

Literature Review on the Tujia Daliuzi Music of Western Hunan

Zirong Wu^{1,a,*}

*¹School of Music, Nanjing Normal University, 122 Ninghai Road, Gulou District, Nanjing, China
a. 18933189521@163.com*

**corresponding author*

Abstract: The Tujia is an ancient ethnic group with a long history, and the Xiangxi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture is one of their inhabited areas. This region, with its continuous mountains and rich cultural heritage, has nurtured diverse forms of music. Unique Tujia musical forms such as Daliuzi, wedding weeping songs, Tima songs, Youshui labor chants, and Tujia folk songs were included in the national intangible cultural heritage list in the 21st century. This paper focuses on the Tujia Daliuzi music of Western Hunan. Through platforms such as CNKI, Wanfang, VIP, and Chaoxing, relevant literature was collected and reviewed using the literature review method. The paper organizes the known literature on Tujia Daliuzi music from Western Hunan, summarizing materials on the basic overview, score inheritance and collection, band composition, instrument performance, and subsequent development after being listed as intangible cultural heritage. By summarizing the literature on Tujia Daliuzi music, the paper aims to deepen the understanding of this ethnic musical genre.

Keywords: Western Hunan, Tujia, Daliuzi, Intangible cultural heritage, Tune.

1. Introduction

The term "Western Hunan" in this paper refers to the Xiangxi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture, established in September 1957. Located in the northwest of Hunan Province, Xiangxi borders Hubei, Chongqing, and Guizhou provinces, encompassing Jishou City and the seven counties of Longshan, Yongshun, Baojing, Guzhang, Huayuan, Luxi, and Fenghuang.

2. Basic Overview of "Daliuzi"

"Daliuzi" is also known as "Dajiahua", "Jiahuoha", "Jiboha", and others. This type of music originated in ancient times during people's production activities, used to protect crops by driving away wild animals. The name "Daliuzi" became commonly accepted after the founding of the People's Republic of China due to the instrument "liuzi" being a fixed main component. Due to the popularity and artistic features of Daliuzi among the Tujia people, many contemporary studies have explored its history and development. Key works include "Selected Traditional Tunes of Tujia Daliuzi" by Li Kaipei and Zhang Shuping; Research on the Music of Xiangxi Tujia "Dajiahua" by Hua Laohu; "From Tujia Villages to the World Stage" by Lu Changxiong and Liu Nengpu; "Analysis of the Cultural Characteristics of Tujia Daliuzi" by Xiao Di and Zhang Hui; "From Small Accountant to Tujia Folk Music Master - Oral Interview with Tian Longxin" by Ye Hao, Chen Tingliang, and Chen Aolin; and

"Metaphorical Narratives of Tujia Daliuzi" by Xiong Xiaohui. These works cover the origin, usage, historical evolution, types of tunes, and structural components of Daliuzi.

In "Selected Traditional Tunes of Tujia Daliuzi", Li Kaipei and Zhang Shuping explain the composition and function of "touzi", "changfan", "liuzi", and "weizi" within the tune structure using examples. They argue that Daliuzi typically consists of these four parts, though various combinations can be formed based on different performance needs [1]. Hua Laohu's article "Study on Tujia 'Dajiahua' Music in Xiangxi" categorizes the tune structure into four types: complete with a head and tail ("touzi + liuzi + weizi"), head without tail ("yinzi + touzi + liuzi (with closing phrase)"), multiple heads ("touzi (six) + liuzi (with closing phrase)"), and full response ("yinzi + touzi + liuzi + weizi + weisheng"). However, the article lacks detailed analysis of these examples. Additionally, the author believes that the evolution of Daliuzi can be seen in content and instruments: from early forms used to scare away wild animals to forms imitating birds and fish and from hitting stones or tools to striking gongs or other metal instruments, eventually becoming the Daliuzi form [2].

In "From Small Accountant to Tujia Folk Music Master - Oral Interview with Tian Longxin", Ye Hao, Chen Tingliang, and Chen Aolin explain that the animal-themed tunes are due to the rugged mountainous terrain where Tujia people live. During wedding processions, encountering various animals led to the creation of tunes imitating animal sounds and behaviors, following the local saying "play as you see" [3]. Xiao Di and Zhang Hui's "Analysis of the Cultural Characteristics of Tujia Daliuzi" discusses how Daliuzi activities and venues represent cultural characteristics of folk customs and entertainment. Two types of competitive modes derived from this: traditional competition, where students learn to read scores and perform to compete within their school as a basic requirement for survival or succession, and school-based competition, where two Daliuzi teams meet on a wedding road and compete in playing techniques and tune quantity [4]. This aspect is also mentioned in Ye Hao, Chen Tingliang, and Chen Aolin's interview with Tian Longxin.

3. Transmission and Collection of Daliuzi Scores

The Tujia people have their own language but no written script, which has led to the endangerment of some traditional Tujia culture. "Gong Drum Classics" is a traditional Chinese music notation method for percussion, known as oral "gong drum scores" among the Tujia people. In Tujia, it is called "chanting scores" or "liuzi jing". Su Xi's article "The 'Daliuzi' in the Hands of Artist Tian Longxin from Longshan County, Hunan" explains why Tujia music is passed down orally. Firstly, the Tujia people who mastered Daliuzi were deprived of the right to education before liberation. Secondly, Daliuzi is an improvised art form rooted in and serving daily life, making written notation unsuitable for its widespread dissemination and the capture of its style and charm [5]. Oral transmission is prone to being forgotten, so Tian Longxin collected and notated Daliuzi music through performances and daily visits, eventually gathering over 230 Daliuzi tunes. He also innovated by combining Daliuzi with "dongdong kui" to create the Daliuzi rap "The Old Bachelor's Wedding" (later renamed "Yansheng Zuo'a") and used Daliuzi as the main theme to compose the distinctive Tujia Daliuzi gong and drum piece "The Festival of Bizika" [6]. These efforts not only preserved primary materials for the inheritance of Daliuzi music but also provided directions and opportunities for the innovative development and plasticity of Daliuzi tunes and performance forms.

Traditional tunes can be found in collections such as "Compilation of Hunan Ethnic and Folk Instrumental Music" and Li Kaipei and Zhang Shuping's "Selected Traditional Tunes of Tujia Daliuzi". "Compilation of Hunan Ethnic and Folk Instrumental Music" is an expanded and revised version of "Compilation of Chinese Ethnic and Folk Instrumental Music: Hunan Volume". The book categorizes tunes by ensemble forms and includes 67 Tujia Daliuzi tunes: 33 for three-person ensembles, 18 for four-person ensembles, and 6 for five-person ensembles. "Selected Traditional Tunes of Tujia Daliuzi" categorizes tunes into themes such as life, blessings, and metaphorical objects,

with a total of 70 traditional Tujia Daliuzi tunes, including 9 journey tunes, 26 animal-themed tunes, 13 life custom tunes, 11 metaphorical auspicious tunes, and 11 blessing tunes. It also includes two creative tunes, "The Golden Pheasant Descends the Mountain" and "Joy in the Bridal Chamber".

4. Composition and Instrument Performance of Daliuzi Bands

There are three common ensemble forms for Daliuzi performances. The first two are percussion-only ensembles: the three-person ensemble (first cymbals, second cymbals, big gong) and the four-person ensemble (first cymbals, second cymbals, small gong, big gong). The third form is a five-person ensemble combining percussion and suona (first cymbals, second cymbals, small gong, big gong, suona). Based on his practical experience, Tian Longxin summarized performance idioms for these ensembles, such as "double cymbals converse, big gong punctuates and embellishes" for the three-person ensemble and "first cymbals and second cymbals converse, big gong deliberately interrupts, small gong leads steadily to prevent deviations, small gong leads, big gong stabilizes, first and second cymbals closely follow" for the four-person ensemble. However, with continuous innovation and development in music, the ensemble forms of Daliuzi have expanded beyond these. Chen Dong's book "Field Presentation of Art - A Multidimensional Perspective Study of Traditional Tujia Music Culture in Western Hunan" mentions three additional forms beyond the ones above: six-person wind and percussion ensemble (five-person ensemble plus side drum), Daliuzi rap, and Daliuzi gong and drum ensemble.

Li Gaifang's article "An Overview of Xiangxi Daliuzi", Mo Xiangzhang's article "Preliminary Exploration of the Musical Form and Cultural Characteristics of Tujia 'Jiaohua' in Western Hunan", and Peng Huiyu's master's thesis "On the Stage Practice Experience of Learning Tujia Daliuzi" introduce the notation, playing techniques, and methods for these instruments. Li Gaifang's article lists three band formation methods: vertical arrangement, square formation, and horizontal arrangement, reflecting the Tujia musicians' considerations for both aesthetic and acoustic effects during performances [7]. Peng Huiyu's master's thesis, based on her experience learning Daliuzi under Tian Longxin, presents a comprehensive introduction to the use and playing methods of Daliuzi instruments, illustrating performance techniques, power application, and various notation methods [8]. Yang Xiao's article "The Combination Features of Xiangxi Tujia 'Jiaohuaha'" studies the composite sound and tone color rules in Daliuzi ensembles, where the organic combination of tone colors and registers creates intricate musical lines, providing valuable insights for the composition of Tujia Daliuzi music [9].

5. Subsequent Development after Being Listed as Intangible Cultural Heritage

In 2006, "Tujia Daliuzi" was listed as a national intangible cultural heritage. This recognition highlighted the decline of traditional culture and shifted attention towards preserving such cultural elements. The academic community now places significant emphasis on the inheritance of Daliuzi as intangible cultural heritage, which is reflected in several aspects.

5.1. Interviews with Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors

Tian Longxin, a folk artist from Longshan County in Xiangxi, is a national-level inheritor of Tujia Daliuzi. He has a deep interest in Tujia musical culture and possesses skilled techniques and a vast repertoire of Tujia music. Before 2006, Tian Longxin had already created innovative music different from traditional tunes and had taught Tujia culture and music in many schools. He even led Tujia music onto the world stage. After 2006, as a national-level inheritor, he participated in numerous interviews, always sharing his knowledge enthusiastically and openly. Research works about him include Li Kaipei and Zhang Shuping's "Selected Traditional Tunes of Tujia Daliuzi"; articles such

as Lu Changxiong and Liu Nengpu's "From Tujia Villages to the World Stage", Su Xi's "The 'Daliuzi' in the Hands of Artist Tian Longxin from Longshan County, Hunan", and Ye Hao, Chen Tingliang, and Chen Aolin's "From Junior Accountant to Tujia Folk Music Master: An Oral History of Tian Longxin"; and master's theses like Peng Huiyu's "On the Stage Practice Experience of Learning Tujia Daliuzi" and Xu Qian's "Study on the Multiple Identity of Tujia Music Inheritor Tian Longxin". These works demonstrate Tian Longxin's genuine dedication to music inheritance and explore his artistic career, performance characteristics of Daliuzi, domestic and international performances, and contributions to the transmission of Daliuzi before and after becoming a national-level inheritor.

5.2. Combining Ethnic Music Elements with Local Conditions

Leveraging geographical advantages, ethnic music culture is integrated into tourism and school education to enhance the cultural content of tourism and the ethnic characteristics of education. Li Pengpeng's article "Research on the Inheritance and Innovation of Tujia Music Culture in Xiangxi in the Development of the Tourism Industry" suggests developing ethnic tourism, nurturing musical performance talents within this industry, protecting the ecological environment, and establishing ethnic culture museums to broaden dissemination pathways [10]. Other articles such as Li Daihua and Tian Longxin's "Tian Longxin: An Ambassador for the Spread of Tujia Culture", Li Junlei's "Research on the Creative Integration of Xiangxi Ethnic Music Elements and Sports Dance", Li Xiaolei's "Research on Classroom Teaching of Xiangxi Tujia Daliuzi Based on the Comprehensive Concept of Subjects", Jiang Di's "The Integration and Inheritance Status of Hunan Province's Music Intangible Cultural Heritage in College Music Education", and Peng Yuping's "Research on the Implementation Path of the Living Inheritance of Tujia Folk Songs in Local Colleges and Universities" also explore the application of Xiangxi music elements in school curricula and provide suggestions for the current inheritance and dissemination of Daliuzi.

5.3. Modernization of Traditional Music

Daliuzi not only shines in traditional musical culture but also revitalizes contemporary music compositions incorporating its elements. For example, in Tan Dun's work "Map", he integrates Xiangxi Tujia music culture, using Western instruments to mimic the sounds of ethnic music. In the third movement, the contrast between the short notes of the French horn and the long notes of the trumpet depicts the festive and humorous nature of Daliuzi. Additionally, Tan Dun combines plucking and tapping techniques on string instruments with the cello's sliding and combined plucking and tapping to evoke the lively atmosphere of Daliuzi [11]. By integrating folk music culture through multimedia presentations with live symphonic performances, he transforms it into an "audio-visual multimedia concert", bringing Xiangxi culture to a global audience [12].

6. Conclusions

Through comprehensive literature review, this article outlines the current academic research on Daliuzi from four aspects: basic overview, transmission and collection of scores, ensemble composition and instrument performance, and subsequent development after being listed as intangible cultural heritage.

Daliuzi originated from the Tujia people's need to drive away wild animals and for entertainment. With the advancement of tools and the increase in population, Daliuzi has evolved in terms of instruments and content, becoming richer and more nature-oriented, enhancing the atmosphere. The structure of Daliuzi tunes is varied, with the fixed main part being the "liuzi" segment, hence its name. Daliuzi is often used in festive scenes, such as weddings, grand events, and birthday celebrations, where Daliuzi ensembles are invited to liven up the atmosphere. Due to the lack of a written script,

Daliuzi is traditionally passed down orally, requiring apprentices to memorize scores and master playing techniques before taking on responsibilities. As times have progressed, the forms and performances of Daliuzi have seen innovations, including enhancements in body movements, storyline content, and performance arrangements. In 2006, the recognition of Tujia Daliuzi as a national intangible cultural heritage brought attention to this musical form and its associated ethnic culture. It is hoped that the government will formulate detailed protection measures and plans, providing favorable conditions and resources for the inheritance of these intangible cultural heritages. Additionally, it is hoped that more enthusiasts, researchers, and workers will actively engage in the excavation and preservation of music, making traditional music known to more people, spreading Chinese traditional music across China and the world, and letting the world hear the rich sounds of the Chinese nation.

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