tone dances. The most common instruments for accompaniment are cigarette case, three-string, four-string, Bili, kouxian and leaves.

2. *Samo Ali Music Guide Book* consists of four units. Unit one: the history of Yuanjiang; Unit 2: The basic situation of the Yi nationality in Yuanjiang; Unit 3: Folk song and dance music; Unit 4: Samo Ali Inheritors. Each of the four units is described below.

Unit 1: History of the Yuanjiang

To understand the folk music culture of a place, we must first understand the historical development of the place. Therefore, this unit mainly introduces the historical development of Yuanjiang from the pre-Qin period to the present period from the diachronic point of view. The name, geographical environment, natural resources, culture, economy and other aspects of each historical period are summarized, so that readers can first have a preliminary understanding of the overall development of Yuanjiang.

Unit 2: Samo Ali music inheritors

This unit is about the introduction of inheritors. This unit introduces the inheritors who grew up in Yuanjiang Wadie and made important contributions in the inheritance of Samo Ali music culture, such as the older generation of inheritors Pu Youlai, the middle-aged inheritors representatives of the people include Fang Xuezhi, Bai Yunuo, and the younger generation inheritors Yang Xiong and Yang Qiuguo, etc.

Unit 3: General Situation of Yi Nationality in Yuanjiang

This unit mainly introduces the customs and etiquette of the Yi people. According to the classification method of folklore, this part is divided into two parts: life rituals and annual festivals. Life rituals include the marriage customs and funeral customs of the Yi people. Annual festivals and festivals mainly introduce the Yi people, which are very representative. Festivals such as: Yi New Year, Dragon Boat Festival, Torch Festival, Song Contest Festival and Dragon Sacrifice, etc.

Unit 4: Yuanjiang folk song and dance music

This unit is the core part of the guide book, which mainly introduces the folk song and dance music of the Yuanjiang Yi people. Divided into three parts: music, dance and instruments. First of all, the music is divided into four categories: custom song, Ali tune, labor song and children's song. The dance part mainly introduces the most popular dance types of the Yi people in Yuanjiang, which are Sanbu Xian, Sibuxian, Lezuo, cigarette box dance, etc. The Instruments section introduces the instruments commonly used in Samo Ali music,

according to the German musicologist Curt Sachs and the Austrian ethnomusicologist Hornbostel. Erich von Hornbostel created the Hornbostel-Sachs classification system (referred to as H-S classification), which divides Musical Instruments into four categories: idiophone, membranophone, chordophone and aerophone. Various representative instruments are introduced from the aspects of instrument shape, instrument performance and so on.

3. Using *Samo Ali Music Guidebook for Preservation*. In order to make better use of the "Samo Ali Music Guidebook" and further promote the preservation and transmission of Samo Ali music culture, the author held two academic seminars in 2023 to study the preservation and transmission of Samo Ali music by means of on-the-spot exchanges and discussions. One is "Samoa Ali Preservation and Heritage Research Workshop". In January 2023, an academic conference was held at the School of Music of Yunnan Arts University. Ethnomusicologist Wu Xueyuan, Professor Wang Fengli of Yunnan Arts University, Professor Shi Xiangning, professor of Yunnan University of Arts and musicology historian, former president of Yunnan Ethnic Publishing House, editor-in-chief of History of Yi Literature Zuo Yutang, Professor Ang Ziming of Yunnan University for Nationalities, and Some Samo Ali inheritors were invited to attend the meeting. At this meeting, the author discussed some important issues about Ali music with participating experts, and held a workshop on Samo Ali protection and inheritance. In November 16, 2023, the author hosted another academic conference on "Music Education and Teaching in Colleges and Universities and Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Ethnic Minorities". The researcher invited well-known domestic experts and scholars in the field of ethnic minority music to discuss issues related to the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

After the two academic conferences, the author conducted a questionnaire survey on the participants, and randomly selected more than 200 participants to conduct a questionnaire survey on the satisfaction of the conference and the guide book. The questionnaire shows that it is very necessary to hold such an academic conference, which is very successful and has positive significance for the preservation and inheritance of Yi music culture. Through academic exchanges, people have a deeper understanding of the Yi music culture and Samo Ali music culture, recognize the opportunities and challenges in the development of folk music, and make clear the direction of efforts in the development of folk music in the future.

Discussion

The music of each country, region and ethnic group has its own unique charm. The music of the Yi people in Wadie Township, Yuanjiang County, Yunnan Province, has its own unique value and cultural connotation due to its unique history, geography and humanistic environment. It is the spiritual wealth created and accumulated by the Yi people in the long river of history, which has been inherited by the family for thousands of years (Song, 2010). With the development of the times, this family-style tradition of oral and verbal teachings and teachings is becoming increasingly weak and no longer adapts to the needs of modern society. Many young people are already aware of their own music and culture. Most of the Yi music and dance only remained in the hands of the older generation. The phenomenon of inheritance has been broken. People began to seek new ways and methods to change the present situation and save the endangered Yi music culture.

The researcher systematically studied the Samo Ali music according to the folk artists in the fieldwork, and did notation analysis to the music, compiled the *Samo Ali Music Guidebook*, and further popularized the *Samo Ali Music Guidebook* by holding academic conferences. Experts and scholars at the academic conference pointed out that the guidebook should be popularized in schools (including middle schools and universities) so that more people, especially young people, can understand the music culture of samo Ali (Hu & Peng, 2020).

School education is an important way for young people to learn knowledge and culture. Therefore, school should be the main front for upholding, inheriting and developing national culture. In response to the call of the state, relevant departments of Yuanjiang County have issued a series of corresponding policies and measures, and launched the activities of "entering Yi music culture into schools". However, most schools are still in the stage of focusing on cultivating students' cultural knowledge and neglecting comprehensive quality education.

School education plays a very important role in the inheritance and development of Yi music. School leaders and teachers should pay attention to the activities of "Yi music entering the campus" in their thoughts and actions, and let Yi music enter the campus be implemented in a real way, not just in a form (Liang, 1990). Properly handle the relationship between folk music education and other education in schools. In the process of education and teaching, the students should cultivate their love for Chinese traditional national culture, strengthen the students' consciousness of protecting, inheriting and developing the Yi music in this area, and strengthen the students' and parents' identification with the Yi music in the campus.

Recommendation

1. Practical Recommendations

This study mainly focuses on the history, culture, artistic characteristics, notation and inheritance of the music of Yuanjiang Wadie Samo Ali music. Due to the limited research time, the author believes that there are many aspects that can be improved and supplemented in the future.

(1) The field investigation is not deep enough. Field recording work should be carried out frequently in the future, and more Samo Ali living music should be recorded. Put them into books, and make a collection of Samo Ali music.

(2) Strengthen the research on the mutual evidence of musical historical materials and living music. We can use the research method of historical anthropology to further excavate the historical data of Samo Ali music from the Yi literature, and verify it with the living music.

(3) There is a lack of comparative research on Ali music from other regions.

2. Recommendation for future research

At present, the research of music culture of the Yi nationality is more and more intercrossing and blending with other disciplines, for example: From the anthropology, ethnology, culture, sociology, semiotics, aesthetics and other interdisciplinary perspectives to start the research. Moreover, the present research results include not only the analysis of Yi music culture from the angle of a single category, but also some comprehensive theoretical achievements from the perspective of multi-discipline in the study of Yi music culture.

The interweaving and amalgamation of different disciplines can describe the Yi music culture in all aspects from various dimensions, which is reflected by the connection with the music noumenon or the comparative study, which has become an important way to study the Yi music culture. This approach can also be used in the study of Yi music in Yuanjiang.

From the perspective of comprehensive research on the Yi nationality, the following characteristics are presented: There are many kinds of records and studies on the Yi people in Chinese literature. There are mainly records and records of the early local history, folk tales, epic songs and so on. There are also documents based on field investigation, which emphasize on records, but do not make in-depth study, which provide valuable first-hand materials for the follow-up research. Therefore, the research of Yi music culture phenomenon has a broad prospect.

References

- Fang, G. (1984). *Historical Manuscripts of the Yi Nationality*. Sichuan Ethnic Publishing House.
- He, Y. (2014). *Encyclopedia of Yi Nationality in China*. Yunnan People's Publishing House.
- Hu, X., & Peng, X. (2020). The national identity function of Buddhist music in multi-ethnic areas—a case study of Yuanjiang Hani, Yi, and Dai Autonomous County in Yunnan. *People's Music*.
- Li, W. (1995). Fresh and simple singing from the heart - the singing art of Yunnan Yi singer Bai Xiuzhen. Huang Zhong. *Journal of Wuhan Conservatory of Music*.
- Liang, Y. (1990). *Suona music in the folk customs of the Yi people in Yunnan*. National Art Research.
- Song, J. (2010). Regional characteristics of ethnic music in Yunnan Yi areas. *Ethnic Art Research*.
- Yang, C. (2010). Lalo regional varieties: phylogeny, dialectometry, and sociolinguistics. *Linguistics*.
- Zhang, X. (2006). *Yunnan original ecological folk music*. Central Conservatory of Music Press.