



The Wedding Music of the Yao in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China

Huang Xiaohuan

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for

degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music

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### ABSTRACT

This dissertation deals with the music of the Yao wedding in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China. It describes the musical context of the Yao wedding music and analyzes its musical elements in order to examine its importance and significance to the community of Jinxiu Yao. Using literature research and field work, this study further examines the music of Jinxiu Yao wedding in the context of its culture, religion, language and history. The music of the Yao wedding is described according to its instrumentation, compositional techniques and performance form. More importantly, the music is analyzed according to its structure, mode and tonality, melodic style and rhythmic characteristics. Based on the literature review, and the description and analysis of Jinxiu Yao wedding music, this dissertation concludes with the following. Jinxiu Yao wedding music is related to its culture, religion, language and history. It has a profound national cultural significance but retains its traditional culture. The music of the suona has the most complex musical elements, performed as solo or in an ensemble with percussion instruments. The relatively fixed wedding melody is simple and easy to remember, with pentatonic mode as the main melody and played in free rhythm. The Jinxiu Yao wedding music and ceremony complement each other, expressing the traditional culture of the Yao, and ensures the transmission of the music from their ancestors through the ceremony. With the recent changes in the social economy, this wedding ceremony and music have gradually declined in importance and practice. It is thus necessary to propose and undertake a series of ways towards the preservation and transmission of this precious music culture.

Keyword : Jinxiu Yao wedding, Music context, Music elements, Preservation, Transmission

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# Chapter I

## Introduction

### 1. Statement of the Problem

The Yao people is one of the oldest groups in China, with a distinctive culture and customs. Various Yao branches have different wedding customs. The Yao wedding ceremony is complicated and at the same time, simple in various forms. Since the Yao society has the custom of both male and female marriage, they treat both male and female children equally, and there is no preference for male or female children. (Mo Jinshan & Chen Jianqiang, 2006)

The Yao people have distinct differences in life traditions and cultural customs. Their culture is rich and colorful, and their marriage custom is well known, which is the "living fossil" of Yao culture. The Jinxiu Yao people still have a variety of ancient marriage customs, but also kept a large number of handwritten documents of daily life. The characteristics of marriage custom truly reflect their livelihood, economic development level, identity and historical and cultural tradition. (Mo JinShan. 2015)

The marriage customs of the Yao are inseparable from their music. In their weddings, there are rich musical accompaniments. Some are mainly instrumental accompaniments, and in some are singing. For example, the PanYao's wedding for the married man is dominated by a large number of suona songs. (Zhao Shufeng, 2016)

At present, many young Yao people work outside the country all the year round. Their aesthetics and marriage concept are impacted by Han culture. Their traditional and modern culture, and marriage concept and custom are gradually weakened in their consciousness. In addition, the musicians of Yao wedding ritual music in some areas have died of old age, which makes the transmission of folk culture more difficult. Therefore, it is urgent to preserve and document Yao wedding ritual music. (Zhou Ge. 2021)

The practices in the wedding ceremony of the Jinxiu Yao is gradually changing. One reason is that with the changes in the young people's wedding concept, most opt for Western wedding ceremonies. They no longer wear national costumes at their weddings, but white wedding dresses. The ceremonies are not held in the village, but in a larger city with a banquet in

the hotel. Another reason is that there are more and more intermarriages between the Jinxiu Yao and foreign nationals, and many wedding ceremonies are becoming more and more simplified and more Chinese. All these have caused the wedding music to gradually shrink and disappear. (Xiao Yan, 2018))

Therefore, this study is primarily focused on the wedding customs and music of Jinxiu Yao, recording the unique practices of the wedding ceremony, analyzing the musical elements and characteristics of its wedding music and to explore its significance to the local community.

## **2. Research Objectives**

- 2.1 To describe the cultural context of Yao wedding music in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China.
- 2.2 To analyze the musical elements and characteristics of the wedding music of the Yao.
- 2.3 To examine the importance of the wedding music of Yao in relation to the society of Jinxiu, Guangxi.

## **3. Research Questions**

- 3.1 What is the cultural context of the wedding music of Yao in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China.
- 3.2 What are the music elements and characteristics of wedding music of the Yao.
- 3.3 What is the importance of the wedding music of the Yao in relation to the society of Jinxiu, Guangxi,

## **4. Importance of Research**

- 4.1 We can know the cultural context of Wedding Music of Yao in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China.
- 4.2 We will know the music elements and characteristics of Wedding Music of the Yao.
- 4.3 We can know the importance of Wedding Music of the Yao in relation to the society of Jinxiu, Guangxi.

## **5. Scope of research**

In the investigation and analysis, the scope mainly includes two aspects.

First, the geographical scope. The research focuses on the wedding ceremony music of the Yao group in Jinxiu, Guangxi.

Second, The scope of content. The research focuses on recording and notation of the wedding music, the composition of the musical ensemble, description of the music, recorded music examples, and description of the characteristics and styles of music.

## 6. Definition of Terms

Yao: (瑶). One of the oldest minorities in China. In 2021, the total population of Yao in China was 3.3 million. Guangxi accounts for about 55.8 percent in the country. The national languages are divided into Sino -Tibetan (Hmong-Mien) Miao language branch, Sino -Tibetan (Hmong-Mien) Yao language branch, and Sino -Tibetan (Kra-Dai ) Dong Shui language branch.

Jinxiu: (金秀). A county in Guangxi Province, China. It is the first Yao autonomous county in China. The Jinxiu Yao includes three groups of Yao, including PanYao, ChaShan Yao, HuaLan Yao, ShanZi Yao and Ao Yao. China has the most branches of Yao in the world and one of the main lines of Yao people's settlement. It is a representative area in China to study Yao culture.

Marry off a Son: It is a unique wedding ceremony in Jinxiu Yao, the local people call it 嫁郎, which is different from a son-in-law who lives in the home of his wife's parents. It means that the bridegroom is required to settle down in the bride's home, adopting his wife's surname and assuming responsibility to keep the family line alive after they marry.

Suona : (唢呐) Suona, a traditional Chinese double reed woodwind instrument. With the opening up of the Silk Road, it was introduced into China from Eastern Europe and West Asia in the 3rd century CE. It is the main musical instrument in the Jinxiu Yao wedding ceremony.

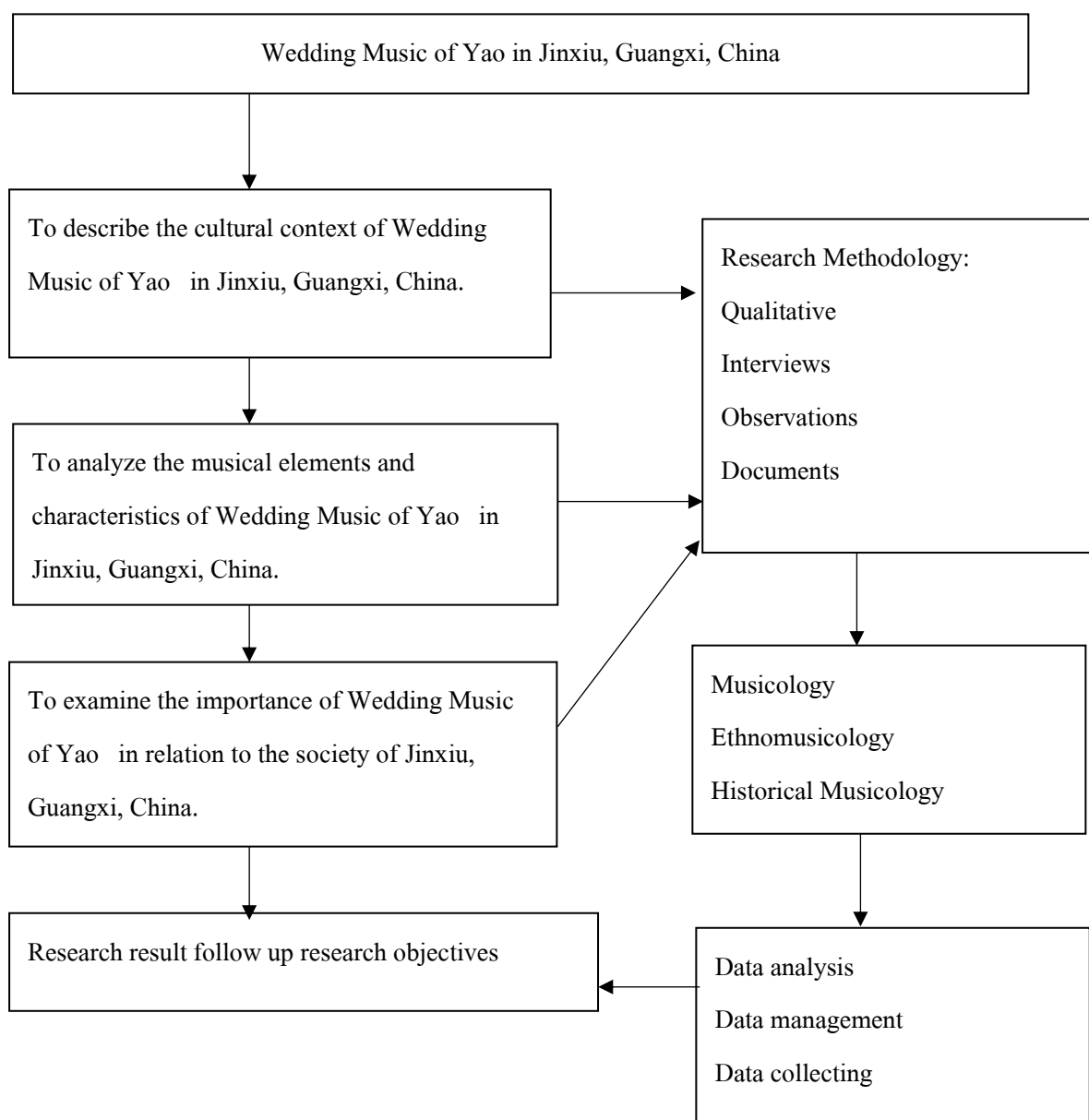
The cultural context of Yao weddings includes several aspects: 1. National culture; 2. Religion; 3. Language ; and 4. History.

Musical elements and characteristics: These refer to the analysis of wedding music with accompaniment or unaccompanied music pieces, including melody, rhythm, tempo and other aspects.

The importance of the Yao wedding music in relation to the society of Jinxiu points to the following: 1. The traditional culture of the Yao; 2. Representation of the national culture of the Yao. 3. Transmission of the music of the ancestors of the Yao.

## 7. Conceptual Framework

This dissertation focuses on the Yao wedding music as the research object. The research method mainly adopts qualitative research. Interviews, observation and documents as the main tools to collect data. These data are explained by general theories of musicology, ethnomusicology, historical musicology.



## Chapter II

### Literature Reviews

This chapter reviews the documents related to the marriage customs of the Yao, and wedding music according to the following topics and objectives:

1. The general knowledge of Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County, Guangxi, China
2. Yao wedding music in the context of its society and culture
3. The history and changes of Yao wedding music
4. The theories used in research
5. Documents and related research

#### 1. The General Knowledge of Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County, Guangxi, China

##### 1.1 Introduction

The Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County is the first Yao Autonomous County established in the country. Founded in May 1952, it is located in the central part of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Known as the "Yao Capital of the World", A multi-city based on the Yao culture as the carrier. ([www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com))

According to the seventh census data, as of 0:00 on November 1, 2020, Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County has a permanent population of 130,313 people, with a total area of 2,518 square kilometers. The Yao group accounts for 34.4% of the total population. Among the Jinxiu Yao people, there are five different Yao groups: Pan Yao, ChaShan Yao, HuaLan Yao, ShanZi Yao, and Ao Yao. They belong to the PanYao branch, BuNu Yao branch and ChaShan Yao branch respectively. (Website of Jinxiu Municipal People's Government, 2020)

The county now governs 3 towns and 7 townships: Jinxiu Town, Tongmu Town, Toupai Town, Sanjiao Township, Zhongliang Township, Luoxiang Township, Changdong Township, Dazhang Township, Liuxiang Township, Sanjiang Township. (Website of Jinxiu Municipal People's Government, 2020)



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## 1.2 Geography

The Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County is part of Laibin city, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and is located in the east of the central part of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. It is connected to Mengshan County in the east, Pingnan County, Guiping City and Wuxuan County in the south, Xiangzhou County in the west, and Luzhai County and Lipu City in the north. The autonomous county is 62.4 kilometers from east to west and 93 kilometers from north to south, with a total area of 2,518 square kilometers. The Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County is surrounded by the DaYaoShan mountains, except for the northeastern margin of SanJiang township in the north, which is the border of the Jiaqiao ridge. The mountain area accounts for 73% of the county's total land area. The whole terrain is high in the middle, low on all sides, and surrounded by hills, terraces and small plains in the middle. (Website of Jinxiu Municipal People's Government, 2020)



Figure 1 Map of Guangxi Province, China

Retrieved: from (<https://image.so.com/>) Accessed 19 September 2021

The water system of Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County belongs to the Xijiang water system of the Pearl River Basin. Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County belongs to the south subtropical monsoon climate zone, and the seasonal climate changes. The summer is humid and rainy, and the winter is dry and cold with little rain. Because of the mountainous, high altitude and complex terrain in the county, DaYaoShan mountain has obvious subtropical mountain climate

characteristics, that is, warm in winter and cool in summer, more cloudy and rainy days, less sunshine, high humidity, vertical and horizontal Changes in climate. Both are more obvious, there is a saying that "different days across the ridge". (Jinxiu Da Yao Shan mountain History of Yao. 2010)

### 1.3 Social environment

#### 1.3.1 An overview of Yao in China

The Yao group is one of the oldest groups in China. It is one of the ancient Eastern "Jiu Li" (Ancient Chinese legend group), with the gradual migration to form the present Yao. The Yao group is the most widely distributed in southern China and one of the longest-lived groups in China. According to the China Statistical Yearbook 2021, the total population of Yao is 3,309,341, including 1,722,586 males and 1,586,755 females, distributed in more than 130 counties in the six provinces (regions) of Guangxi, Hunan, Guangdong, Yunnan, Guizhou and Jiangxi in Southern China. Among them, Guangxi accounts for about the country 55.8% of the total Yao. There are many branches of the Yao group, and there are great differences between individual branches in terms of society, history, language, and beliefs. The marriage culture is also varied. (China Statistical Yearbook, 2021)

The Yao people in China have more than 30 different names. In the past, because of its origins, legends, production mode, living and clothing and other characteristics, there are "Pan Yao", "GuoShan Yao", "ChaShan Yao", "HongTou Yao", "Hua Yao", "Hua Lan Yao", "Blue Indigo Yao", "White Pants Yao", "PingDi Yao" and other more than 30 different names. They call themselves more than 20 different ways, others call them in more than 100 ways. Some called themselves "Mian" (meaning "people"), while others called themselves "BuNu", "JinMen", "LaJia", "WuNai", and others. (Yao Government of the People's Republic of China,2016)

The diversity of the culture of the Yao people is reflected in the different languages of each group. The languages are divided into Sino -Tibetan (Hmong-Mien) Yao language branch, Sino -Tibetan (Hmong-Mien) Miao language branch, and Sino -Tibetan (Kra-Dai) Dong Shui language branch. According to the differences in language, customs and beliefs, the Yao people can be roughly divided into three categories: PanYao, BuNu Yao, ChaShan Yao. More than 60% of the Yao people speak the Sino -Tibetan (Hmong-Mien) Yao language branch. They call themselves Mian. One third of the Yao speak the Sino -Tibetan (Hmong-Mien) Miao

language branch, and they call themselves BuNu. The Yao people who call themselves LaJia belong to the Sino -Tibetan (Kra-Dai) Dong Shui language branch. In addition, there are some people who only speak Chinese. Because of their long history of living and frequent contact with Han, Zhuang and other groups, the Yao people in all parts of the country generally speak Chinese, and some of them also speak the languages of neighboring minorities and other Yao groups. (www.baidu.com)

According to the legend of Yao's ancestors, it is one of the ancient Eastern Jiu Li, which migrated to Hubei and Hunan. During the Qin and Han dynasties, the ancestors of the Yao lived in Changsha, Wuling or Wuxi. In Chinese historical records, they are collectively called Wuling man and Wuxi man, together with other minorities. During the Southern and Northern Dynasties, some Yao people were called MoYao and lived in Hengyang, LingLing and other counties. During the Sui and Tang Dynasties, the Yao was mainly distributed in today's Hunan, northeastern Guangxi and northern mountainous areas of Guangdong. In the late Tang dynasty and the Five Dynasties, there were still many Yao people living in the middle and lower reaches of the Zijiang river in Hunan province, and in the Wuxi region between Hunan and Guizhou Province. In the Song Dynasty, the Yao mainly distributed in Hunan, but some of them spread to the north of Guangdong and Guangxi. In the Yuan Dynasty, under the pressure of the war, Yao people had to move south in large numbers, and continuously penetrated into the hinterland of Guangdong and Guangxi. By the Ming Dynasty, Guangdong and Guangxi became the main distribution areas of the Yao. At the end of Ming dynasty and the beginning of Qing Dynasty, some Yao people migrated from Guangxi to Yunnan-Guizhou. At that time, Yao people spread all over six provinces in south China, and basically formed today's distribution pattern, which is characterized by "large dispersion and small settlement". After the mid-Ming Dynasty, some Yao people from Guangxi and Yunnan migrated to Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries and became residents of other countries. (Yao. Government of the People's Republic of China,2016)

Since the Yao society has the custom of both male and female marriage and male marriage, they treat both male and female children equally, and there is no preference for male or female children. Historically, after marriage, the relationship between band and wife of Yao was relatively stable, and divorce was rare. Widows remarry without discrimination. Before the

founding of the People's Republic of China, the Yao people generally did not intermarry with foreigners. Their marriages were generally carried out by young men and women through singing festivals or other ways to establish feelings, falling in love freely, and getting married after obtaining the consent of their parents. After the founding of New China, the country implemented a policy of equality, which eliminated estrangement, and the phenomenon of intermarriages between the Yao and outside groups continued to increase. (China Statistical Yearbook, 2021)

### 1.3.2 An overview of Jinxiu Yao

The Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County is the first Yao Autonomous County established in the country. Founded in May 1952, it is located in the central part of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Known as the "Yao Capital of the World". A multi-city based on the Yao culture as the carrier, the Yao group accounts for 34.4% of the total population. Among the Jinxiu Yao people, there are five groups of Yao: Pan Yao, ChaShan Yao, Hualan Yao, ShanZi Yao, and Ao Yao. (Website of Jinxiu Municipal People's Government, 2020)

The Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County is also called DaYaoShan National Forest Park and DaYaoShan National Nature Reserve. On January 9, 2019, it was selected into the list of the Hometown of Chinese Folk Culture and Art in 2018-2020 by virtue of HuangNi Drum Dance. In September 2019, it was selected as one of the first national all-regional tourism demonstration zones. (People's Government network of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, 2020)

Fei Xiaotong, a famous anthropologist and sociologist, once said, "The world center of Yao studies is in China, and the Chinese Center of Yao Studies is in Jinxiu." Therefore, Jinxiu is known as the Yao Capital of the world. It has been more than 600 years since the Yao people migrated here. There is almost the largest concentration of Yao population in the world, and it is the area with the most colorful Yao culture and the most intact Yao language and traditional culture. (Zhao Shufeng, 2016)

It is generally believed in academic circles that the Yao people did not have their own writings in history. There are also a few scholars in the academic circle who believe that the Yao people have their own writing, that is, Yao teachers, dao gong and folk singers create their own writing by adding and subtracting or recombining Chinese characters after learning and skillfully using Chinese, and use them to record their own language. This writing is called the Ancient Yao script. In order to make up for the deficiency, these ancient Yao texts were mainly

used by Taoist lords, masters and folk singers when they copied the classics and songs in Chinese characters. Dao Gong, master gong and folk singers are the creators and disseminators of ancient Yao literature. (m.jzlishi.com)

In July 1982, some Yao scholars in Beijing jointly designed a preliminary Yaowen Scheme based on Mian language. The character consists of 30 initials, 130 finals and 8 tones, and was first tested and promoted in parts of Guangdong and Guangxi. In 1984, combined with the research results of Dr. Joseph Hou, a Chinese Yao American in the United States, China and the United States realized the unification of Yao culture programs. (Five series on questions of Chinese Minorities)

The Pan King Festival of the Yao is popular in Guangxi, Hunan, Yunnan, Guangdong, Guizhou, Jiangxi and other provinces (regions) where the Yao people live, and it is one of the national intangible cultural heritage. The PanWang Festival of the Yao originated from the PanWang Song Festival on October 16th of the lunar calendar. On this day, the Yao people would gather together to sing and dance to commemorate the PanWang, and gradually developed into the PanWang Festival. The modern PanWang Festival has gradually developed into celebrating the harvest, where young men and women take this opportunity to sing love and find future partners. (Pan Taifu, 1994)

The Yao people have distinct differences in life traditions and cultural customs. Their culture is rich and colorful, and the marriage custom of Yao is the most well-known. The Jinxiu Yao people still have a variety of ancient marriage customs, but also kept a large number of handwritten documents of daily life. The characteristics of marriage custom truly reflect their livelihood mode, economic development level, identity and historical and cultural tradition. (Mo JinShan, 2015)

#### 1.4 An overview of the Five Yao branches of Jinxiu

##### 1.4.1 PanYao

The Pan Yao worship the ancestor Pan King, and is the most populous among all Yao nationalities. The PanYao call themselves Mian, which means people. The PanYao is the main branch of the traditional culture of the Yao, which contains most of the population of the Yao. It mainly speaks the MianYu or BiaoMin dialect of the Yao branch of the (Hmong-Mien) Yao language branch. The GuoShan Yao, ShanZi Yao, Pai Yao, and others belong to the Pan

Yao branch. Because the hats worn by the PanYao women were made of wooden boards, they were also called BanYao. (Jin Xiu Da Yao Shan mountain history of Yao, 2010)

The most solemn festival of the PanYao is the PanWang Festival, a ceremony for the Yao people to cherish the memory of their ancestors. It has a history of more than 1,000 years. The Festival of PanWang Festival from the totem worship of the Yao. In the traditional ceremony, most of the Yao people commemorate the PanWang, pray for his blessing, and thank and respond to him. (m.fengsuwang.com)

In 2006, the PanWang Festival of Yao was listed in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage. The Jinxiu County people's government designated the PanWang Festival of Yao on October 16th of the lunar calendar every year. Since then, Yao representatives from the United States, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Southeast Asia and friends from all over the world gathered here. At first, only the people of the PanYao celebrated this festival, and later it evolved into the whole Yao group celebrating this festival. (Qin Xiangxiang,2018)

#### 1.4.2 Ao Yao

The origin of the name Ao Yao is related to their head attire. The Ao Yao is mainly distributed in Luoxiang, Liuxiang and Dazhang townships in Jinxiu. (Jin Xiu Da Yao Shan mountain history of Yao, 2010)

The Xiaguchen village is a small village dominated by Ao Yao, known as the only Ao Yao Museum in Guangxi. It is an important base of Yao studies in China and even the world, and is selected as Chinese Traditional Village. The Ao Yao's favorite entertainment during the Spring Festival is that the masses gather on the hillside of the village to dance the HuangNi Drum Dance collectively. (Chen Zhiyue,2013)

#### 1.4.3 ShanZi Yao

The ShanZi Yao is very similar to Pan Yao. They were originally Pan Yao people who spoke Mian, but after they migrated into DaYaoShan mountains, due to the complex geographical environment of DaYaoShan Mountain in Jinxiu, they gradually developed a variant language. The ShanZi Yao is also known as LanDian Yao, calling itself Men or Gan Di Men, which means "ren" or Shan Zi ren. In the old days, people who rented mountains and farmed by land were called ShanZi, hence the name ShanZi Yao. (Jin Xiu Da Yao Shan mountain history of Yao, 2010)

The religious culture of ShanZi Yao is very rich, with peculiar customs, marriage, love, celebration, sacrifice, and communication. These include the Du Jie (a form of teaching religious magic) and "jumping incense" in sacrificial activities (singing and dancing performances to worship ancestors), the QiuHuaNiang (the ancient religion to worship the god of flowers and pray for children), and "passing fire" (performance of stepping on the red hot coals to eliminate disasters). The beautiful and beautiful ShanZi Yao music god songs, amorous songs, and various folk tales all have high scientific research value and appreciation value. The ShanZi Yao do not have shrines and temples. In order to facilitate sacrifices, stones are used as a symbol of the gods and are offered under the big trees. (Jinxiu Shan Zi Yao Museum)

#### 1.4.4 ChaShan Yao

The ChaShan Yao is one of the three branches of the Yao family. There is no written language of its own. The ChaShan Yao dialect is called LaKa and belongs to the DongShui language branch of the Sino -Tibetan (Kra-Dai), and is one of the three major languages of the Yao group. ChaShanYao is a Chinese name, and claims to be LaXiang and LaRu means a person who lives on a mountain. The ancestors of ChaShan Yao chose to plant tea according to the topography and landforms to form a large-scale tea forest, hence the name ChaShan Yao. The people of ChaShan have great artistic talents, and they are the best at singing and dancing among the five YaoShan in Jinxiu DaYaoShan. (Jin Xiu Da Yao Shan mountain history of Yao ,2010)

The clothing design of ChaShan Yao clothing is relatively simple, only white, blue, and black. There are roughly four styles due to different living areas. (Jinxiu ChaShan Yao Museum)

The silk ribbon is a special ornament that distinguishes the ChaShan Yao from other groups in the Yao, and it is also an indispensable item for labor, at the same time they are necessary dowry for marriages. ribbons are even more popular gifts for girls. (Chen Jianqiang. 2006).

#### 1.4.5 HuaLan Yao

The HuaLan Yao is a branch of the Yao family, Not only has a long history, but also a nation that has experienced long-term migration. The HuaLan Yao call themselves "Dong Nai" (HuaLan Yao language), which means a person who lives on the mountain. The HuaLan Yao women's clothing is embroidered with exquisite patterns, colorful, and extremely beautiful, so it

is named after. This Yao is the Yao with the smallest population in the country. (Jin Xiu Da Yao Shan mountain history of Yao, 2010)

The entire process of making HuaLan Yao garments, from planting cotton, tying flowers, spinning and weaving, to indigo dyeing, embroidering, and sewing, is done by the women. With a symbolic diamond pattern sunflower embroidered on the backpack. The sunflower represents the meaning of peace and happiness. (Jinxiu HuaLan Yao Museum)

## 2. The wedding in Yao society and culture

### 2.1 The wedding customs of the Yao

Compared with the marriage customs of other groups in our country, the Yao 's wedding customs have similar parts and their own distinct characteristics. For example, PanYao's "run at both ends" allows both families to take care of them after marriage. Their children can either follow the father's surname or the mother's surname, and the paternal family concept is not so strong. (Wu Shengjun, 2020)

The traditional wedding ceremony of the Yao includes several steps, such as crying for marriage, singing to each other, welcoming the bride and visiting the temple. The different groups and clades have different customs and habits, but these can result into the collision and blending of the culture. (Wang Aihong, 2021)

The marriage form of Yao is mainly to marry female, followed by to recruit a son. Before the founding of The People's Republic of China, Yao people generally did not marry with other groups. Their marriage usually started with young men and women building feelings through festival singing or other ways, falling in love freely, and getting consent from their parents before getting married. After the founding of New China, the state implemented the policy of equality, eliminating estrangement, and the phenomenon of intermarriage between Yao people and other groups is increasing. According to the Chinese Statistics Yearbook 2006, the marriage rate between Yao and other groups reached 26.46 percent in 2000. (Five series on questions of Chinese Ethnic Minorities volume)

The bride usually receives a certain amount of money and pork as betrothal gifts. After marriage, the woman can either live with her husband, or the couple can take turns living in the family of both parents, or the woman can first live in her mother's home after giving birth to a



child or living in her husband's home after a period of time. If both parties are the only child in the marriage, the husband and wife live and work in turn in the husband's family and the mother's family. The first child bears the father's surname, the second takes the mother's surname, and the children live with their parents when they are young, and stay in the grandfather's house and the grandfather's house respectively when they grow up. Jiu Quan is highly respected among the Yao people. (Five series on questions of Chinese Ethnic Minorities volume)

Yao weddings often have many local customs of the Yao people, such as singing local songs in the local language. The folk songs of Yao show the rich national folk culture. When the folk songs of Yao were produced, it was also a whole symbiosis with folk customs. All the folk songs of the Yao mostly contain folk customs. The people of Yao often sing some related songs when they are engaged in some custom activities. For example, in farming activities, they also sing songs of vitality and songs of knowledge; young men and women often sing songs of love. In the three stages of marriage, marriage, and funeral, there are customs of birth song, marriage song, and funeral song. (Wei Guixi,2013)

## 2.2 Yao wedding language

The wedding music of the Jinxiu Yao interprets the colorful language and culture. According to differences in language and customs, the Yao group in DaYao Mountain in Jinxiu can be divided into five groups: ChaShan Yao, HuaLan Yao, Ao Yao, Pan Yao, and ShanZi Yao. The language of the Yao belongs to the Yao language group and the Yao branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family, but the situation is more complicated. More than half of the people speak the Mian language, belonging to the Yao branch of the Miao-Yao language group; two-fifths of the people speak BuNu The language, such as HuaLan Yao, belongs to the Miao language branch; but ChaShan Yao has said that the LaJia language belongs to the Zhuang-Dong language family. However, with the continuous integration of the Jinxiu Yao people and the Han people, the influence on language and life is also increasing, making the vast majority of Yao people now use Chinese and Zhuang language. The Yao has no native language, and generally uses Chinese. (Shi Sangming. 2019)

Jinxiu Yao folk songs are a combination of sound curve and language expression. The style and local style of the folk songs are inseparable from the specific local language, pronunciation and semantics of Jinxiu. The sound, rhyme and tone of phonetics also have local

language characteristics. The ancestors of the Yao sing to communicate with each other, communicate with songs, and express their inner emotions with songs. The content of folk songs described their daily life, labor, and all activities. (Liu Juanjuan,2013)

From the folk songs sung by the Yao people in Jinxiu, it is clear that with the changes of the times, the Yao people's Chinese proficiency has improved. From the songs sung in the ancient Yao language in the past, it has gradually developed into singing in Chinese, which is also the language of the Yao people in Jinxiu, which indicates as well cultural change. (Wei Guixi, 2013)

### 2.3 The wedding in Tao religious culture

The wedding music of the Jinxiu Yao group expresses their religious culture. Since the Jinxiu Yao people have lived in nature for generations and depended on the resources of heaven and earth to provide food and clothing, they relied more on the protection of supernatural forces in their spiritual thinking. For this reason, a polytheistic culture emerged, with mountain gods, water god, shrine god, land god and others. The inherent religion of the Yao is to believe in the spirit of all things and worship the gods. The people of the Jinxiu Yao group also use folk song music to express religious activities such as driving away ghosts and evil spirits, worshipping the heavens and the earth, offering sacrifices to the dead, asking gods to return vows, praying for the prosperity of poultry, and harvesting grains. In different religious activities, they use different content of songs to express. (Duan Jinlan, 2017)

Since the Song and Yuan dynasties, Taoism and Buddhism have been introduced into the Yao area. Taoism was widely spread in the Yao area during the Qing Dynasty. After the Opium War, a large number of Western missionaries came to China, entered Yao district, in some mountainous areas to establish churches, missionary activities. Therefore, there are also some people of the Yao in Shiwan Dashan, Yongfu and Jinxiu of Guangxi who believe in Catholicism. (www.zgyzwhw.com)

## 3. The History and Change in Yao Wedding Culture

### 3.1. Historical documents on the wedding culture of the Yao

The core ritual parts of the Yao's wedding activities mainly include reception, worship, sitting in song hall, drinking marriage wine, wizard inviting god to remove evil spirits. (ChenZhou ZhiLi Local History) clearly describes the ancient Yao wedding customs of

snatching marriage, receiving, drinking wine, washing feet, sitting in the song hall, "wedding banquet, eating pig liver for wealth and good luck and others. (Feng Henggao, 2007)

The historical literature dates back to the Song Dynasty Zhou Qufei's (Ling Wai Dai Da). The literature describes the Song dynasty Yao young men and women singing and dancing romantic way of courtship. During the sacrifice of King Du Bei, through the form of shaking to achieve the ancient love custom of seeking a mate and free marriage. It also reflects antiquity, Men are superior to Women in the Three Cardinal Principles and Five Constant Thoughts of Shi Yao people's Marriage Concept. The concept of marriage is deeply important to Yao women. (Zhao Shufeng, 2017)

Three documents from the Qing Dynasty also record the traditional ceremony of "telling love by song" in the engagement custom of Yao people in ancient times. For example, the Yao usually convenes the HuiBu (also called song hall and meeting period) ceremony in the PanWang Temple on November 16 of the lunar calendar. Young men and women sit in two rows in the temple for courtship. By inviting the matchmaker to measure whether the length of each other's dress belt is similar, the basis for determining whether two people can fall in love and marry. (Qu Dajun, 1985)

In addition to the marriage customs described in the Guangdong New Language, the book (Yao People's Marriage), also describes the marriage proposal custom of whether the length of the dress belt of the men and women is similar. The wedding ceremony and music scene of mountain officials of Yao are also compared. Detailed description and record. The rituals described in the literature, such as wuhe, wufang, wucui, five ginseng, nine altar and seven xian, are enough to identify the Yao native official family spectacular wedding ceremony scene. At the same time, it can be seen that Yao wedding ceremony and worship of gods are accompanied by the parallel development of ceremony and performance. The music of the wedding ceremony is more diversified. There are both GuChu-Yue, Ya-Yue and vulgar music, as well as liao dance, a ceremonial music and dance performed in wedding ceremonies. At this time, the Yao wedding musical instruments have been very complete, not only percussion instruments such as drum (ou) and cymbal (bo), but also plucked instruments (lei), wind instruments such as flute (hulusi) and sheng, and percussion instruments such as yunyang (yun yang pi gu). (Xu Ke, 1984)

### 3.2. Changes in the musical ensemble accompanying the Yao wedding

The musical instruments in the Yao wedding ceremony during the Song Dynasty are mainly sheng (笙), flute (笛子), a vertical bamboo flute(箫), drum(鼓), yunyang(云阳)a drum made of leather). In today's Yao's rituals, the use of suona (唢呐), gong(锣), drums(鼓), cymbals(钹), wind instruments and percussion instruments, was not present in the Yao area in the Song Dynasty. Today, the pan flute (排笛), bamboo flute (竹笛) and other wind instruments, have basically disappeared in the present practices. (Zhao Shufeng, 2017)

After the Qing Dynasty, the musical instruments gradually became diversified, including the lu sheng (芦笙), drum (鼓) and flute (笛子), as well as the wind instruments, plucked instruments and rhythm instruments introduced from outside. In "The history of the Yao" it describes the following -- "The Yuan and Ming dynasties, influenced by the Han, Zhuang culture, when Yao song and dance entertainment, in addition to using the original drum(鼓), lusheng (芦笙,) bamboo flute (笛子), suona (唢呐), cymbals(钹), some instruments from the Yao, Han, Zhuang, also were used as accompaniment instrument by the Yao." (Feng Henggao,2007)

## 4. The Theory Used in Research

### 4.1 Musicology

Musicology is the general term for all theoretical subjects that study music. The general task of musicology is to elucidate the nature and laws of various phenomena related to music. For example, studies on the relationship between music and ideology include music aesthetics, music history, music ethnology, music psychology, music pedagogy, etc. The study of the material and material characteristics of music includes musical acoustics, jurisprudence, instrumental science, etc. The study of music form and its composition includes melodic theory, harmony acoustics, counterpoint, composition theory, etc. There are also from the performance aspect to consider, such as performance theory, command method and so on. (David Beard and Kenneth Gloag, 2005)

The researcher will use this knowledge to lay out the conceptual framework for the study of music culture related to the theory of music analysis in various forms, including the study of its history.

## 4.2 Ethnomusicology

Jaap Kunst replaced the term "comparative musicology" with the term "ethnomusicology", since the method of comparison was applicable to all kinds of sciences. Ethnomusicology is the study of all kinds of music; It is not limited to the study of music itself, but also includes the study of the relationship between music and its cultural background. Usually the term has one of two meanings: 1) the study of music outside of all European art music and of the early traditional musical heritage in Europe and elsewhere; 2) the study of a wide variety of music that exists in a

given place or region. (Mantle Hood, 1986)

The researcher will use this knowledge to study the concepts of human culture that affect the creation of musical instruments and to improve the form of music culture from the past to the present.

## 4.3 Historical Musicology

Historical musicology is a branch of musicology. It is a discipline to study the specific process and regularity of the development of music history using various methods of interpreting history in chronological order. Originally Western music was the main research axis, and now it includes music history research from all over the world. It studies the issues related to the writings of music history and the science of the past Changes of music that appear in music treatises, such as the evolution, development and laws of music content and form. It belongs to a branch of the entire field of human cultural history research, and is a discipline juxtaposed with historical studies such as literature, fine arts, and dance. (Crist, S. A. ,2004)

The researcher will use this concept as the main in the study of history related to the intended objectives.

In this research, the researcher mainly used descriptive research methods to explain the existing phenomena, laws and theories through her own understanding and verification; and the methods of historical musicology are adopted to study and interpret its development, process and laws in chronological order; Ethnomusicology research methods to conduct fieldwork and interviews important informants; The qualitative analysis method to further refine Yao wedding music so as to grasp the essence, clarify the relationship, and predict the trend of things development.

## 5. Documents and Related Research

So far, the researcher has collected more than 100 related studies on the wedding customs and music of the Yao and 4 monographs. In addition, there are some opinions and discussions. Generally speaking, there are many studies on the traditional wedding customs of the Yao group, combined with comprehensive studies of music, society, history, and cultural context. After entering the new century, due to the penetration and influence of the methodology of the humanities and social sciences, music research on the Yao has demonstrated a distinct interdisciplinary nature.

In the literature review of this chapter, the researcher selected 17 dissertations, roughly classified into several content points. Those who study the marriage customs of the Yao group, the folk songs of the Yao group, and the social context of the Yao group. Researchers will review relevant literature with research as a concept and framework to obtain knowledge and answers based on goal setting.

In 1942, the first volume of the first volume of Folk Customs, the fourth periodical published the first dissertation on the music of the Yao, "Music of the Yao People in LianYang". So far, the study of Yao's music has gone through a full 80 years. The socio-historical survey of Chinese minorities started in the 1950s. It was the first time that national forces have allowed the Yao's history and culture to be sung from generation to generation in their minds and tongues to be recorded in official yellow scrolls. With the continuous efforts of well-known domestic scholars such as Wu Guodong, Qiao Jianzhong, Fan Zuyin, Yang Minkang, and Peng Zhaorong, Yao music has formed a multi-dimensional interpretation of Yao music culture from the collection and compilation of music scores to the analysis of music morphology to the study of folk ritual music. The 80-year Yao music research road, such a magnificent research landscape, has projected the track of Chinese music research for more than half a century, and it is worthy of our summary and reflection. (Li Xiaoting, 2011)

Before the 21st century, the study of Yao traditional music was mainly based on the self-disciplined ontological analysis research, and a small part of the comprehensive research that combined the social, historical and cultural context. After entering the new century, due to the penetration and influence of the methodology of the humanities and social sciences, the Yao music research has demonstrated a distinct interdisciplinary nature. However, there are also some

problems in actual research: the description and analysis of the Yao music form obviously has traces of being influenced by the analysis and evaluation concepts centered on Western classical music and Han traditional music; current research is mostly based on The main focus is on synchronic case studies, and more attention is paid to the current music performance activities, and there is a lack of diachronic observation and examination of the trajectory of its development and Changes. Concerned about the problems of the traditional instruments of the Yao in organology, music rhythm, and music acoustics. (Zhao Shufeng, 2017)

The 2015 National Social Science Foundation Art Science General Project: "A Cross-Border Comparative Study of Yao Group's Wedding Custom Music-A Case Study of Chinese and Lao Yao Groups", Project Leader: Zhao Shufeng, Approval Number: (15BD004), Research Period: 2015 September 8 to June 30, 2018. This project takes the suona music, percussion, Taoist music, and folk songs in the Yao weddings in Hunan, Guangdong, Guangxi, and Yunnan in China, Langnan Pagoda, and Huishai in Laos as the object of investigation, and aims at the commonalities between the music in the above-mentioned regions, carry out extensive and in-depth investigation and research on the modern outcome of personality differences and their enrichment and acculturation. (Zhao Shufeng 2015)

As a kind of marriage custom, crying marriage exists widely in many groups in China and even the world. PingDi Yao's marriage custom of crying marriage has a long history, and also has unique national characteristics. Taking FuChuan Yao Autonomous County in Guangxi as a case, from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage, a "deep description" of PingDi Yao's crying marriage custom, and an in-depth analysis of its cultural meaning and value, we can find that PingDi Yao's crying marriage custom is an example of its folk culture. It has multiple values and conforms to the various characteristics of "intangible cultural heritage". It has the potential to be rated as intangible cultural heritage. Under the background of today's social changes, Ping Di Yao's marriage custom of crying for marriage is facing the danger of decline and disappearance. In order to make this excellent folk culture have a long history, the folk environment on which it depends should be protected in accordance with the principle of intangible cultural heritage integrity and vitality protection. On the basis of cultural and cultural space, the cultural tourism industry should be appropriately developed, and timely adjustment and innovation should be made in practice to make it more vigorous and vigorous. (Zheng Guanlei, 2021)

GuoShan Yao's traditional concept of marriage and the grand pursuit of holding weddings, so besides the complicated setup of the wedding procedures, the music is also integrated with each procedure. Among them, the suona wind music and poems are the sounds of the wedding in an orderly manner. They also show their own artistic style and characteristics, and constitute one of the important forms of Yao wedding custom music. (Xiao Wenpu, 2012)

With the acceleration of modernization, urbanization, and commercialization, the values of life, marriage, and aesthetics of the young Yao people have been impacted by multiple cultures. The traditional wedding ceremony of GuoShan Yao is rarely seen again as well as the traditional wedding ceremony music. The acquisition and recording has become a thing that can be met but not desired. Based on fieldwork and oral history research methods, and from the perspectives of outsiders and insiders, a detailed description of the case of DaSan Yuan traditional wedding ceremony in DaWan Village, LongQuan Town, XinTian County, YongZhou City, Hunan Province, was selected from the traditional wedding ceremony of GuoShan Yao. The three types of music events are analyzed in the form of music, so as to give an understanding of the characteristics and reasons of the Changes in the traditional marriage ceremony music of GuoShan Yao. (Wang Aihong, 2021)

The PingGui Yao people in HeZhou City, Guangxi, who live in the deep mountains of the NanNing Corridor, still have many ancient forms of marriage customs, and also preserved a large number of handwritten documents recording daily life. Folk literature and field survey data show that affected by factors such as natural environment, livelihood, economic level, historical culture and other factors, the marriage of the Yao people in PingGui is dominated by intra-marriages. Whether rich or poor, the villagers of the Yao group in PingGui pay special attention to the wedding ceremony. The characteristics of the marriage customs of the Yao in PingGui truly reflect their livelihood, economic development level, identity and historical and cultural traditions. (Wu Shengjun, 2020)

The PingDi Yao is a branch of the Yao group. It has preserved many historical and cultural treasures. The Crying Marriage Song is an important phenomenon in the cultural history of the Yao people, It has been transmitted from generation to generation in the form of folk oral means. It is so rich and colorful, showing various cultural phenomena. However, compared with other groups, there are very few researchers. Even, many people still don't understand its cultural



meaning and academic value. From the perspective of mutual corroboration of folklore, history, folk literature, and ethnology, this dissertation makes a brief analysis on the formation, ritual process, chanting form and its manifestation of PingDi Yao's Crying Marriage Song. (Zhong Zhou & He Ting 2019)

As one of the ethnic minorities in our country, the Yao is a constantly migrating and merging with other Yao groups. They are currently gathered in Guangxi, Hunan, Yunnan, Jiangxi and other provinces. Among these are the Gongcheng Yao Autonomous County, Guangxi is located between the Xianggui Corridor and the Xiaohe Ancient Road in the northeast of Guangxi, with Sanxiang to the north and Yuewu to the south. Due to the convenience of the two major transportation routes, the Central Plains culture and the Lingnan culture interact with each other. The collision and fusion created the unique culture of Gongcheng. This dissertation takes Gongcheng's Yao's wedding water parade rituals as the research object. Through the analysis of its characteristic visual symbols, costumes, long drums, auditory symbols, eight-tone music, and folk songs, it explores the metaphorical cultural connotation of the Yao wedding rituals in the tourism market. Combining with the tourism data of GongCheng, it discusses the tourism value of the wedding ceremony, provides a basis for the integration of rituals into the tourism market, and puts forward relevant suggestions. (Duan Jinlan & Mai Lin, 2021)

Instrumental speech (YueHua for short) is a common cultural phenomenon found among many nations in the world. It refers to "using musical instruments as a medium, parallel use of language and music (or between the two) materials for the main purpose of expressing semantic content. According to its functions, the voice communication system is generally divided into two types: long-distance music talk and close-distance music talk. Taking the Yao (GuoShan Yao) marriage custom suona music as the object of investigation, starting from the spatial scene and method characteristics of its application, this study puts forward a new viewpoint of middle distance music, and then participate in the marriage custom music space through suona music, construct the situation and explore the perception and multiple functions of the music space. (Xiao Wenpu, 2017)

The Yao people in my country has a population of more than two million. They have a long history, are brave and hardworking, with a rich and colorful folk culture and art. Like other fraternal nations, they have made due contributions to the development, prosperity and

development of the motherland. However, due to various historical reasons, frequent migration, scattered residence, and most of them live in secluded mountainous areas, so there are some differences in their marriage customs. (Pan Taifu, 1994)

There are five branches of Yao group in Jinxiu Yao Mountain, among which is the ChaShan Yao with unique marriage customs. When picking up the family, they don't play trivialities, lift sedan chairs, or play gongs, drums and firecrackers. The man sent several brothers from the Fang clan to pick up the bride in the middle of the night. (Western Review 2022)

Hua Yao is an ancient group with less than 7,000 people living in Longhui County, Hunan Province. It is a unique branch of the Yao group. Due to the closed living environment, the ancient folk customs have been preserved to this day. The HuaYao marriage custom in the HuXingShan Yao Township of Longhui County uses the four basic links to make love with songs, send umbrellas, get married, marry in mud, and marry in dance. (Yu Minghua, 2010)

"Fighting three fights" and "playing the matchmaker" are ancient and interesting marriage customs of the HuaYao people in Longhui County, Hunan Province. There are still young HuaYao people today. The newlyweds follow this very local tradition on the day of their wedding. There are more than 6000 Hua Yao living in HuXingShanTownship, Longhui County. The Hua Yao is a branch, with a history of about 400 years. (Luo Lili & Lu Xianzhong, 2013)

The Yao community are fond of forming singing groups. Folk songs are closely related to the lives of local residents. Whether it is daily entertainment or weddings and funerals, it is inseparable from folk songs. The wedding ceremony, as an important part of the traditional folklore of PanYao in Jiajiang Village, Jinxiu Triangle Township, demonstrates their simplicity and charm and has become an important means for the transmission of folk songs. (Tan Yuekui, 2014)

The Yao has a relatively long history, and many excellent folk music were born in the development process. The Mangshan Yao live in Hunan Province. Due to its special geographical location, it has also formed a relatively distinctive folk customs during the development process. This dissertation investigates the folk songs in the marriage customs of the Yao in Mangshan. (Duan Jinlan, 2017)

The Yao is a nation with a long history and splendid culture. The Lan DianYao who live in Lingyun County, Guangxi, has a traditional marriage custom of crying to marry. The married

daughter expresses her hardship to her mother in the form of crying and singing; the mother also teaches her daughter to be diligent and thrifty in the days to come. Family management, filial piety to parents-in-law. At the time of marriage, the whole village, men, women and children all go to the village. (Li Tong, 2017)

Arranged marriages are unstable and weak marriage relationship based on feelings. It has different manifestations in different nationalities and different stages of historical development. Before the founding of the People's Republic of China, the five Yao groups in DaYao Mountain in Jinxiu had extramarital affairs, and ChaShan Yao, Ao Yao and HuaLan Yao were more prominent. The main forms were huobao, climbing a building and looking for the same year. There is a practice of an open extramarital freedom. After marriage, men and women can find another lover after their honeymoon, and the wife can openly invite a lover to stay at home. Because the lover came with a torch at night, it was named "ignitor". This is an open lover relationship. There is a big difference between Jinxiu DaYao Mountain ChaShan Yao's fire bar and the NaXi group's A Zhu marriage in Yongning, Ninglang County, Yunnan Province. (Mo JinShan & Chen Jianqiang 2006)

Thailand and Laos have had a close relationship since ancient times. The two nations have the same origin and similar culture, language, customs and religious beliefs. On both sides of the 1,750-kilometer border, most residents have relatives. Close contacts. Therefore, it is often said that Thailand and Laos are brother neighbors. (Surakhai Sirigai, Wen Cong 1986.)

Purnell, an American scholar, wrote a dissertation in 1992 on the timbre and text of the Yao's marriage ceremony in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. (The investigation and study of tones. Herbert C, Purnell 1992)

Kun Chang wrote a comparative study of Yao's tonal system in 1996, which is a comparative study of Yao's tonal system from the perspective of phonetics. (Kun Chang 1996)

### **Summary:**

As most researchers believe, the results of this study shows that the Yao wedding music is a unique traditional folk music, which plays an important functional role in Yao wedding, and its original music style is precious.

## Chapter III

### Research Methodology

Due to the important status of Jinxiu Yao in China, in this qualitative research, the researcher chose Jinxiu County of Guangxi Province as the research area. Through literature research, field interviews and other methods, chose key informants as my research clues, to investigate the musical context of Wedding Music of Jinxiu Yao and to analyze the music element of wedding music of Jinxiu Yao.

1. Research Scope
2. Research process

#### 1. Research Scope

##### 1.1 Scope of research site

My site is Jinxiu County, Guangxi Province, China.

The Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County, founded in May 1952, is the earliest Yao autonomous county in China, located in DaYaoShan Mountain in the eastern part of Guangxi. The total population is 147,300, of which the Yao group accounts for 34.4%. Yao has five branches of PanYao, ChaShan Yao, Hua Lan Yao, ShanZi Yao and Ao Yao. Fei Xiaotong, a famous sociologist, said, "The world Yao Culture research Center is in China, and the Chinese Yao Culture Research Center is in Jinxiu."

All three major branches of Yao in China can be found in Jinxiu, where the main branches of Yao in China are found. Therefore, it has certain representativeness and significance to choose it as the research destination.



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Figure 2 Map of Guangxi Province, China

Retrieved: from (<https://image.so.com/>) Accessed 19 September 2021

### 1.2 Scope of content

Among the weddings of the five branches of Jinxiu Yao, The "Marry off a Son " of Pan Yao is the most distinctive, complete and rich in musical elements. With "marrying Lang" as the main research topic.

The research content of this dissertation includes: the culture context of the wedding music of the Yao in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China; the music elements of the wedding music of the Yao in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China; and the importance of the wedding music of the Yao in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China.

Music is part in the whole Yao wedding ceremony. Therefore, it is necessary to record the whole Yao wedding ceremony in detail and analyze the functions and significance of wedding music.

By music elements, it includes specific songs, rhythm, music style, accompanying instruments, which is a further step oto the analysis and study of music ontology.

### 1.3 Scope of time

My research lasted for more than one year, starting from February 2021 until the research is completed.

From February 2021, relevant literature and materials were collected and sorted out. From June 2021, I went to Jinxiu Yao several times, and recorded the "Marry off a Son". From February 2022, all data were collected and analyzed.

#### 1.4 Methodology

This dissertation uses Yao wedding music as the research object. The research method mainly adopts qualitative research, interviews and observation and documents as the main tools to collect data, and answers are obtained based on subjectivity. These data are explained by theories of musicology, ethnomusicology, historical musicology.

## 2. Research process

### 2.1 Selection site and key informant

#### (1) Research site: Jinxiu County, Guangxi Province, China

The reason: Jinxiu is the first Yao Autonomous County established in the country, Founded in May 1952, it is located in the central part of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Known as the "Yao Capital of the World". As of 2009, the county's administrative divisions have jurisdiction over 80 village committees (including street committees) in 3 towns, 8 townships. A multi-city based on the Yao culture as a carrier, the Yao group accounts for 34.4% of the total population (the rest are Han, Zhuang, Miao, Dong and other groups). Among the Jinxiu Yao people, There are five Yao group, (Pan Yao, ChaShan Yao, HuaLan Yao, ShanZi Yao, and Ao Yao), They belong to three branches of Yao in China.

The concentration and diversity of Yao culture makes DaYao Mountain in Jinxiu a central place for Yao research, and it occupies an important position in Yao research in China. As noted by Mr. Fei Xiaotong, a famous sociologist, anthropologist, and researcher of Yao culture: The research center of Yao culture in the world is in China, and the research center of Yao culture in China is in Jinxiu.

#### (2) Key informants

The First group: Mr. Huang Chenglin

Huang Chenglin, Men, 71 years old, he is responsible for playing suona. A Jinxiu local resident, he is the main person in charge of the PanYao "Marry off a Son" Performance

Troupe. He has participated in performances for a long time and knows the process of the PanYao wedding ceremony and the music repertoire.



Figure 3 Mr. Huang Chenglin

Photographer: Zhao Ping (2021)

The criteria for selecting key informants are:

- 1) He was born and raised in Jinxiu County.
  - 2) The person understands the culture and development of the Yao in Jinxiu,
  - 3) The person knows how to perform wedding music, has been engaged in wedding performances,
- and has rich experience.

- 4) He is the main practitioner of the music.

The Second group: Mr. Hu Zongchuan

Hu Zongchuan, Male, a Yao from Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County, Guangxi, majored in ethnology of Guangxi University for Nationalities. Now he works for Guangxi Materials Group, the deputy secretary general of Guangxi Yao Association. As an expert of the Yao, he has studied the culture and customs of Jinxiu Yao for a long time, and has also deeply studied Yao marriage. In studies of YaoXue (such as national press) published the Jinxiu HuaLan Yao source for the "East" card ", "Ming dynasty big rattan gorge uprising characteristics provides descendants of the previous generation this life", "Yao's history and culture in southwest conference review

academic papers, such as a prose in Guangxi University For Nationalities newspaper," The feeling with the new development ", The guests daily, "Yao" in the newspaper.



Figure 4 Mr. Hu Zongchuan

Photographer: Huang Xiaohuan (2021)

The criteria for selecting key informants are:

- 1) He was born and raised in Jinxiu County, and understands the local language.
- 2) He is an expert on Yao culture and is familiar with the culture and development of the

Yao

Yao in Jinxiu.

- 3) As a professional researcher, he has been engaged in professional theoretical research
- for a

long time and has a systematic research method.

- 4) He now lives in Nanning, the same city as the researcher, making it easy to visit.

The Third group: Chen Xiaorong; Zhao Ping; YeFei and others

The criteria for selecting the key informants are:

They are all local people of Jinxiu Yao and have a good understanding of the local culture of Jinxiu

- 2) They took part in the wedding of the Jinxiu Yao people.



3) They participated at the Jin Xiu Yao's wedding---“Marry off a Son”.

## 2.2 Research equipment

- (1) Voice recorder: Record information about the interview.
- (2) Camera: Record information about the observation.
- (3) VCR: Record information about interview and observation.
- (4) Laptop: Store photos and videos, record text and information.

## 2.3 Research Tools

The research tools used in this dissertation are mainly interview, observation and document collection. To obtain data for the study, the researchers conducted several field surveys.

1) Observation: visit and observe the museums of five Yao branches of Jinxiu Yao and a comprehensive Jinxiu Yao Museum. Visit and observe Pan Yao's wedding “Marry off a Son”.

2) Interviews: Purposeful interviews with three key groups of informants.

3) Document collection: refer to relevant literature at home and abroad, summarize and sort out.

The researchers did some preparatory work:

- 1) Take collated material to key sources for inspection.
- 2) Make Changes according to informant editing.
- 3) Send it to an expert informant for inspection before use
- 4) Make modifications according to expert advice before site work.

## 2.4 Data collecting

Researchers collected data through literature analysis and field visits, including literature data, audio data, image data, and recorded data.

1 ) Literature data: In order to conduct in-depth research, researchers refer to literature materials in libraries and cultural centers, and collect literature data by using network platforms such as CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) to complete document analysis.



2 ) Acoustic data: Researchers went to the study site (Jinxiu County, Guangxi Province, China) for field investigation. Use recording equipment to collect audio data at the wedding site.

3) Image data: Researchers went to the study site (Jinxiu County, Guangxi Province, China) for

4) field investigation. Use camera equipment to collect image data at the wedding site.

Recorded data: Researchers went to the research site (Jinxiu County, Guangxi Province, China) for field investigation, interviewed three groups of local informants, recorded and sorted out the interview content, and recorded audio and video.

## 2.5 Data analysis

The researcher analyzes the data to follow up the goals and definitions Use conceptual and theoretical terms.

In the first objective, the researcher used literature analysis, using qualitative research methods and field survey data. The researcher went to Jinxiu, Guangxi for a field visit to the museum, and interviewed my main informants with observation methods to obtain experience and relevant information, investigated and analyzed the musical context of Jinxiu Yao wedding music.

In the second objective, the researcher used field research, interviews with informants, and recorded suona music and oercussion music in wedding music to complete the practical analysis of musical elements of Jinxiu Yao wedding music.

In the third objective, the researcher used document analysis methods by collecting and organizing data. The core of the data analysis mainly focuses on the dissemination, development and description of music culture, in order to understand the importance of Jinxiu Yao wedding music.

## 2.6 Summary of chapters

In this dissertation, the researcher will present 7 chapters:

- 1) Chapter I Introduction
- 2) Chapter II Literature Reviews

- 3) Chapter III Research Methodology
- 4) Chapter IV The Cultural Context of Yao Wedding
- 5) Chapter V Analysis of Yao Wedding Music
- 6) Chapter VI The Importance of Wedding Music of Yao in Relation to the Society of Jinxiu, Guangxi, China.
- 7) Chapter VII Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions



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## Chapter IV

### The cultural context of the Yao wedding

The wedding music of Jinxiu Yao is closely related to the wedding ceremony. In this section, it will be explained the cultural context of the wedding of Yao in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China.

1. In history, the marriage custom of different Yao branches in Jinxiu
2. Representative of cultures - "Marry off a Son" ceremony
3. The embodiment of folk customs and religious activities

#### 1. In history, the marriage custom of different Yao branches in Jinxiu

In the process of field work, the researcher visited the museums of five branches of the Yao

group in Jinxiu, interviewed many local informants and villagers, and investigated and recorded the history of Yao wedding customs.

There are several Yao tribes of the Jinxiu Yao. Each group has its own unique marriage customs and common rituals. The Pan Yao's wedding is the most lively, The most representative is "Marry off a Son", played. with suona music; Shan ZiYao's wedding music, only a few simple religious rituals were preserved. Cha Shan Yao's wedding was held quietly, Marriages are usually made at night by torch light, There was no music or excitement; Ao Yao wedding is a lot of taboos, basically no music; HualanYao did not hold her wedding until after she gave birth,. In the process of gradual intermarriage and sinicization, different Yao branches gradually simplified the marriage process and ceremony, or use the same wedding ceremony. Like "Marry off a Son".

##### 1.1 Pan Yao's 's marriage system

PanYao's marriage process can be roughly divided into four stages: love, marriage, engagement, and marriage.

In Guangxi Jinxiu PanYao, the young men and women have a complete set of etiquette from confirming the relationship to getting married. The first is the mutual understanding and mutual understanding of the man and the woman. If they agree, the parents will ask the



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matchmaker to talk about their relationship. If both parents agree, the engagement ceremony can be held, but must go through the master's "combination of eight characters". Then the matchmaker and the marrying party will make a betrothal gift to the wedding party. At the same time, the master's "counting day" is also needed to determine the wedding date.

After the marriage is confirmed, the wedding can be held on auspicious day. PanYao's wedding was very grand whether it was married to a daughter or a married man. The whole wedding had a banquet for 3 days. On the first day, there was a banquet to welcome relatives and friends who come to congratulate and the villagers who come to help. On the second day, a ceremony is held with a long table banquet to receive relatives and guests.

Traditional marriages usually involve marrying daughters, but among the Jinxiu Yao people, both women or men can be married. Their wedding procedures are basically the same, but the main characters are different.

The Jinxiu PanYao has a marriage custom called "Marry off a Son", also called "home visit", as the name suggests, refers to the man married into the woman's home. In the Yao family, door-to-door visits are considered a model of respect for people, so the custom of "Marry off a Son" is most prevalent in the Jinxiu Yao people, especially among the Pan Yao. The man does not need to change his surname after marrying at the woman's home, and half of the children born after marriage still follow their father's surname. After marriage, if the man's family is in difficulties, the couple will return to the man's house together, stay for a period of time to help solve the difficulties, and then return to the woman's house. The Yao family calls this "two-sided top". The "Marry off a Son" fully interprets the idea of equality between men and women of the Jinxiu Yao.

## 1.2 The Shan Zi Yao's marriage system

The Shan Zi Yao's marriage system is relatively simple. The whole process can be roughly divided into the stages of marriage, engagement, and "return to the door". When young men and women have a happy marriage, they like to talk about love in the form of singing, such as the unique "Song of Crabs" by young people, but this does not mean choosing a spouse. Because his (her) marriage must be established by their parents with their consent. When they get married, the two parties have to have a "wine and rice together", and after listening to the

admonitions of their parents and relatives, the wedding is over. The wedding usually lasts three days and nights. (Xiao Wenpu, 2012)

The day before the marriage, the marrying party will send a reception team. Under the leadership of the matchmaker, they will bring rice, wine, and meat to the marrying party's home to receive the marriage. The next day, the welcoming team together with the wedding-off team selected by the marrying Fang's family will send the new couple to the marrying Fang's family. The newlyweds must start before dawn. If the Fang's family is too far away, the party must go to the relative's house near the Fang's house one day in advance. There are many taboos in ShanZi Yao's way of sending off her relatives. If the woman is married, the bride will go to a bridge on the way, and cannot cross the bridge. When encountering a bamboo tower, she must also take a detour. The folks believe that this can prevent future quarrels between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

The family sending off the family leaves the family home in a mighty manner. They often engage a team of singers sent by the family to marry the Fang family. These pairs of songs often have questions and answers, full of life interest, say you say me, the final winner is of course the marrying party. After passing the antithetical song, the wedding can be held when the team arrives to marry Fang's house.

First, the newlyweds will burn incense. With the accompaniment of the xuona music, Dao Gong walked to the middle of the house and sat on a high stool. The bride and groom sat on the left and right sides of Dao Gong. Dao Gong began to speak colorful words while holding it up with chopsticks. He will then place the pork dish in the two small bowls and pass the pork to the bride and groom to eat separately. This is the "eating meal with wine". After the bride and groom finish their first bite, they will continue to feed the pork dish to the bride and groom in the same way, until the pork is finished. This ceremony implies that the bride and groom share joys and sorrows and respect and love each other after marriage. Then the parents, relatives and matchmakers of both parties gave admonitions to the new couple, such as respecting family members and caring for younger brothers and sisters, and improving family and neighbor relations.

On the third day of marriage, the newlyweds prepared pork, chicken, and glutinous rice cakes and returned to the Fang's family to thank their parents for their kindness. This is called a

"home". After returning home, the newlyweds began to "work at both ends", that is, both the man and the woman have to do the work in the two families, usually for a month, work for one month at the man's house, and then work at the woman's house for another month, repeatedly taking turns, Until the woman was pregnant and it was not convenient to move around, then she settled in Marry Fang's house.

### 1.3 The Cha Shan Yao's marriage system

The ChaShan Yao's marriage generally goes through three stages of love, engagement and marriage.

The ChaShan Yao people are most dramatic when they fall in love, with their popular "climbing stairs". The ChaShan Yao villages are generally large, and their residences are all two-story wooden buildings. The quiet hanging building is a place for adult girls to socialize. Whenever the hanging building was covered with dim moonlight, the girls embroidered ribbons together. The thoughtful young man used songs in the alleyway to express his love. If the person who came is the girl's favorite, the door of the hanging tower will open quietly in the singing, and then the brave and witty young man will climb up the wood. This way of falling in love is the witty "climbing". Of course, the enthusiastic girl must help the young man upstairs. But there are also people who eat closed doors, but sing self-deprecatingly: "I think how hard you are, A Xiang Li! I think you can't eat, three bowls for one meal; I love that you can't sleep. Yo! Sleep till dawn...". The girl in the hanging building was amused by the kind singing. Once the men and women agree, they'll be together . (Zheng Guanlei, 2021)

The ChaShan Yao's wedding ceremony is held in the middle of the night, which is a unique event. The wedding day is held without blowing suona, without the sedan chair, without banging the gongs or drums, no setting off firecrackers, the person in charge of receiving relatives lighted a torch, went to the marrying party's house in the middle of the night, toasted with the marrying party's parents, had a "gratitude meal", and then lit the torch to take the new couple back to the marrying party's house. It must be guaranteed to be able to send the couple into the marrying Fang's house before dawn. After the marrying party came to Marry Fang's house, take a short rest, and then perform an indispensable ceremony-the marrying host prays to the ancestors at the table, the content is nothing more than the addition of new people in the family, and hope that the ancestors will bless others. They begin to eat the first happy meal. After the meal, the

reception ceremony is over. The ChaShan Yao people still maintain this simple marriage custom. (Wu Shengjun, 2020)

#### 1.4 The HuaLan Yao's marriage system

The Jinxiu HuaLan Yao's marriage generally requires an inquiry and engagement first. After confirming the date the matchmaker will bring the wedding party to the other party's home to ask the relatives. If the other party agrees, he can accept the gift and engagement. When Jinxiu HuaLan Yao is engaged, the matchmaker will give the bride price money such as clothes, Handkerchiefs, bracelets, and collars to the spouse. After the spouse accepts the gift, it is considered an engagement. After the marriage, the marrying party chooses the date of marriage and informs the marrying party. (Jiang Yuanluan, 2008)

After the newlyweds entered the door, the newlyweds stood in front of the shrine and bowed to their ancestors. After the ceremony, the newlyweds sat on the same bench in the hall, took the wine glass handed by the master, and drank it, which is considered to be married. The two parties do not host a banquet or receive a betrothal gift. Only one or two tables are prepared on that day, and the family will have a meal with the matchmaker and the person receiving the relatives. Often after the wedding, most people in the village still don't know whether someone is getting married. The wedding party does not give away dowry, and does not need to marry the party's belongings. It just asks the marrying party to bring 5 catties of meat, 5 catties of rice and 5 catties of wine when receiving the marriage. After marriage, most of the couples live in their respective homes, until the woman is pregnant and is about to give birth.

HuaLan Yao's wedding custom is to do "Double wedding wine", that is, the child's full moon wine and the parents' wedding wine are organized together, so the wedding is only done after the child was born.

HuaLan Yao's wedding is not all that simple. Double happiness wine is usually held for two days. During full moon, they organize the "Double Happiness Wine" as usual: to celebrate the "marriage" of the child's parents, and the second happiness is to congratulate the child on the full moon. The so-called "uncle eats pork leg" marriage custom is staged in this "Double Happiness Wine". The "uncle" here refers to the team of relatives of the wedding party, who are the main guests at the banquet. Regardless of adulthood, anyone over the age of seven or eight



can receive the highest courtesy of the "maternal uncle". When HuaLan Yao is holding a wedding wine, she will put DustPan meat on the square table specially set up for the married relatives.

### 1.5 The Ao Yao's marriage system

There are many taboos in Ao Yao's weddings. The process can be roughly divided into six stages: asking relatives, making appointments, reporting the marriage date, celebrating the ceremony, getting married, and returning to the door. "Ask a marriage" is to invite a matchmaker to discuss marriage with each other, and determine good or bad by brewing shochu. If the brewed wine is sour, it is bad, indicating that this couple is not suitable for being together. If auspicious, send a chicken to the other party as a deal.

After choosing the wedding date, the marrying party sends a matchmaker to notify the marrying party. The day before the wedding, the marrying party accompanied the matchmaker to send the bride price to the marrying party's home, which is called a gift. Most of the wedding ceremonies of Ao Yao also choose to be held around dawn, and it is especially emphasized that the marrying party must have four uncles (brides or brothers and sisters of the son-in-law) and other relatives and friends. If the road is near or far, the marrying party must make sure that it is auspicious to enter the marrying Fang's house. If the road is too far away, they will usually set off on the first day and stay at the relative's house closer to the marrying Fang's house.

There are many taboos in the process of sending off relatives in Ao Yao. For example, the umbrella covered by the bride must be hung with a symbol painted by a Taoist to ward off evil spirits, a small red flag must be placed on a pole on the way, and a bridge must be detoured from the river, and so on. The bride's entrance process is also very particular. Take the groom's house as the main body, depending on the location of the bride's house in the groom's house. Behind the door of the newlyweds, they worship the ancestors' shrine, and then the master will preside over the drinking of "He-Bo wine", then the "wine in the house" for the whole family, then the newlyweds will have a "Hands-off ceremony", and finally the matchmaker will accompany the newlyweds to eat a bowl of rice. it's over.

## 2. Representative of cultures -"Marry off a son" ceremony

In Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County, the ancient marriage custom "Marry off a Son" means that a man marries a woman, and then the man lives in the woman's home after marriage,

and the husband and wife have equal status. According to local people, "Marry off a Son" is quite common among Yao people. This kind of "house admission" is regarded as a virtue to respect the elderly and takes the rise and fall of the nation into account.

Therefore, among Pan people, all of them are willing to marry off their sons.

A real wedding was filmed with the help of a local informant. The researcher was not able to visit the site on time due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Interviews were conducted after the wedding. As recorded below.

Date: April 3, 2022

Location: FenZhan Village, Jinxiu County

Event: Pan Yao wedding ceremony

Bride and Groom: Both are locals

The whole wedding lasts about three days.

On the first day, each family of the bride and groom made some preparations.

The main ritual process was concentrated on the second day. In the morning, the bride's family prepared the food needed to entertain the guests that day, furnished the room, and got the suona table ready. The suona ensemble is usually be invited and paid several days in advance, and the specific amount is determined by the financial ability of the bride's family. At noon, the bride's family sent relatives to pick up the groom, and returned home within the specified time for dressing, worship ceremony and banquet arrangement. In the evening, meals are served after which they saw off the guests.

On the third day, relatives went home.

#### 2.1 The first day, relatives gathered at the bride's home

In Jin Xiu, the wedding ceremony is held for a total of three days. On the first day, friends and relatives of the bride's family gathered at the bride's house, eating and chatting enthusiastically. This is their rare big reunion, talking about the next day's wedding. There are no explicit purpose here, just family gathering for dinner. A drum ensemble, the bride's family prepared for the wedding, the ensemble played music during the banquet. The main purpose of playing the music is to welcome everyone to their home for dinner. Music was playing repetitively during seat arrangements, cigarette offering and toasts.

## 2.2 The second day, the preparation of the bride's home

At 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning, firecrackers are lit in the bride's house. The crackling sound of firecrackers, confetti, all kinds of red-colored decoration indicate a jubilant atmosphere. The front door of the bride's home is pasted with traditional red banners with written couplets, which expresses good wishes to the new family.



Figure 5 Red banners are affixed to the bride's home

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

In the wedding of Yao nationality to “Marry off a Son”, a suona ensemble should be invited in advance to accompany the whole wedding ceremony. This is an important part of the whole process, so early in the day, the bride's family will prepare a table for the ensemble to play, which will be placed in a prominent corner of the hall. On the wall next to the table, there is a red paper read "musicians table".



Figure 6 The musicians table prepared by the bride's family for the suona ensemble

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

On that day, there were so many friends and relatives who came to congratulate the bride. Therefore, the bride's family needed to prepare food to serve them for a whole day from early morning.



Figure 7 The bride's family is preparing food

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan )

The bride's family was in active preparation, busy people rotated in and out of the kitchen. Dao Gong was preparing the items for the wedding ceremony. In the bride's room, a group of young girls were blowing colorful balloons to decorate the wedding room.

At about 11:20, A man from the bride's family held a rectangular plate with red cloth, red envelopes, wine glass and food in it, and brought it to the suona ensemble. The suona players received the red envelope and drank the wine, indicating the formal ceremony is about to begin.

Next, the suona ensemble led the representatives of the bride's family with the items to be given to the groom to the village entrance to meet the groom by playing music.

In the old days, the groom's house was so far apart from the bride's, the groom had to set off at midnight to ensure punctual arrival. Nowadays, with the convenience of transportation, the groom just need to arrive at a little bit earlier before the appointed time. During the whole process, there will be a person holding a red umbrella for the groom, which indicates fending off disaster and ushering in more prosperous life.



Figure 8 The groom is waiting for the arrival of the procession of the bride's family

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

At about 12 o'clock, the groom's family and the bride's family met on the road. The suona ensemble played around the groom's family to welcome them. With the sound of music, the two groups of families exchange goods, served cigarettes, said blessing words to each other,

which roughly means to thank the groom's family for their hard journey, and wish the groom a better life in the future as well.



Figure 9 The suona ensemble takes the groom home

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

The informant talked to the researcher that traditional weddings like this are becoming less and less common. Under the current fast-paced social background, few people are willing to adopt Yao traditional wedding. In particular, many young people in the village flood into the cities and towns, and their thoughts are modernized or westernized. Most weddings are held in the way of traditional Chinese-style wedding or even Western-style wedding.

People in the village rarely wear formal Yao costumes. Due to the development of modernization, Yao clothing seems to be a kind of party dress that can only be worn on formal and grand occasions. In ordinary life, only some old people wear arch hats to show their Yao identity. Although many young people praise the beautiful costumes of Yao, most of them are reluctant to wear them because it is too complicated and inconvenient to wear. They even don't know how to wear them. In this case, Yao clothing as a treasure has become remote. The old men said the hand-made embroidered Yao clothes are nearly unavailable now, what people can buy directly from the store are those mass produced by machines, and the price varies from one to two thousands yuan.



But weddings held in the village still retain the original customs. For example, bamboo poles are used to carry wedding items such as food and clothing. According to the person at the scene, these bamboo poles were used to carry the dowry. The pork on the bamboo poles was used to reward the people who carried the dowry. The double bamboo poles were used to carry the quilt. The meaning of taking bamboo leaves on the ends of a pair of bamboo poles, indicating that the marriage will last forever.

After some ceremonies, the bride's family welcomed the groom into their home.



Figure 10 Taking the groom back to the bride's house

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

The bride's family welcomed the groom with traditional ceremonies such as playing suona and drums. When the groom entered the house, he stepped over a brazier, then there was someone help him wash his face and feet, and then put on new shoes and clothes.

"Wash face and feet" is a custom with profound implication passed down from Yao ancestors, It's a farewell to the past and an embracement to a new life and good luck. Dressing the groom symbolized that he had become a part of the bride's family.



Figure 11 The groom's foot washing ceremony before entering, and then put on the new shoes.

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)



Figure 12 The bride's family is helping the groom put on new clothes

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

The bride wears an embroidered Yao wedding dress and follows the ancient ceremony to get married. In the worship ceremony, presided over by the Dao gong (道公), the bride and groom to heaven and earth, ancestors salute, and then the bride and groom drink the wine, and finally the couple in accordance with the order of superiors and subordinates, to all relatives and elders to thank.







Figure 13 Meeting the bride ceremony

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

As time progressed and the society moving forward, the wedding procedures of Yao people become much simpler than the traditional wedding in the past, and the dress is not as formal as

before, but the whole wedding ceremony is still very splendid.



Figure 14 The blessing of elders to the new couple

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)



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Figure 15 The bride and groom bowed to each other

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

At the wedding banquet, the bride and the groom propose a toast one by one, one holding sugar, one holding wine, this process is called please sugar. The informant introduced that in the past the guests from faraway did not go home at night, they gathered together to sing folk songs or talk all night long around the campfire, the scene was very lively. But now with the improvement of living standard, many people have private cars to go back home after dinner, no need to stay overnight.

The worship hall is the most solemn ceremony in Pan Yao wedding. It is usually held in the evening before a altar table in the hall. When visiting the clan temple, the bridegroom wore a flower turban on his head, the bride wore a full set of wedding dress with a kerchief on her head, and a fan on her face. In the worship hall, the new couple worshiped the ancestors and then made a toast to relatives and friends. Relatives and friends should give the bride and the groom red envelopes. The whole process is full of laughter.

Music plays an important role in wedding ceremonies. During the wedding banquet, the music never stopped, which was divided into “Inviting guests to the banquet”, “Sitting around the table”, “Taking a sip ” and so on.

The bride's family also said that there is an important part missing today — DUI GE TANG (对歌堂), a music dialogue in antiphonal style. people usually sit together to sing freely for all night long.



Yao people's festival has always been synonymous with DUI GE TANG , especially the happy events as marriage, birthday and other great festivals. Since there are too many people participate and no enough accommodation, they usually sing songs until dawn. On the one hand, it relieves the pressure of accommodation for the master, and more importantly, it deepens the emotional contact between friends and relatives. DUI GE TANG has become a kind of memory in the mind of Yao people, especially for those middle-aged and elderly people.

### **3. The embodiment of folk customs and religious activities**

#### **3.1 Suona music**

Yao people believe that the suona is a kind of object that can communicate with god and the sound can reach heaven. Therefore, they like to use the suona to achieve some religious significance in some important ceremonies.

Suona music plays an important role in Yao's traditional wedding ceremonies, which runs through the whole wedding procedures. Among them, suona plays a role of "master" of the wedding, leading and dominating the operation of the whole wedding process to add an air of gaiety to the scene.

The suona was introduced into Yao area in the late Qing Dynasty with the migration of Yao from the Central Plains. It has an irreplaceable position in Chinese musical instruments. The shape and playing method of the Yao suona are not very different from that of Han.

The suona has a wide range of tone. Since the timbre of suona is close to human voice, its simulation of human singing seems to be so much alike, thus it is widely used in different occasions.

The suona in Yao's wedding with long-term use and practice, it replaces words with music, let music driving behavior, gradually presents a set of pattern. As Teacher Xiao Wenpu wrote in a New Discussion on "Musical Instruments Speaking"- The Spatial Sense and Functional Cluster of Suona Music In Yao Wedding Custom: "When suona music forms a music system according to convention, the wedding ceremony is carried out in an orderly way under the scheduling and command of these music words"; "The host performs the same ceremony as the musicians play, and there is no mistake." The sound of suona music can not only tell people " what to do next, what to do", but also "link up the transition from one ceremony to another



ceremony". Therefore, the wedding suona and playing qupai(曲牌) is also titled as "ritual qupai", "qupai association" and Wedding Suite.

### 3.2 The current situation of toasting song

The hospitable Yao people usually drink wine by using cups, but there is a drinking method called "GAO SHAN LIU SHUI (高山流水)" in the Yao village for thousands of years, which is used to entertain distinguished guests from afar. This special way of drinking is toasted by several Yao sisters, who filled the special pots with wine, symbolizing long history. The time-honored toasting ceremony is the highest toasting etiquette of Yao when receiving guests. "Long history" means dating back to the legend of PanGu who created the world.

The lyrics of the traditional toasting song can also be improvised than arranged, Yao people can express different moods through singing by using the same tune.

When toasting, Yao people will sing a toasting song. In the past, the toasting songs were sung in Yao dialect, but now fewer and fewer young people can speak Yao dialect. Gradually, they sing toasting songs in mandarin rather than in Yao dialect. What a pity it is!



Figure 16 Make a toast and sing a toast song

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

### 3.3 The preservation of traditional customs

In Jinxiu Yao wedding, many traditional customs are preserved. For example, when greeting the bride and groom, a red umbrella is used to cover them, representing protection for good luck. For example, in the wedding, a lot of red articles, red balloons, red paper, red couplets, red clothes and so on will be used. In the hearts of the Yao people, red represents auspice and joy.

For example, in the sacrificial activities of the wedding, the ancestors must be worshipped first. They worship the animist and must pass the consent of the ancestors to obtain the final happiness.

#### **4. The fading of the Yao dialect**

Different Yao people have different languages. More than 60% of the Yao people speak the Sino -Tibetan (Hmong-Mien) Yao language branch. They call themselves Mian. One third of Yao's speak the Sino -Tibetan (Hmong-Mien) Miao language, and they call themselves BuNu. The Yao people who call themselves "LaJia" belong to the Sino -Tibetan (Kra-Dai ) Dong Shui language branch. In addition, there are some people who only speak Chinese.

Because of their long living and frequent contact with Han, Zhuang and other groups, Yao people in all parts of the country generally speak Chinese, and some of them also speak the languages of neighboring minorities and other Yao groups.

With more and more young people moving out and the trend of world harmony, more and more young people no longer speak their own language, nor can they understand their own language. In some ceremonies of the Yao people in Jinxiu, the young people did not even know what the Daogong was saying. For example, at weddings, bar mitzvahs and so on.

## Chapter V

### Analysis of Yao Wedding Music

This chapter will present an analysis of the music elements and characteristics of the wedding music of Yao in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China.

The wedding ceremony of the Jinxiu Yao is distinguished from the perspective of music. The most musical element is the wedding ceremony of "Marry off a Son". In the wedding ceremony of the Jinxiu Yao, the music is mainly in the form of suona playing. The researcher looked at according to its structure, mode and tonality, melodic style and rhythmic characteristics.

1. Overview of suona and oercussion ensemble
2. Wedding Suite
3. Musical Element and Characteristics
4. The melody and content of the antiphonal singing in the wedding ceremony

#### 1. Overview of the suona and percussion ensemble

The suona was introduced into Yao area from the Central Plains with the migration of Yao in the late Qing Dynasty and was widely used. Yuan BingcHang, Feng Guangyu. History of Chinese Music [M]. Central University for Nationalities Press, 1998, 781 (Music History of Yao, Chapter Compilation: Su Shaning, Yang Xiuzhao, He Hong)

Among the Jinxiu Yao, there is only one ensemble that can play wedding music, as few people can play the suona.

##### 1.1 Performing instruments

In 2021, the researcher interviewed an ensemble that played frequently in PanYao, FenzHan Village, Jinxiu County. The ensemble is composed of two suona (唢呐), one small drum (鼓), one small cymbal (小镲), one big cymbal (大镲), and one gong (锣). The music played by the two suona is the soul of the ensemble. The drum is responsible for coordinating the tempo. The drum, small cymbals, big cymbals, and gongs are percussion music and are played intermittently throughout the wedding.





Figure 17 The musical instruments are from Top to bottom, suona (唢呐), drum(鼓), small cymbal(小镲) and big cymbal (大镲), and gong(锣)

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan, 2021, Jinxiu)

### 1.2 The musicians

The musicians are all men, all over 45 years old, and they are all villagers from FenZhan Village in Jinxiu County. They do farm work during the day and gather to perform when they need to perform during the wedding ceremony. I learned from interviews that the performers' skills were learned from their masters, learned through word of mouth, and consolidated in practice. There is no record of any sheet music. The performance of the members is as follows:

Zhao Chengming, 61 years old, suona 2.

Huang Chenglin, 71 years old, suona 1.

Feng Wenzhou, 66 years old, small drum.

Pang Fushou, 65 years old, small cymbals.

Ye Zuliang, 45 years old, big cymbals.

Zhao ChengHan, 72 years old, gong.



Figure 18 The musicians of the suona ensemble and their instruments

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan, 2021, Jinxiu )

### 1.3 Performance form

The Yao suona wedding music has two forms: walking performance in procession and seating performance.

The walking performance in procession is usually on the way of meeting the bride or groom. The suona players in the front, the gongs, drums, and cymbals are in the back. They lead the procession of the bride and groom's loved ones, playing as they walk.





Figure 19 Musicians perform at the village ceremony procession.

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

The seating performance is held during the formal wedding ceremony and banquets. The suona players sit around a square table arranged by the host for playing, leading the progress of the wedding ceremony.



Figure 20 The musicians perform inside the house

(Photo: Huang Xiaohuan)

## 2. Wedding Suite

After a long period of historical development, the Guangxi Jinxiu Pan Yao suona wedding music has formed a wedding suite performed during the wedding ceremony. Each melodic piece has its specific content and meaning. The completeness of its form and content is

not in the Guangxi instrumental music. It is more also in an ancient state from the perspective of music style, which is very precious.

During the wedding ceremony, folk musicians mainly played the following ten pieces, Sometimes it's an ensemble of all the instruments, sometimes it's just the suona playing solo.

Table 1 The List songs Wedding Ceremony

Name of melody	Play the Occasion	Performing Forms	With or Without Percussion Accompaniment
1.Meeting the Groom (迎亲)	The bride's procession meets the groom and his procession halfway and escort them to bride's home for wedding	Play while walking	With
2.Tea Ceremony (敬茶敬烟)	The bride's procession serves tea (and cigarette) to groom's procession to greet them.	Play while walking	Without
3.Taking the Groom Home (接回)	The groom's close relatives and bride's close relatives escort groom to the bride's home	Play while walking	With
4.Performing the Formal Wedding Ceremony (拜堂)	The groom kneels down and bow to the heaven and the earth firstly, and then bow to the bride's ancestors and parents, finally groom and bride bow each other	Play while seating	Without
5.Preparing a Banquet (开桌上菜)	Preparing a banquet in honor of the guests. The bride's family preparing a banquet	Play while seating	with
6.Inviting Guests to the Banquet (邀请客人)	Music sounded, on behalf of the host to welcome all the relatives attending the wedding, will be used to treat everyone	Play while seating	Without
7.Sitting Around the Table (围桌)	All the guests sat around the table	play while seating	Without

Table 1 (Continued)

Name of melody	Play the Occasion	Performing Forms	With or Without Percussion Accompaniment
8. Taking a Sip (慢慢饮)	Taking a sip of the fine wine and tasting gourmet food. To amuse the guests at the banquet, tell them to take their time and enjoy themselves	play while seating	With
9. Banquet Finished (收桌)	At the end of the banquet, the staff cleared the table	play while seating	With
10. Seeing the Guests Off (送客)	The ensemble and the host sens the guests off to the entrance of the village.	play while walking	With

Each piece is played repeatedly in certain situations, representing different meanings. For example, playing " Taking a sip of the fine wine and tasting gourmet food " repeatedly during the meal has the meaning of persuading guests to eat slowly, and also has the meaning of persuading guests to eat in a civilized manner. For example, playing "Meeting the groom " represents the greeting of the newlyweds. Before the banquet, similar music is also played when welcoming guests to represent the new friends and friends who greet the newlyweds. Generally, some concerts are played 3-5 times indefinitely according to the actual situation, to coordinate with the whole wedding ceremony. In the actual performance process, according to the situation at the time, the main part can be played repeatedly to coordinate with the wedding ceremony.

### 3. Music Element and Characteristics

In the ten pieces of wedding music, these are the following characteristics:

- (1). Most of the pieces are short, mainly consisting of 20-30 bars.
- (2). All pieces have a prelude and main body, and some have postlude.
- (3). Melodic style: Many songs end with the pattern EGDED. The melody is mainly progressive, the

second, third, and fourth intervals are more common. There are occasional big jumps of sixth and seventh degrees, and the melody is smooth and smooth. The music vocabulary mostly uses pentatonic tri-tone groups, such as: DEC, DEG, EGD, GAC, and others.

(4). Most of the songs are 2 or 4 beats, only one (Preparing a banquet) has 3 beats.

(5). Characteristics of percussion rhythm : The rhythm of the prelude is free. The rhythm of

the music is relatively free, with a folk song flavor. The speed is mostly between 66 to 88 beats per minute, and the rhythm is smooth.

(6). The mode tone sequence: Most of the pieces are mainly based on the five-tone mode (CDEGA).

(7) Of the four percussion instruments, the function of the drum player is very important, and he plays a guiding role. Surprisingly, although there is no sheet music, with a good sense of music, the cooperation between percussion and suona is very evident.

### 3.1 “Meeting the Groom” (迎亲)



2

**Percussion plays fast**

Drum

Small Cymbal

Cymbal

Gong

**★Percussion 1-6**

Drum

Small Cymbal

Cymbal

Gong

Figure 21 Meeting the groom

(Huang Xiaohuan. Recorded at the Jinxiu Fighting Village, 2021)

The music is composed of a prelude, the main body and a postlude. The overall structure is simple and easy to remember. The whole piece is 25 bars long and very short. The loose part of first bar is the prelude, bars 2-24 are the main body of the music, and bar 25 is the postlude.

The main body of this music bars 2 to 24. The melodic scale that appears is CDEGAB, and F does not appear. It is a combination of five-tone mode and a biased tone, six-tone scale. The whole music appears many times for AEG, AED. The melody is beautiful.

The music is in the form of an ensemble. The suona plays the main melody and the percussion instruments accompany it. But since they are not performed at the same time, there are percussion pauses and breaks. At first the percussion plays fast, then, appears 6 times in a regular rhythmic pattern, Finally, they play fast again, ending with the suona.

The rhythm is 4/4 beat. the prelude and the postlude are free.

3.2 “Tea Ceremony” (敬烟敬茶)

## Tea ceremony

(敬茶敬烟)

PLAYER: Huang Chenglin  
RECORDER: Huang Xiaohuan

The musical score is written in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. It consists of six staves of music, each starting with a measure number in a box: 1, 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, and 18. The melody is composed of quarter and eighth notes, with some measures containing rests or longer note values. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the sixth staff.



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Figure 22 Score 2. Tea ceremony.

(Huang Xiaohuan. Recorded at Jinxiu Fighting Village 2021)



The music is composed of a prelude, and the main section. The overall structure is simple and easy to remember. The whole piece is 20 bars long and very short. The loose part of first bar is the prelude, bars 2-20 are the main body of the music.

The main body of this music bars 2 to 24, with a melodic scale CDEGA, and the F and B do not appear. It is a combination of five-tone mode, The whole music appears many times for CDA. The melody is beautiful.

The whole music is played by the two only the suona, playing the same melody in unison.

The rhythm of the main body is 4/4 beat. the prelude is freedom.

3.3“Taking the Groom Home” (接亲回家)

# Taking the groom home

(接亲回家)

PLAYER: Huang Chenglin

RECORDER: Huang Xiaohuan

1

Percussion plays fast

2

★Percussion 1

3

★Percussion 2

9

★Percussion 3

15

★Percussion 4

20

★Percussion 5

★Percussion 6



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2

**Percussion plays fast**

**★ Percussion 1-5**

**★ Percussion 6**

Figure 23 Score 3 (Taking the groom home )

(Huang Xiaohuan, Recorded at Jinxiu Fighting Village, 2021)

This music is very similar to the first example “Meeting the groom”. They have the same prelude. The music is composed of a prelude and the main body. The overall structure is simple and easy to remember. The whole song is 24 bars long and very short. The loose part of first bar is the prelude, bars 2-24 are the main body of the music.

The main body of this music bars 2 to 24. The melodic scale that appears is CDEGA, and the F and B do not appear. It is a combination of five-tone mode. The whole music appears many times for AEG, AED, CDA. The melody is beautiful.

The music is in the form of an ensemble. The suona plays the main melody and the percussion instruments accompany it. But since they are not performed at the same time, there are percussion pauses and breaks. At first the percussion plays fast, then, they play 6 times in a regular rhythmic pattern.

The rhythm of the main section is 4/4 beat. the prelude in free rhythm.

3.4“Performing the Formal Wedding Ceremony”(拜堂)

## Performing the formal wedding ceremony

(拜堂)

PLAYER: Huang Chenglin  
RECORDER: Huang Xiaohuan

1 2

5

10

16

22

29

35

41

46 49

Figure 24 Score 4 (Performing the formal wedding ceremony)

(Huang Xiaohuan, Recorded at Jinxiu Fighting Village, 2021)



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The music is composed of a prelude, the main section. This piece of music is a little longer than the others. The whole piece has 50 bars . The loose part of first bar is the prelude, bars 2-50 are the main body of the music.

The main body of this music bars 2 to 50, the melodic scale that appears is CDEGA, and the F and B does not appear. It is a combination of five-tone mode. The whole music appears many times for CDA, EGE, the melody is beautiful.

The whole music without percussion accompaniment, only the Suona blowing melody. Both the two suona play the same melody.

The rhythm of the main body is 4/4 beat. But have a bar 2/4 beat. The prelude is freedom.

### 3.5 “Preparing a Banquet” (开桌上菜)

# Preparing a banquet

(开桌上菜)

PLAYER: Huang Chenglin  
RECORDER: Huang Xiaohuan

1 2

5

10 3 3

14

18

22

26 27



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Figure 25 Score 5 (Preparing a Banquet” )  
 (Huang Xiaohuan Records of Jinxiu Fighting Village in 2021)

The musical structure is a piece of music. The music is composed of a prelude, the main body. The overall structure is simple and easy to remember. The whole song are 30 bars long and very short. The loose part of first bar is the prelude, bars 2-30 are the main body of the music.

The main body of this music are 2 to 30 bars, the scale is CDEGA, and the F and B does not appear. It is a combination of five-tone mode. The whole music appears many times for ACA, DEG. The melody is beautiful.

The music is in the form of an ensemble. The suona plays the main melody and the percussion instruments accompany it. But the tempo of the suona is not the same as the tempo of the percussion. They just start and end at the same time, with different tempo in the middle part.

The rhythm of is 3/4 beat. Only a bar is 2/4 beat.

### 3.6 “Inviting Guests to the Banquet” (请客)



## Inviting guests to the banquet

(邀请客人)

PLAYER: Huang Chenglin

RECORDER: Huang Xiaohuan

1 2

5

9

13

17

21 22

Figure 26 Score 6 (Inviting Guests to the Banquet")

(Huang Xiaohuan, Recorded in Jinxiu Fighting Village, 2021)



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The music is composed of a prelude, and the main body. The whole song has 23 bars. The loose part of first bar is the prelude, bars 2-23 are the main body of the music.

The main body of this music bars 2 to 23, the scale is CDEGA, and the F and B does not appear. It is a combination of five-tone mode. The whole music appears many times for EDG, EGE. The melody is beautiful.

The whole music is without percussion accompaniment, only the two suona play the melody.

The rhythm of the main body is 4/4 beat. The prelude has free rhythm.

### 3.7 “Sitting Around the Table” (围桌)



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## Sitting around the table

(围桌)

PLAYER: Huang Chenglin  
RECORDER: Huang Xiaohuan

The musical score is presented in seven staves. The first staff begins with a prelude (measures 1-2) and then continues with the main body of the piece. The score includes various time signatures: 2/4, 4/4, and 3/4. The piece ends at measure 32.

Figure 27 Score 7 (Sitting Around the Table ”)

(Huang Xiaohuan Records of Jinxiu Fighting Village in 2021)

The music is composed of a prelude and the main body. The whole song has 33 bars. The loose part of first bar is the prelude, bars 2-33 are the main body of the music.

The main body of this music are 2 to 33 bars, the scale is CDEGA, and the F and B does not appear. It is a combination of five-tone mode. The whole music appears many times for AGE, CDA. The melody is beautiful.

The whole music is without percussion accompaniment. Both the two suona play the same melody.

The rhythm of the main body is 4/4 beat and 2/4 beat. The prelude has free rhythm.

### 3.8 “Taking a Sip” (慢慢饮)



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# Taking a sip

(慢慢饮)

PLAYER: Huang Chenglin  
RECORDER: Huang Xiaohuan

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of seven staves of music, each starting with a measure number in a box. The notes are as follows:

- Staff 1:** Measures 1-5. Measure 1 starts with a B-flat. Measure 2 has a B-flat with a fermata. Measure 3 has a B-flat with a fermata. Measure 4 has a B-flat with a fermata. Measure 5 has a B-flat with a fermata.
- Staff 6:** Measures 6-11. Measure 6: B-flat. Measure 7: B-flat. Measure 8: B-flat. Measure 9: B-flat. Measure 10: B-flat. Measure 11: B-flat.
- Staff 12:** Measures 12-16. Measure 12: B-flat. Measure 13: B-flat. Measure 14: B-flat. Measure 15: B-flat. Measure 16: B-flat.
- Staff 17:** Measures 17-20. Measure 17: B-flat. Measure 18: B-flat. Measure 19: B-flat. Measure 20: B-flat.
- Staff 21:** Measures 21-26. Measure 21: B-flat. Measure 22: B-flat. Measure 23: B-flat. Measure 24: B-flat. Measure 25: B-flat. Measure 26: B-flat.
- Staff 27:** Measures 27-31. Measure 27: B-flat. Measure 28: B-flat. Measure 29: B-flat. Measure 30: B-flat. Measure 31: B-flat.
- Staff 32:** Measures 32-34. Measure 32: B-flat. Measure 33: B-flat. Measure 34: B-flat.

Figure 28 Score 8 (Taking a Sip)

(Huang Xiaohuan. Recorded at Jinxiu Fighting Village, 2021)

The music is composed of a prelude, and the main body. The overall structure is simple and easy to remember. The whole song is 35 bars long and very short. The loose part of first bar is the prelude, bars 2-35 are the main body of the music.

The main body of this music bars 2 to 35, the scale is CDEGAB, and the F does not appear. It is a combination of five-tone mode and a biased tone, six-tone scale. The whole music appears many times for ACD. The melody is beautiful.

The music is in the form of an ensemble. The two suona plays the main melody and the percussion instruments accompany it. But the tempo of the suona is not the same as that of the percussion. They start and end at the same time, with different tempo in the middle.

The rhythm of the main body is 4/4 beat.

3.9 “Banquet Finished” (收桌)

# Banquet finished

(收桌)

PLAYER: Huang Chenglin  
RECORDER: Huang Xiaohuan

1 2

3

7

11

15

19

23 25



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Figure 29 Score 9 (Banquet Finished)

(Huang Xiaohuan. Recorded at Jinxiu Fighting Village, 2021)

The music is composed of a prelude and the main body. The overall structure is simple and easy to remember. The whole song has 26 bars long and very short. The loose part of first bar is the prelude, bars 2-26 are the main body of the music.

The main body of this music are bars 2 to 26, the scale is CDEGA, and the F and B does not appear. It is a combination of five-tone mode. The whole music appears many times for EDE, DCD, the melody is beautiful.

The music is in the form of an ensemble. The suona plays the main melody and the percussion instruments accompanies it. But the tempo of the suona is not the same as the tempo of the percussion instruments. They just start and end at the same time, with different tempo in the middle

The rhythm of the main body is 2/4 beat.

### 3.10 Seeing the Guests Off (送客)



# Seeing the guests off

(送客)

PLAYER: Huang Chenglin

RECORDER: Huang Xiaohuan

1

Percussion plays fast

2

★Percussion 1

3

★Percussion 2

9

★Percussion 3

15

★Percussion 4

20

★Percussion 5

★Percussion 6



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2

**Percussion plays fast**

**★Perercussion 1-5**

**★Percussion 6**

Figure 30 Score 10 (Seeing the Guests Off)

(Huang Xiaohuan. Recorded at Jinxiu Fighting Village. 2021)

This music is almost similar as the third example “Taking the groom home”. The music is composed of a prelude, and the main body. The overall structure is simple and easy to remember. The whole song has 24 bars long and very short. The loose part of first bar is the prelude, bars 2-24 are the main body of the music.

The main body of this music are bars 2 to 24. The note scale is CDEGA, and the F and B does not appear. It is a combination of five-tone mode. The whole music appears many times for AEG, AED, CDA. The melody is beautiful.

The music is in the form of an ensemble. The suona plays the main melody and the percussion instruments accompany it. But since they are not performed at the same frequency, there are percussion pauses and breaks. At first the percussion plays fast, then, it plays 6 times in a regular rhythmic pattern.

The rhythm of the main body is in 4/4, the prelude has free rhythm.

#### **4. The melody and content of the antithetical song in the wedding ceremony**

In the traditional Yao wedding ceremony, the vocal music examples are rich in variety, especially the Zuotang Song(坐堂歌) which is sung in the evening. The singing hall is set up in the bride’s home, and the singers are the relatives and friends who come to attend the wedding. The antiphonal singing is in the form of "question and answer" or "chat" between the host and guests. The content of the antiphonal singing is generally related to the surroundings or people’s mood while they are singing, such as expressing their heartfelt thanks to the host for his hospitality and so on. As it were, people use antiphonal singing to replace chatting. It is a natural singing, so the melody is not strong and the rhythm is determined the change of their mood, usually drawling the last tone.

However, as the changes of the times, more and more local youths walk out of the mountain; technology has brought more leisure and choices to people, the traditional ways of communication such as singing all night long have disappeared for many years.

## Chapter VI

### The Importance of Wedding Music of Yao in Relation to the Society of Jinxiu, Guangxi, China

Yao wedding music and wedding ceremony complement each other. Music guides the wedding ceremony, the coexistence of wedding ceremony and music, and has importance and social influence in Yao society. It shows the traditional culture of the Yao, represents the culture of the Yao, and transmits the music culture of the Yao's ancestors through the continuing practice of the wedding ceremonies and rituals.

#### 1. The characteristics of Yao's traditional culture and folk customs

The Yao suona wedding music is influenced by factors such as geographic environment, production methods, economic patterns, living customs, cultural origins, aesthetic appeal, language tone and other factors. It still preserves the repertoire corresponding to the content of the Yao wedding ceremony, which constitutes a wedding suite. The completeness of its form and content is rare in Guangxi instrumental music. From the perspective of the music style, it is also an important and precious ancient musical tradition.

#### 2. Transmission of the music of Yao ancestors

The suona is mainly used in PanYao wedding ceremonies. During the whole ceremony, it plays the role of "master of ceremonies", directs the proceedings of the entire wedding process, and plays a role in setting off the atmosphere.

The use of suona music in wedding ceremonies by the PanYao people gives the suona instrument a unique function, acting as the emcee of the ceremony. These characteristics are rooted in the PanYao people's social needs, that is, the symbolic needs of marriage custom activities and the appreciation of beauty needs of people's spiritual activities. The music of the suona has undergone continuous change and development. In the fast-developing social

environment, the exchanges between groups have been strengthened, and social needs have slowly and continuously changed as well.

There is therefore the need to create a strong atmosphere. The suona, as an important musical instrument used in traditional wedding celebrations in Han areas, has the function of creating a warm and festive atmosphere. In the blending of Han and Yao cultures, the suona introduced to the Yao area has not only this function, but also expanded its application to all aspects of the wedding. For example, playing the corresponding "meeting the groom" song when receiving the relatives, and playing the corresponding "preparing a banquet" song when the banquet is served,

Secondly, there is the demand for the wedding ceremony. In the process of the wedding, important events such as ancestor worship. In addition, the PanYao people's prayers for a happy and stable life and reproduction of offspring also need to be expressed through suona music.

Musical form and wedding ceremony complement each other. It is a cultural phenomenon that reflects the accumulation and process of human activities in cultural time and space.

### **3. The culture and religion of Yao**

Driven by traditional ideas, in the DaYao Shan area of Jinxiu, the people's religious beliefs have undergone a transformation from an ancient form religion to a man-made religion, but ancestor worship and animism are still popular. The suona, whether it is used by the ChaShan Yao or Pan Yao, is a kind of spiritual artifact in a sense. This is why the suona musicians must perform a ritual before playing. Whether it is a wedding ceremony or the suona music played, it has elements of worshiping ancestors. The music of the suona plays a role in the communication between man and spirits.

## Chapter VII

### Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

There are three objectives in this study: to investigate the musical context of wedding music of the Yao in Jinxiu, Guangxi, China; to analyze the musical elements of the wedding music of the Yao; and to examine the importance of the wedding music of Yao.

By using the method of collecting field data and document data, the results of the study can be summarized as follows:

#### 1. Conclusions

1. Yao wedding music is closely related to Yao religion, language, history and culture
2. Yao wedding music is warm and atmospheric.
3. Yao wedding music is part of Yao traditional culture and transmits and preserves the music of the ancestors

##### 1.1 Yao wedding music is closely related to Yao, religion, language, history and culture

The wedding music of the Jinxiu Yao, embodies the strong Yao custom, language and culture. The ceremony, with a strong religious color, is the heritagr of Yao history and culture.

The Yao suona wedding music is influenced by factors such as geographic environment, production methods, economic patterns, living customs, cultural origins, aesthetic appeal, language and other factors, and has a strong Yao music flavor. It still preserves the repertoire corresponding to the traditions of the Yao wedding ceremonies, which constitutes a wedding suite. The completeness of its form and content is rare in Guangxi instrumental music. From the perspective of the music style, it is also an ancient form, which appears to be in its original state. But today, the Yao weddings are being simplified and music is fading.

##### 1.2 Yao wedding music is warm and atmospheric.

Yao wedding music permeates the whole ceremony, making it lively and festive. The overall tempo of the music is relatively fast and is not long. It is repeatedly and flexibly according to the needs of the ceremony or banquet. Music leads the ceremony.

1.3 The Yao wedding music expresses traditional culture, preserving and transmitting the music of the ancestors.

The Yao wedding music and wedding ceremony complement each other. Not only the embodiment of traditional culture, but also the participation of folk activities. People wear Yao clothes at the wedding. The suona plays a leading and dominant role throughout the whole wedding process. This function originates from people's spiritual needs and the requirements of wedding activities, which is also the basis of suona music's continuous practice today.

The Yao wedding music represents the religious beliefs of the Yao people. Due to the common influence of the Yao people's ancestor worship and the concept of animism, the wedding ceremony also reflects a strong faith. Specifically, it is to respect the spirit headed by suona, as well as the ancestors. The performance of wedding music preserves the legacy and heritage of the music culture of the Yao's ancestors.

## 2. Discussion

The Yao wedding music is a precious form of music culture. which thrives in the Yao area, develops in Yao area, so spreading Yao folk custom, and religious culture. It is thus important legacy to make it be the precious wealth of the nation.

The Yao wedding ceremony music is gradually declining, because the Yao youth cannot play the suona. The transmission of suona was inherited from the masters and disciples, and then slowly developed by transmission through the family lineages. But the young people today has neglected to learn traditional culture, as they play the western guitar, drum kits, whatever they like, but not the suona. Now, the suona musicians are getting older and older, and they are getting tired of it.

The lack of music notation makes it difficult to pass down the music. So far, suona music is still passed on by oral transmission, and there is no written notation. The researcher has found in the survey that some artists have a certain ability to recognize notated music, and they also hope that suona music can be recorded. The suona musicians are now getting older and older, and fewer and fewer young people are willing to learn suona instruments.

Due to the convenience of transportation, which has strengthened the communication between the Yao people and the outside world, the people's living standards are improving. they

have cars, so it is no longer necessary to spend a lot of time to pick up relatives on foot and no need to stay overnight in the bride and groom's home during the wedding ceremonies. Therefore, a lot of procedures are omitted, the banquet time is the main part, and sometimes the worship and reception part are omitted.

The rapid development of society has changed way weddings are held. People have simplified the process of traditional weddings, so the corresponding music has lost its function. Young people yearn for western wedding ceremonies, which are affecting the transmission of suona music, and even the transmission of the music is broken. They rarely speak their own language, not to mention singing in Yao language. They also don't have as much time for three-day weddings because they prefer to play with their phones. All of these are so regrettable.

### 3. Suggestions

#### 3.1 Suggestions on the transmission and preservation of Yao wedding music

The Yao wedding music is precious and special, which is the legacy and heritage of Yao people's music culture in the past dynasties. Therefore, for the better dissemination of Yao wedding music, the researchers proposes the following recommendations. First, with the help of professionals, the video, audio and music of the wedding music should be documented and recorded, and the data should be preserved in an archive. Second, encourage and reward young people to learn Yao music and traditional instruments. Third, create an environment for speaking Yao language, so that more people can learn Yao language and sing Yao songs.

#### 3.2 Suggestions for further research on Yao wedding music

Since the researcher does not understand the skills of playing suona instrument, this study has not analyzed the playing skills of suona instrument. I hope that someone can do the research in this aspect in the future.

The musical elements studied in this study is mainly about suona music, and there is not much research on Jin Xiu Yao's traditional folk songs. It is hoped that future researchers can study more folk songs of Yao.



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