

THE MUSIC CREATION FOR SOLO BASSOON FROM “DA GE” TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF DONG

Ye Yang¹ Akkarapon Dejjwacharanon²

Abstract

The current situation of Da Ge is that many singers and singers are already old, and the inheritance of Da Ge is facing a crisis, with no successors and on the brink of extinction, urgently requiring protection. There are currently no solo or ensemble works of ethnic minority music materials created for bassoon, and this study aims to address this issue. This paper conducts in-depth research on Dong culture and Da Ge. This article aims to study and create a music performance for Solo Bassoon from “Da Ge”. This paper employed qualitative research methods and creative research methods to research. This study aims to develop new forms of performance of Da Ge while also enriching the performance of Western instruments such as the bassoon. Through this study, it is also possible to create more Da Ge works for Bassoon while promoting Da Ge. This study can catalyze the study of innovative forms of performance in Da Ge.

Keywords: Da Ge, Bassoon, Chamber music, Traditional music of Dong

¹ Student, Master of Fine and Applied Arts Program in Music and Performing Arts, Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Burapha University, 439402912@qq.com

² Advisor, Asst. prof., D.F.A., Department of Music and Performing Arts, Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Burapha University, akkarapon@go.buu.ac.th

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1. Introduction

The Dong culture boasts strong characteristics, especially the Da Ge, which is one of the best-preserved ancient artistic heritages and the most distinctive folk art. (Ding, Z, 2020) The Dong nationality big song is a national Intangible cultural heritage and one of the treasures of the Dong nationality culture. The Da Ge is a national vocal art and an important part of in-depth research on the Dong ethnic group. It has important scientific research and artistic value and is an important cultural and spiritual support for maintaining the economic and social stability of the Da Ge.

With the continuous progress and development of society, more and more Dong youth are exposed to more music culture and prefer contemporary music and modern pop music. The Da Ge has always been a way of learning that has been passed down from mouth to heart. They do not have written language or notation like Western music to record and preserve the Da Ge. Therefore, when the traditional way of learning the Dong ethnic song is impacted, how to inherit and develop innovation is a serious problem. I want to make more people understand the music and performance forms of Da Ge through innovation, to better inherit and innovate the development of Da Ge.

2. Research Objective

2.1 To study Da Ge music in Guizhou.

2.2 To create a music performance for Solo Bassoon from “Da Ge” Traditional music of Dong

3. Research Methodology

This study was conducted using qualitative research methods and creative research methods. After consulting a large number of references, interviews with experts in Dong culture and on-site investigations were also conducted.

4. Dong music culture

The Dong ethnic group is a minority group that is skilled in singing and dancing, and their songs are mostly spread through oral pronunciation. (Liao, Q, 2019) On the other hand, the Dong folk custom is that during the festival, there will be competitions between ethnic minority villages, such as singing and dancing, playing Lusheng, singing on the turntable, and blocking songs at weddings and other happy events, so their folk song activities are colorful. Da Ge has various forms and rich and colorful connotations. According to statistics, there are over a hundred Da Ge works and songs in various regions, although they differ, they all share some common characteristics of Da Ge.

It was included on one of the first representative lists of China's intangible cultural heritage in 2005. (Tan, H, 2019)

The Da Ge can be divided into two dialectal areas, north and south, according to traditional customs and traditions. In the northern part of the region, the songs are mainly monophonic and usually include singing, playing, vernacular, drinking songs, wedding songs, and other ritual songs. The songs of the southern dialect region can be divided into three categories: small songs, big songs, customary songs, and ceremonial songs. The Da Ge is the both in content and singing form. It has long been permeated with the natural, ethical, aesthetic, and emotional cultural factors of the Dong people, and as a cultural heritage, listeners can feel the character preferences, aesthetic consciousness, and values of the Dong people while enjoying the double songs. (Deng, M, 2019)

5. The Musical Characteristics of Da Ge

The Da Ge is rich in harmony and multi-voice parts. According to the theme of the song, it can include a drum Tower, human voices, a story, children's voices, drama, social customs, and mixed songs. It must be sung by more than three people. (Lu, S, 2004) The other specific contents of the Dong age are generally imitating the sound of birds and insects, as well as the sound of nature such as mountains and water. At the beginning of Da Ge, the female voice is predominantly used to sing in a mixture of real and falsetto voices, with the real voice being used in the lower register and the falsetto voice in the upper register, while the mixture of real and falsetto voices is typically used in the girls' middle register. (Liu, Y, 2016)

6. Techniques for the Bassoon

Many of the techniques of the bassoon can be linked to the characteristics of Da Ge, for example, the slide in the tuba can echo some of the improvised lyrics in Da Ge, and the Dong play mountain tune often has a big jump, often in the downbeat, and a big wave sound, which can also be interpreted using the slide technique of the tuba and fast scales. The song of the cicadas sung by the Dong people imitates the song of the cicadas, all of which can be played in the past with techniques such as legato, staccato, vibrato, and portamento all of which can be linked.

7. Music Theory

A pentatonic mode is a mode made up of five tones (instead of seven). Pentatonic modulation is widespread in ancient China and Folk Music in ancient China,

and based on which the Chinese Folk Tunes variations and a complete Music Theory. It is often referred to as the 'Chinese mode' or 'national mode', although it can be found in the traditional music of many countries and regions. The pentatonic mode is based on the pure Fifths of the Intervals. The pentatonic mode is arranged in a purely relational way, consisting of five tones. As this mode is unique to China, it can also be called the national mode. The names of these five tones are Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi, and Yu.



**DO is Gong, Re is Shang, Mi is Jue, Sol is Zhi, La is Yu*

Figure 1 Pentatonic scale

Source: Ye Yang

8. Field research

Zhaoxing Dong Village is located in Liping County, Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province. It is a minority-inhabited area dominated by the Dong nationality. It has a long history, dating back to the Southern Song Dynasty, and has a history of more than 800 years. Zhaoxing Dong Village has attracted many tourists for sightseeing and tourism due to its unique cultural characteristics such as Dong architecture, singing and dancing, and folk customs. The purpose of this Zhaoxing Dong Village Fengcai Tour is to gain a deeper understanding of the ethnic and folk characteristics, traditional culture, music and dance, local customs, food specialties, etc. of the Dong ethnic group. Through on-site inspection and personal experience, we aim to explore and perceive the cultural heritage and folk customs of Zhaoxing Dong Village more comprehensively. We hope to create innovative Da Ge for bassoon.



Figure 2 Zhaoxing Dong Village, Liping County

Source: Ye Yang

9. Creative research

The material information was collected through field research. The materials expressing the sound of nature, Dong's love songs, and life and labor are selected for adaptation and creation. It's based on the five-tone mode of the Da Ge the adaptation utilizes elements such as rhythm, beat, intensity, range, melody, and harmony while remaining faithful to the original work. I have created four new Dong music works created for Bassoon. Among them, "Song of Cicada" and "Song of Labor for Twelve Months" are solo works, and "Lang Ge, Let's Make Friends" and "Half in August" are western chamber music works with two oboes and two large pipes.

In the actual adaptation process, the adaptation of techniques and the adaptation of structures often occur in a staggered manner. Element adaptation refers to the use of fixed core tones to reconstruct the music structure and techniques of a song's content. This adaptation method can better reflect the connection between music pieces, which is helpful and inspiring for adapting Da Ge into bassoon works.

Through the field investigation of the Dong village in Zhaoxing, it is found that the most important parts of the Dong in life are love, life and labor. So I chose love and materials that can show life and work. Inspired by the love songs of the Dong people. During the few days in the Dong village, I also fully felt the love of the Dong people for cicadas. The sound of cicadas is constant. It was also one of my inspirations, so I created a solo work with the theme of Cicada.

10. Music Analysis

The first song is Cicada's song. The five bars of this Cicada song appear five times in the song. The appearance of cicadas can also be said to be a transformation of a scene in this song. The Cicada song is the soul of the whole song and also the clue. The appearance of cicadas runs through the whole storyline of the song. When the first time the cicadas sing, it represents the beginning of the music just like the beginning of the theater.



Figure 3 The melody imitating the sound of the cicada

Source: Ye Yang

This melody also uses repetition and contrast to simulate the echoes in the mountains and forests. The expression here is a dialogue between lovers. The music expression symbols here are *f* (Forte) and *p* (Piano). I mainly want to express the memories of a girl and her lover singing in the mountains. The Forte in section 55 represents the song sung by the girl, and the Piano in section 56 represents the echo generated by singing in the mountains. The melody in section 57 is one octave lower, meaning that the boy is singing, and the emoticon is the same as before. Forte (*f*) is the boy's voice, while the piano (*p*) in section 58 represents the echo of the boy's singing.



Figure 4 The melody imitating the echo

Source: Ye Yang

Since the 69 bars, it adds a lot of decorative sounds and 2 / 4 and 3 / 4 beats. It imitates a lot of birds singing in the trees. There is no fixed rhythm and regularity when the bird calls, so the beat conversion is added here. Mock bird calls with constantly changing beats. This section wants to show that the Dong people live in the original ecological environment, near the mountains and rivers, birds' Twitter, and the fragrance of flowers.



Figure 5 The melody mimicking the bird's call

Source: Ye Yang

This piece is “The twelve-month labor song”. In January, Dong people went up the mountain to chop firewood because it was labor. So maintaining the rhythm of the original song's work, adapting the notes and rhythm changes.



Figure 6 The theme melody

Source: Ye Yang

February is still a busy month as we are going to open fields and plant seedlings. So the melody of these three bars still maintains a sense of rhythm in a working state.



Figure 7 Adapt of the theme melody

Source: Ye Yang

The work from March to April involves fertilizing the land and plowing with cattle. Because the movement of cattle plowing is very slow, the melody here gradually slows down, which is different from the rhythm of the previous work.



Figure 8 Adapt of the theme melody

Source: Ye Yang

The labor tasks from May to June include transplanting seedlings in May without rest and weeding to help seedlings grow in June. In May, it is the labor of transplanting

seedlings, and all the labor maintains the rhythm and rhythm of the original song. The labor intensity of weeding in June is not as high as that of transplanting seedlings, so the melody is relatively relaxed after 35 bars.



Figure 9 Adapt of the theme melody

Source: Ye Yang

Cut grass and feed cattle and sheep in July. The temperature of the summer weather in July is also quite hot. Although farming is also necessary in July, I want to use soothing and melodic music to express the combination of work and rest, just like bringing a hint of coolness in a hot summer.



Figure 10 Adapt of the theme melody

Source: Ye Yang

From August to September, the rice is harvested in August, and in September, the grain is collected in the granary. These two months can be said to be very important for the Dong people, and it is the harvest season. Therefore, the theme of the original song is adopted here, highlighting the happiness and joy of the hardworking Dong people's harvest.



Figure 11 Adapt of the theme melody

Source: Ye Yang

From October to November, there is nothing to do at home, and it is difficult to go out due to the frost in November. From October to November, due to the cold weather, there is almost no agricultural work to do, so here we use relatively soothing music to express it.



Figure 12 Adapt of the theme melody

Source: Ye Yang

In December, we carry a hoe and start farming again. In December, we start working again and preparing for next year's farming, so we choose to repeat the theme here, symbolizing a new year.



Figure 13 Adapt of the theme melody

Source: Ye Yang

11. Conclusion

Dong people also consider Da Ge as a treasure. As the saying goes, "Food nourishes the body, and song nourishes the heart." Dong people value Da Ge as equally important as eating. It can be seen that the artistic value of studying Da Ge is extremely high. In the form of music, it showcases the social values, humanistic life, marriage customs, interpersonal communication, and so on of the Dong people. This study conducted in-depth research on the creation of Da Ge works by using a reference literature review, on-site investigation, expert interviews, and questionnaire surveys.

This study selected materials from three aspects: expressing the voice of nature, love songs, and daily labor for adaptation and creation. Based on the five-tone mode of the Da Ge, the adaptation utilizes elements such as rhythm, beat, intensity, range, melody, and harmony while remaining faithful to the original work. I hope to gain more attention through new forms of performance, new instrument performances, and new adaptations of Da Ge. Enable more people to understand and love excellent ethnic music culture. I particularly hope to receive more attention from young people of the Dong ethnic group, showcase their music culture in more ways and platforms, and awaken their awareness of the inheritance and protection of the Da Ge.

12. Discussion

The researchers' research can provide certain beneficial support and inspiration for the cultural and development work of Da Ge. We can create more musical instruments and enrich the performance forms of Dong music to broaden people's acceptance so that more people can spontaneously promote and promote it. Thus, it can promote the inheritance and development of Dong music. For my professional bassoon, it can enrich the material of the bassoon's performance works. It can play more minority music.

The researchers hope that in the future, there is more composers will use ethnic minorities as music materials to create excellent works of Western wind music. I hope to gain more attention through new forms of performance, new instrument performances, and new adaptations of Da Ge's works. So that more people can understand and love excellent minority music culture. I particularly hope to receive more attention from young people of the Dong ethnic group, showcase their music culture in more ways and platforms, and awaken their awareness of the inheritance and protection of the Da Ge. It makes the promotion methods of Da Ge more diverse, promoting and developing Da Ge. Let such excellent minority culture attract more attention, inherit and protect it.

13. Suggestions

Due to the limited time for researchers to conduct on-site investigations, the relevant information on Dong culture and music surveyed may not be very comprehensive. The researchers are not professional composers and have shortcomings in the techniques used to create music and their ability to adapt. The works created by researchers may differ from their expectations, but researchers hope to catalyze future creation.

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