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Tradition, Modelling, Mechanisms: Research on the Path of Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection for Fishermen's Music Culture in Northern Jiangsu

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the development trends and preservation strategies of the culture of fishermen's groups in northern Jiangsu in the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The paper selects three main projects in the cultural life of these fishermen, namely, the fishermen's *haozi*, which reflects and expresses their basic way of labour; the *paifu*, an important boat-building technique; and the *yugu*, a ritual activity that accompanies them throughout their lives. This paper is project-focused and fieldwork-based, and while telling the stories of the inheritors, it also quotes and connects a lot of opinions and viewpoints from others who are not often placed in the research centre in the ICH system, such as government officials, grassroots cultural workers, folk scholars, media, and family members of inheritors, aiming at presenting a more comprehensive, detailed, and dynamic ecology of the functioning of the ICH. This paper departs from the conventional thinking of ICH research, i.e. exploring non-heritage and tourism, non-heritage and technology, etc. Instead, I start from the practical point of view, face the core of the ICH mechanism, explore the relationship between it and grassroots cultural departments in the establishment, institutions and practices, demonstrate and reveal the distinctive development environment and status quo of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage under government intervention.

This paper was written when China's ICH has been developing for 20 years, in which it has successfully established theoretical, personnel and institutional frameworks, and all parties are operating under the guidance of these frameworks regularly. In my opinion, it is a good time for reflection and review. In addition, the ten-year fishing ban that occurred among the fishermen's community during my study made my study results even more urgent and have realistic meaning.

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It has finally come down to the last part of writing a PhD thesis - the acknowledgements. Instead of the expected ecstasy and crying, I am calm and relaxed now. My thoughts go back to that year when I was wandering at the crossroads of my life; I resolutely chose to continue my doctoral studies. At this moment, I would like to say to her, “Good choice! And you did a great job!”

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INTRODUCTION

By the time I was working on this doctoral dissertation, I had been studying in Harbin, the ice city, more than a thousand kilometres away from home, for almost ten years. During these years, I gradually adapted to the dry, cold and snowy climate, but my heart will always think of the wet, warm, flowing water through the small city in the south of the Yangtze River. Therefore, when deciding on the approximate geographic area for my dissertation, I chose my hometown, Jiangsu, almost without thinking. The choice was not only based on my attachment to my hometown but also due to more practical considerations such as cultural closeness and familiarity, the convenience of fieldwork, and even the cost of the research process.

I formally began studying traditional Chinese/folk vocal music in my teenage years. This choice not only helped me get into college, but also influenced the direction of my research in undergraduate and graduate school. In both my bachelor's and master's dissertations, I chose research topics related to traditional Chinese folk songs. Therefore, both the existing state of the field, personal academic interests, and the need to systematically accumulate academic achievements as a scholar in the future quickly led me to determine to continue my research on traditional Chinese folk songs in my doctoral dissertation.

After deciding on the geographical location and direction for my doctoral thesis, I quickly locked my first research target: Yangzhou and Canal Culture. The canal here refers to the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal, which is the earliest man-made canal dug in the world. Yangzhou, a city of origin of the same age as the Grand Canal, was born and flourished to the Canal. In June 2014, China's Grand Canal was successfully inscribed on the World Heritage List. Because of its irreplaceable position in the canal, Yangzhou was involved in the inscription process as early as 2004. It became the lead city for the inscription of the Grand Canal in 2007, jointly promoting the process of the canal with the thirty-five other cities along the canal. In order to further clarify and emphasise the profound significance of the Grand Canal to Chinese

culture, General Secretary Xi Jinping gave important instructions on constructing the Grand Canal Cultural Belt in 2017, making it a national strategy.[1]

In addition, the rich academic value of the Grand Canal itself and the solid national cultural strategy background, I am interested in this topic also because I was born and raised in Yangzhou. Both my existing knowledge to the Canal and the social network that I could find laid a certain foundation for me to conduct further field research and obtain considerable materials. However, after a period of desk work, I finally gave up on this topic. The main reason was that it was difficult for me to frame and find a precise geographical boundary and cultural perspective on the Grand Canal, which traverses the north and south and involves half of the history of Chinese civilization. Secondly, most of the existing research materials on the Grand Canal I consulted were historically oriented. There were fewer materials on music, and among the musical materials I could find, most were mainly literary interpretations of lyrics, lacking musical records.

Although I abandoned the research project on the Grand Canal, two things caught my attention during its argumentation. First, I learned that, besides the Grand Canal, there are various types of water resources in the Jiangsu region, such as oceans, rivers, and lakes. Second, in the *Lixia* River region, where Yangzhou is located, I searched and read many research papers on field songs and rice music,[2] which led to a shift in my perspective. Since there are scholars who can focus their research on rice paddy music, which is dominated by farmers, why can't I take advantage of such rich and diverse water resources in the region and focus my research on fishermen groups and study their music culture?

However, when I scrutinised fishermen more closely, I found that this group, most easily seen in the water village, appeared strange and distant. For me, this

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[1] The information of the Canal in the section is quoted from the introductory part of Wang Yu's Master's Thesis "Dayunhe yangzhouduan yunhe wenhua kaifa yu baohu yanjiu" (Research on the Development and Protection of Canal Culture in Yangzhou Section of the Grand Canal 2022).

[2] Shan Lin. "Daozuo wenhua zhi gu- Jiangsu zhongbeibu diqu tian'ge de cunzai fangshi jiqi daozuo wenhua yiyi" (The Rice Culture- the Existence of Field Songs and their Cultural Significance in Rice Farming in the North Central Region of Jiangsu 2007).

complex feeling is like they (fishermen) can be found everywhere, but it is difficult to precisely describe who they are and what their culture is. In my opinion, the reasons behind this result are: firstly, the difficulty and neglect of recording caused by fishermen's own unstable living conditions due to their wandering; secondly, the lack of attention from mainstream society to the fishermen's groups who have been marginalized in terms of geographical boundaries and social status. Therefore, I hope my research can first present the content, value and significance of fishermen's culture objectively so that this group can be seen and their culture can be understood. Secondly, I hope to present the efforts and current effects of this group on preservation, inheritance, and development in the face of the same problem of cultural loss, to come up with some methods that close to regular patterns, and inspire other cultures of the same type in the same situation. In this way, fishermen's culture can not only be seen and understood, but can also have a substantial effect and influence through sharing.

Based on this, I thought of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, whose concerns and core spirit are basically in line with everything I want to explore in my research. ICH is centred on protecting those behaviours or expressions, such as folklore, knowledge, beliefs, traditions and languages, that are important to cultural transmission and development in the region. In today's fast-paced world, they are seldom seen or understood, passing silently, even on the verge of extinction. Since its introduction to China in the early 21st century, this concept has quickly become a nationally led cultural preservation policy of a salvage nature involving the whole country. Therefore, the fishermen's cultural projects that are concerned about and protected in the list of ICH should be what I need and search for.

Guided by this research perspective, I finally identified two fishermen's cultural projects closely related to music, namely fishermen's *haozi* and Hongze Lake *Yugu*, through repeated screening and selection of the information on the ICH list included in the Jiangsu Intangible Cultural Heritage Network Platform.[3] And in the subsequent field survey of fishermen's *haozi*, with the recommendation and suggestion of people in the field, the project of *paifu* was identified. Since each project has clear

[3] The website is http://www.jsfybh.com/#/homePage.

geographical boundaries, connecting these boundaries together defines the final research area of my doctoral dissertation, Northern Jiangsu.

In the next paragraph, I will follow this order of reflection to summarise, clarify and introduce the Intangible Cultural Heritage as the foundation and background of this study, the region of northern Jiangsu where the main fieldwork was carried out, and the specific information of my fieldwork, so that readers can have a more comprehensive understanding and appreciation of my study in the introductory part.

Aims and Contributions

Since entering China at the beginning of the 20th century, Intangible Cultural Heritage has attracted different degrees of discussion and attention from all walks of life. So far, it has been around for more than 20 years. During these 20 years, under the guidance and planning of the government, China's ICH has formed a series of regulations and legal provisions in various areas such as its declaration, selection and assessment. In my view, it is the time for a more in-depth observation, discussion and analysis of the existing ICH projects. Therefore, the first purpose of this dissertation is to provide a targeted, in-depth field research, detailed, and unique academic text. I hope it can inspire other projects of the same type or even the whole study of ICH. Secondly, as I have always emphasized in this dissertation, the object of my research is the fishermen's group that has been in the margins since ancient times. It is a minority, relatively closed, and has not received much attention. Through my thesis, I hope to make these people seen and treated as equals and let their culture be known, cared for, and loved by the world. Thirdly, the three projects I discuss in my dissertation are not only about the present moment of ICH but also about the past and the future through the protagonists' narratives. Therefore, this paper undertakes a dynamic and ongoing exploration across the time dimension. Fourth, among the three projects I discussed, the Fishermen's *haozi* undoubtedly belongs to the music category. The other two projects are related to music at best (*paifu* is related to sound performance, and *yugu* is related to music and ritual). I hope that by exploring these projects, I can explore the broader boundaries of music-related research and ponder

the closer relationship and influence of music on sound, ritual, and even other fields. Fifth, in this thesis, I have tried to present the overall ecology of ICH. I hope to present a richer, more complex, and more realistic situation of musical ICH through the different perspectives and actions of participants from different generations, identities, and positions.

Intangible Cultural Heritage

Intangible Cultural Heritage is an English concept translated from French and deeply influenced by the Japanese concept of "Intangible Cultural Property" (Hu 2020: 86). It is the accumulation of intangible wisdom and resources of traditional human spiritual, cultural, artistic, and social exchanges, which is inherited by people from generation to generation in a certain form of external manifestation, has multiple values, and has been highly valued and actively promoted by international organizations such as the United Nations and other countries around the world. Among the many conferences and documents focusing on Intangible Cultural Heritage, the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* promulgated by UNESCO in 2003 is undoubtedly a milestone which not only gives a relatively universal definition of Intangible Cultural Heritage but also provides a basic framework and value standard for the development of Intangible Cultural Heritage movement worldwide. Under the impetus of the Convention, countries, especially in the East Asian region, mainly Japan, Korea and China,[4] have successively elevated this movement to the level of national mechanisms.

Take China as an example. China acceded to the Convention in 2004. In March 2005, the General Office of the State Council issued several important documents, including the *Guanyu jiaqiang woguo feiwuzhi wenhua yichan baohu gongzuo de yijian* (Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage*)* and *Guojiaji feiwuzhi wenhua yichan daibiaozuo shenbao pingding zanxing*

[4] Books referring to cases of Intangible Cultural Heritage in these countries include Natsuko Akagawa, Laurajane Smith. 2018. S*afeguarding Intangible Heritage: Practices and Politics*; Natsuko Akagawa. 2014. *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Culture Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*; Khun Eng Kuah, Zhaohui Liu. 2016. *Intangible Cultural Heritage in Contemporary China: The Participation of local Communities*; Keith Howard. 2016. *Music as Intangible Cultural Heritage Policy, Ideology, and Practice in the Preservation of East Asian Traditions*.

banfa (Interim Measures for the Declaration and Evaluation of Masterpieces of the Intangible Cultural Heritage at the National Level), which formally initiated the construction of a national inventory system of masterpieces of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. On February 25, 2011, the National People's Congress passed the *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo feiwuzhi wenhua yichanfa* (Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China), which came into force on June 1, 2011, after the President of the People's Republic of China signed an order. Concerning the number of achievements, according to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Website of *China · Digital Museum of Intangible Cultural Heritage in China*,[5] as one of the important contents of fulfilling the obligations of the States Parties to the Convention, the government has actively promoted the work of nominating items of the Intangible Cultural Heritage to UNESCO's lists (registers). As of December 2022, China has inscribed a total of 43 items on it, ranking first in the world in terms of total number. Secondly, the State Council published five batches of national lists in 2006, 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2021, totalling 1,557 found and published representative items of national Intangible Cultural Heritage. Other practical achievements include granting several national cultural ecological reserves and national research bases for the protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage, the publication of a number of specialized books[6], and the establishment of specialised research institutions for it, among other things.

At this important stage of the twenty-year rapid development of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage, and in the face of such fruitful results, it is time for us to go back to the origin, to the Convention itself, to re-examine, reflect on, and revise the content of its framework and value standards. It is also a good time for us to further think about the significance and role of the Convention for the development of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage in the light of the experience we have already gained. Therefore, in the following, I will take the Convention for the Safeguarding of

[5] The website is https://www.ihchina.cn/.

[6] These books are Wang Wenzhang. 2023. *Feiwuzhi wenhua yichan gailun* (Introduction to Intangible Cultural Heritage); Wang Wenzhang. 2022. *Zhongguo feiwuzhi wenhua yichan da cidian* (Dictionary of Intangible Cultural Heritage of China); Wang Wenzhang. 2008. *Feiwuzhi wenhua yichan baohu yu tianye gongzuo fangfa* (Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection and Fieldwork Method); Yuan Li, Gu Jun. 2022. *Feiwuzhi wenhua yichan xue* (Intangible Cultural Heritage Studies); Li Rongqi. 2021. *Feiwuzhi wenhua yichan kexue baohu lu* (Scientific Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage).

the Intangible Cultural Heritage promulgated by UNESCO in 2003 as the foothold and review the contents of three parts of the Convention, namely, the interpretation, retrospection and exploration of the concepts related to the Convention, the reflection and amendment of the Convention during its development, and the construction and development of China's ICH after its accession to the Convention.

The first part considers the interpretation, tracing and exploration of the Convention and its related concepts. I have categorised this portion of the scholarship into two categories by authorship, one of which is the personal involvement in the preparation, establishment and improvement stages of the Convention as an expert in different field. Relevant articles include Noriko Aikawa's "An Historical Overview of the Preparation of the UNESCO International Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage" 2004; Wim Van Zante's "Constructing New Terminology for Intangible Cultural Heritage" 2004; and Mohammed Bedjaoui's "The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: The Legal Framework and Universally Recognized Principles" 2004. It is worth mentioning that except for the common academic interpretations and enquiries, these articles show a more insider's view of the lesser-known side of the Convention's construction process. The other category is that of scholars in the general sense of the word, they interpret, explore and even derive the core elements of the Convention from their different academic backgrounds and perspectives, including material and immaterial, authenticity, human rights, community, mutual respect and sustainable development. Relevant essays include Chiara Bortolotto's "From Objects to Processes: UNESCO's 'Intangible Cultural Heritage'" 2007; Federico Lenzerini's "Intangible Cultural Heritage: The Living Culture of Peoples" 2011. Articles written in Chinese include Wang Wei's "Wenhua lingyu de xianghu zunzhong yuanze: jiyu UNESCO <baohu feiwuzhi wenhua yichan gongyue> de suyuan kaoshi" (The Principle of Mutual Respect in the Cultural Field: A Retrospective Interpretation Based on the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage) 2023; Wang Wei's "<Baohu feiwuzhi wenhua yichan gongyue > zhong de kechixu fazhan linian: ronghe yu shanbian" (The Concept of Sustainable Development in the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: Integration and Transformation) 2021; and Wang Xiansheng's "Lun feiwuzhi wenhua yichan yu wuzhi yinsu de

guanxi", (On the Relationship between the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Material Factors) 2013.

The second part considers the reflection on amendments to the Convention. In this part, the authors list representative events, expert meetings and relevant rules and regulations that have taken place during the 20 years since the Convention was proposed. In these articles, they combine their actual situations, point out the contradictions and problems that may exist in the Convention in terms of the relevant mechanisms, procedures and standard-setting, and gave some adjustments. Relevant articles include Richard Kurin's "Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in the 2003 UNESCO Convention: A Critical Appraisal" 2004; Saúl Lázaro Ortiz, Celeste Jiménez de Madariaga's "The UNESCO convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: A Critical Analysis" 2022. Articles written in Chinese include Min Chenghua and Zhu Gang's "Lianheguo jiaokewen zuzhi feiwuzhi wenhua yichan baohu qushi yanjiu——yi 2003 nian <baohu feiwuzhi wenhua yichan gongyue> minglu lieru jizhi quanqiu fansi zhuanjiahui wei zhongxin de kaocha" (Study on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding Trends - An Examination Centred on the Expert Meeting on Global Reflection on the Mechanism for Inclusion in the List of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003) 2023; Shen Ce's "Lianheguo jiaokewen zuzhi quanmian fansi <baohu feiwuzhi wenhua yichan gongyue>lieru jizhi de guochengxing yanjiu" (UNESCO Process Study for a Comprehensive Rethinking of the Incorporation Mechanism of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage) 2022.

The third part is the construction and development of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage after its accession to the Convention. The scholarship in this section focuses on the measures taken, regulations enacted, and results achieved in building China's own ICH system after accession to the Convention. These articles I choose tend to take a more macro, holistic view of the situation, rather than focusing on a specific case. Relevant articles include Xu Yanwen, Tao Yu, and Benjamin Smith's "China's Emerging Legislative and Policy Framework for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage" 2022; Dang Qiong, Luo Zhongming, Ouyang Chuhao, Wang Lin, and Xie Mei's "Intangible Cultural Heritage in China: A Visual Analysis of Research Hotspots, Frontiers, and Trends Using CiteSpace" 2021; Zhang Boyu, Yao Hui and

Huib Schippers's "Report: The Rise and Implementation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection for Music in China" 2015. Articles written in Chinese include Gao Bingzhong's "<Baohu feiwuzhi wenhua yichan gongyue> de jingshen goucheng yu zhongguo shijian" (The Spiritual Composition of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and China's Practices) 2017; Hu Xiaohui's "<Baohu feiwuzhi wenhua yichan gongyue> neng gei zhongguo dailai shenme xin dongxi —— jiantan feiwuzhi wenhua yichan quyuxing zhengti baohu de linian" (What New Things the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Can Bring to China - Another Discussion on the Idea of the Regional and Integral Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage) 2014.

Su Bei (Northern Jiangsu)

As a significant cultural province, Jiangsu occupies a critical position in China's cultural history. However, in many people's impression, "*Su* culture" is often equated with the Southern Jiangsu culture represented by *Su*、*Xi*、*Chang* (Suzhou, Wuxi and Changzhou), which is characterized by its warmth and modesty, delicacy and dynamism, and its profoundness. However, this impression essentially erases the proper place of northern Jiangsu culture in Jiangsu culture. In fact, the culture of north Jiangsu also has a long history and far-reaching influence. In Wang Teng's article "Quyu wenhua tezhi, wenhua jingshen yu jingji shehui de fazhan: yi Jiangsu weili" (Regional Cultural Characteristics, Cultural Spirit and Economic and Social Development: Jiangsu as an Example), it was mentioned that:

> During the historical development of the northern part of Jiangsu (in the broader sense), the *Chu-Han* culture and the *Huaiyang* culture have successively emerged, and due to the penetration and continuity of these two cultures, most of the region still retains traditional solid customs, ways of life, and morals (Wang 2008: 11).

The culture of Jiangsu and the specific towns in the northern Jiangsu region involved in my research will be presented in more detail and in full in Chapter One. In this

section, I will focus more on the geographic conceptualization and definition of northern Jiangsu.

As a regional term, firstly, the explanation given by the *Ci Hai* (an extensive comprehensive dictionary with both language and encyclopaedic entries) is that:

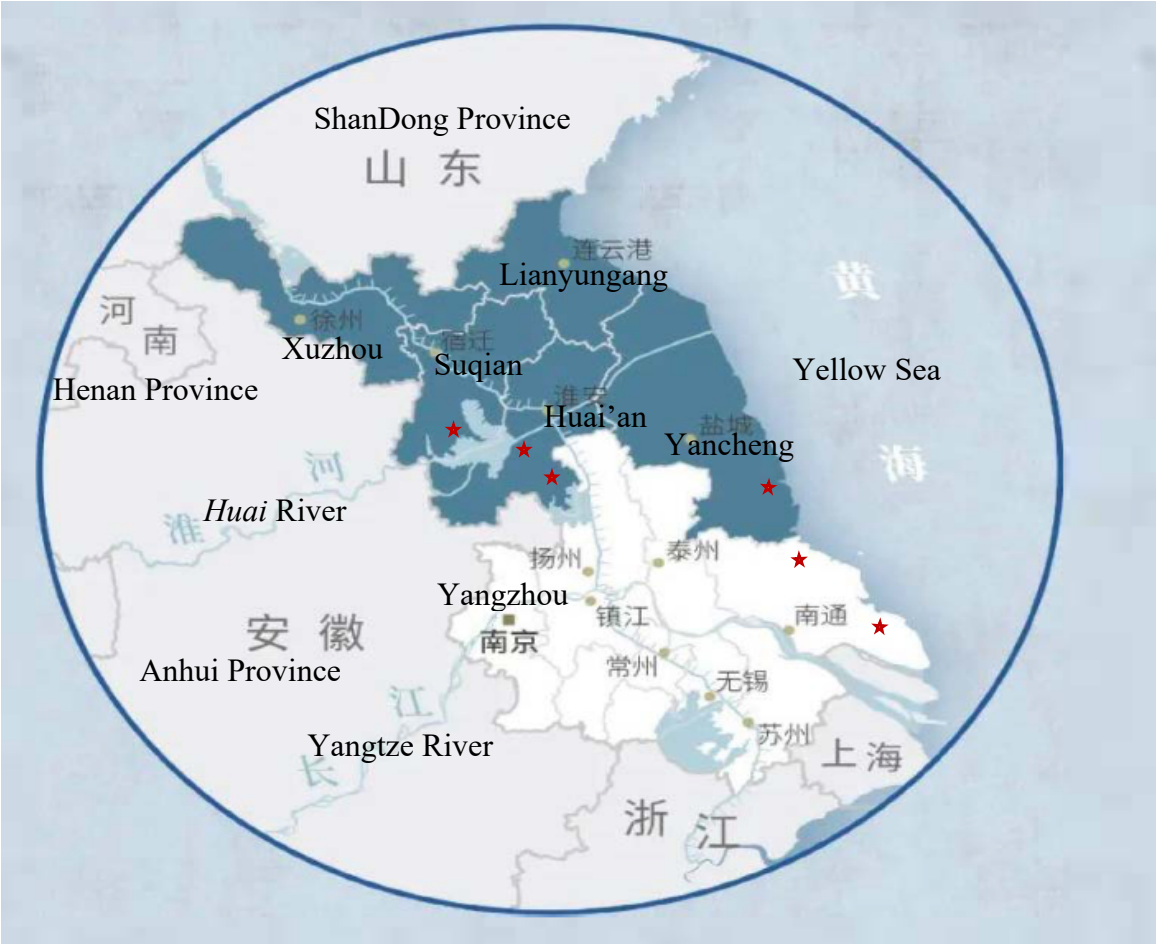
a. A generic term for the area north of the Yangtze River in Jiangsu province.
b. The name of the old administrative region north of the Yangtze River in Jiangsu province. (The Editorial Committee of the Dictionary 1989: 639)

Secondly, in the academic literature related to culture of the region, Feng Qingqing of Peking University, in her PhD thesis "Subei fangyan yuyin yanjiu" (On the Phonetic Analysis of the Dialect of Northern Jiangsu), she defines northern Jiangsu in a broad and narrow sense:

> Northern Jiangsu in a broad sense refers to the vast area north of Jiangsu. In contrast, in a narrow sense, northern Jiangsu refers specifically to the five cities of Xuzhou, Lianyungang, Suqian, Huai'an, and Yancheng and the counties under their jurisdiction (Feng 2013: 1)

In the book *Jiangsu diyu yinyue wenhua* (Jiangsu Regional Music Culture), Pu Hengqiang defines the concept of northern Jiangsu more precisely, i.e., "..... *Huai* River - Hongze Lake - the area north of the main irrigation canal in northern Jiangsu ..... The main cities are Huai'an, Yancheng, Suqian, Lianyungang, Xuzhou" (Pu 2014: 125). My research project explicitly involves Yancheng's Jianggang, Huai'an's Jinhu and Hongze, Suqian's Sihong, and Nantong's Fengli and Lüsi, with the vast majority of these districts and counties falling within the geographic area of northern Jiangsu as defined above.

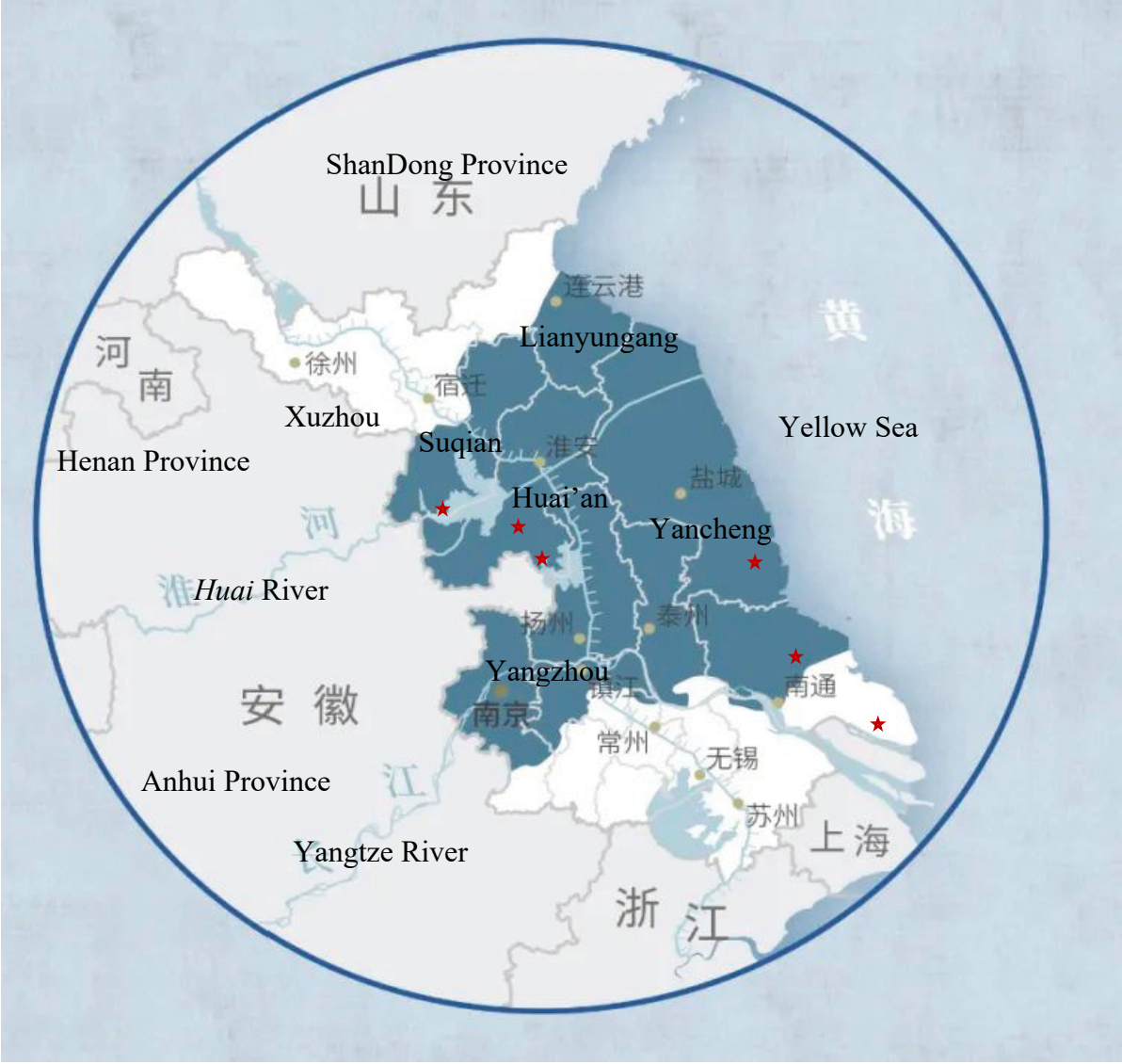
Here are the maps of northern Jiangsu in different contexts:



Map I.1: Map of Northern Jiangsu, under the perspective of the Northern Jiangsu Economic Zone in the Statistical Yearbook of Jiangsu Province from 1997 onwards. The red stars represent the six districts specifically covered in this study.



Map I.2: Map of Northern Jiangsu, under the perspective of historical changes, is basically the same as the old north of Jiangsu Province administrative district. The red stars represent the six districts specifically covered in this study.



Map I.3: Map of Northern Jiangsu, from the perspective of the dialect (Jianghuai official language). The red stars represent the six districts specifically covered in this study.

Fieldwork

I established this research topic in 2018, and a total of two complete rounds of fieldwork were carried out, mainly in the first half of 2019 and over several months in 2020-2021. During this period, I also attended some targeted ICH performances related to my projects and conducted some visits and interviews of a complementary nature. My research is based on the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage, with the fishermen's music culture in northern Jiangsu as the main subject of study, involving

three specific projects and fieldwork spanning six districts and counties in the four cities. Therefore, the above complete round of fieldwork refers to the completion of fieldwork for three projects in six districts and counties in the four cities in a row. It should be added that during the period 2020-2021, when my fieldwork was carried out, China was still under high tension and strict control due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and large-scale gatherings were either delayed or cancelled, which had a significant impact on my *yugu* project, especially the ceremonial part of it. The constant cancellation of rituals prevented me from participating in them and observing from a first-hand perspective, so this section will be presented in other forms in specific field chapters.

Most papers on ICH based on fieldworks mainly focus on the inheritor and rarely involve other participants in the broader context. Consequently, in my fieldwork, in addition to highlighting the position and stories of bearers, I prefer to present the overall ecology of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Therefore, my specific subjects included the bearers (sometimes the bearers' relatives), business leaders of relevant government departments, business cadres, media people, local scholars, ICH assessors, and leaders of local music or folk culture organizations. In addition, as a peripheral supplement to the information, I also opted to visit the relevant people in the local fisheries and archives departments. It is fair to say that half of my fieldwork was spent dealing with government personnel, which aligns with ICH's nature as a government-led, top-down cultural preservation policy. In contact and working with the insiders who are government personnel, my father's educational and career background proved incredibly helpful to me. My father graduated from Yangzhou Water Conservancy School in Jiangsu Province and has been involved in student management in higher education in water conservancy since he stayed at the school. The school was formerly known as the *Huaihe* Water Conservancy College, the first water conservancy college in China. As a result, many of my father's classmates and colleagues, as well as his former students, are either working in front-line operational and technical roles as the backbone of operations at water stations, dams and other water facilities in cities and counties across the province or in higher positions of management in government-affiliated water departments or basin management agencies. Given the close relationship between water resources and fisheries, these

interpersonal relationships played an important role in my smooth entry into the field. Not only did they match me up with and introduce me to the relevant departments and provide me with accommodation and food, but they even kindly arranged for local cultural workers (usually the resident) of my age to act as my assistant and dialect interpreter to assist me with my fieldwork. My father also participated in the second stage of my PhD fieldwork to help me communicate better with government personnel and obtain relevant materials more efficiently. He usually just sat in the corner and took notes as an observer; sometimes, what he recorded would inspire me. For the most part, he did not interfere with my fieldwork, and only when it was clear that I could not control or needed to add details would he join the conversations.

The advantage of going into the field in this way was that I could carry out my research more efficiently and stick close to the plan I had drawn up without wasting more time on things like finding interviewees or confirming addresses. To the maximum extent possible, I could obtain and borrow some of the information held, recorded and even developed by the government. I could also talk to them in the first instance and get some details that were not readily available for the public to access. However, such an approach also poses some inconveniences, especially when dealing with ordinary groups of fishermen. In the actual field, almost all my first visits to fishing villages or heirs were led by government leaders, and with my professional background as a PhD student, most fishermen would subconsciously place me in a position of top-down "inspector" rather than the researcher who wants to talk to them on equal footing. Therefore, in the early stages of fieldwork, I needed to spend some extra energy and time building relations with the fishermen, attending their performances, visiting them repeatedly, respecting and taking their culture seriously, and keeping in touch with them to foster mutual trust and understanding.

The fishermen I interviewed were almost all older men, mostly in essential positions in fishing production, and they don't have much access to education. They are a group of people who identify with and practice the idea that fishing is a way of life. As a young woman with a high level of education, a complete outsider, two completely different treatments emerge when entering such a field. In one case, the older fisherman treated me as a grandchild. If their grandchildren are of a similar age

background to mine, my identity becomes an important building block for a closer relationship and trust with each other; in this case, we can maintain a better communication relationship, and in the later stages of the study I was even able to get the information I wanted just through WeChat. In other case, it was the opposite. They were wary of me, especially in a project involving fishermen's beliefs. In this case, it was important to invite a trusted intermediary to be present. I needed extra care to maintain and build a good relationship with this individual during the fieldwork to my fieldwork went smoothly.

In either case, as opposed to me taking the lead, I chose to place my informants front and centre, by listening to their stories observing the most minor expressions and gesture, paying attention to their clothing and soaking in the atmosphere of the spaces I found myself in. Throughout the thesis, I hope to present through my brushstrokes one living individual after another, and portray the research site as a dynamic field. Offering a synoptic view of the field as I see it, I have also chosen to write up my findings as a nuanced study, which offers a deeper ethnographic understanding and advances a unique style of ethnomusicology which is still developing in Chinese music studies.

Structure of the Thesis

This dissertation focuses on a group of ordinary fishermen and their culture in the frontier region of China's economic and cultural development and explores the paths of their preservation and development in the post-Intangible Cultural Heritage era. The structure of the thesis and the main elements of each section are specified below:

Relevant background involves the larger region (Jiangsu Province), and an overview of the history, geography, fishermen, fisheries, waters, etc., of the specific counties and districts to which the case belongs, is presented in the first chapter. In addition, this chapter focuses on the meaning and boundaries of keywords such as fishermen, fishermen's culture, and Intangible Cultural Heritage in this study through a literature review, historical overview, and contact with the actual fieldwork. In

Chapter 2, 3 and 4, I focus on the fishermen's *haozi*, *paifu* and Hongze Lake *yugu*, which are found in six counties/towns in the region, to explore and demonstrate the important culture behind them, including the most basic working methods, material pursuits and spiritual support, which covers the whole life of fishermen. These cultures will be based on the stories of the inheritors of the cases and the key figures associated with them. Through my continuous questioning, observing and analysing, I will summarise the characteristics and models of the paths of conservation and development of these cultures in the context of ICH. It is worth mentioning that these three chapters are very similar in terms of their structure, intention, specific layout and writing style. Each case appears to be independent of the other but is, in fact, related to each other, with both individual problems and common reflections. They are intertwined with each other, like a net, together constructing and displaying the operational ecology and mechanism effectiveness of the protection and development of the fishermen culture of northern Jiangsu in the context of ICH. In Chapter 5, I have selected, explored and conducted an in-depth discussion on the most significant commonality, based on Chapters 2, 3 and 4. These commons are the more profound and intrinsic connections in actual practice between the management mechanisms of ICH and the cultural stations and centres represented by the grassroots cultural institutions and the mass culture, mass art group under their management. The ten-year ban on fishing in the Yangtze River Basin, which is the focus of the postscript part of the thesis, is not supported by much field evidence because it occurred at the end of my fieldwork; however, I include it here to highlight its possible impact and consequences on the fishermen's culture, which are inextricably linked to my research in this thesis. I also hope that this PhD thesis can smoothly transition into the next possible research of the ten-year fishing ban and provide a solid field and theoretical foundation for it, realising the systematisation and specialisation of my research on fishermen's music culture in the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In addition, English is not my native language and the subject of my research and its cultural background come from China. Therefore, throughout the dissertation, many Chinese terms are employed, based on my fieldwork in China, mentioned and on views from Chinese academia. In the process of writing all these materials, I have carried out a great deal of translation work. This translation is not a word-for-word

direct translation, but a paraphrase based on my understanding and generalization. The main translation tool I relied on was Deepl Translate, and the tool I used for checking my grammar was the Grammarly. I also asked a professional proofreader to help me improve the dissertation before it was submitted.

CHAPTER 1

Strangeness and Familiarity: Fishermen, Waters and Fishermen's Culture

As I outlined in the introduction, the fishermen of the water towns of northern Jiangsu, and Jiangsu as a whole, are a group of people who are both familiar and unfamiliar to me, and this feeling carries over to the waters in which they are located and the cultures they inhabit as well. In this chapter, I will go into this group and strive to understand particular aspects of fishermen's culture. In the beginning, I will explore the historical background and geographical aspects of fishermen, fisheries and water resources within the context of the larger region of Jiangsu Province. Next, I focus on the six counties and districts that belong to the specific projects in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 in terms of their history, geography, fishermen, and fishing boats, as well as the distribution and origin of the waters in which they are situated. Following that, I will unpick the meanings and boundaries of the term "fisherman" and link to fieldwork to summarise the specific images and characteristics of fishermen in my study. Finally, I will show the real life of fishermen in specific waters from a historical perspective by combing through history and give the meaning of fishermen's culture. All these will lay a solid foundation for me to analyse the specific projects in depth in the following section, relying on the background of the ICH.

Jiangsu is located in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River and *Huai* River, east of the Yellow Sea, west of Anhui, north of Shandong, south adjacent to Zhejiang and Shanghai, belonged to the eastern coastal centre of China. The topography of Jiangsu is mainly plain; it has different types of water resources, such as rivers, lakes, seas, canals and so on. The Yangtze River runs through it 425 km east to west, and the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal runs 718 kilometres from north to south. In addition, there are more than 2,900 rivers of various sizes within its geographical area, such as

Huai, Yi, Shushi and Si. Among the five major freshwater lakes in the country, Jiangsu has two of them, Tai Lake and Hongze Lake, in addition to more than 290 large and small lakes throughout the territory.[7]

On the marine side, in particular the specific maritime boundaries of Jiangsu Province and the offshore wetland resources it creates. According to the description of Zhu Jianshu's "Shui run Jiangsu" (Jiangsu Water Runs Everything) :

> The eastern coastline of Jiangsu spans a total length of 954 kilometres, starting from the mouth of the Xiuyu River in Ganyu District of Lianyungang City in the north, where it meets Shandong Province, and ending at Lianxing Port in Qidong, Nantong City on the northern shore of the Yangtze River. The continuous siltation of the coast has made Jiangsu rich in offshore and coastal wetlands. The Second National Wetland Resources survey results show that Jiangsu's total area of offshore and coastal wetlands is about 98.6 hectares (Zhu 2022: 104).

Its coast area includes three provincial cities, Lianyungang, Yancheng and Nantong and 17 counties under their jurisdiction, with a total area of 32,500 square kilometres.[8]

In terms of its specific freshwater resources, Jiangsu Province is one of the provinces with the most freshwater surface resources in the country. According to the introduction in the article "Jiangsu shui ziyuan kechixu liyong de duice sikao" (Thoughts on Countermeasures for Sustainable Utilization of Water Resources in Jiangsu) written by Wang Jian:

> There are 114 lakes larger than 1 km^2 in the province, with a total water area of 6356 km^2, accounting for about 44% of the province's water area. In addition to natural lakes, relevant technicians and workers have also

[7] The above data are from Long Yanling's "Guanyu Jiangsu shuishengtai wenming jianshe de duice sikao" (Thoughts on Countermeasures for the Construction of Water Ecological Civilization in Jiangsu), 2017.
[8] This data is derived from Yang Shutan, Zhang Wenxin, and Jia Suobao's "Lue lun Jiangsu yanhai diqu shuiziyuan peizhi" (A Brief Discussion on Water Resources Allocation in Jiangsu Coastal Region), 2011.

built 1,130 large, medium and small reservoirs since 1953 in the hilly mountainous areas (Wang 2004: 317).

The vast ocean, wide mudflats, and rich inland lake waters also make Jiangsu uniquely positioned for both marine and freshwater fisheries leading it to become one of China's key fishery production areas. Jiangsu offshore has four of the eight major fishing grounds in China, including Haizhou Bay Fishing Ground, Lüsi Fishing Ground, Yangtze River Estuary Fishing Ground and Dasha Fishing Ground, all of which are traditional production sites for up to 100,000 marine fishing fishermen. The fishery production of lakes and other large water surfaces also accounts for about 30% of the province's fish production.[9]

Compared with the fruitful fishery results, Jiangsu has a long fishery recording history that can also be traced. According to the *Jiangsusheng yuyeshi* (History of Fisheries in Jiangsu Province):

> The *Huai* River basin in northern Jiangsu was a place where the *Yi* people lived in ancient times, producing pearls and fish in abundance, while the south of the river is where the *Yue* people lived in ancient times. In the Neolithic Age, 7000 to 4000 years ago, the lower reaches of the Yangtze River, like the Yellow River basin, nurtured a more advanced primitive culture at that time; however, unlike the primitive culture of the Yellow River basin, which was dominated by the cultivation of millet, the lower reaches of the Yangtze River developed into a water village based on rice cultivation, with fishing playing an important role in cultural life here. In the *Records of the Grand Historian*[10] *- The Biography of Goods and Products* written by Sima Qian in the Western Han Dynasty,[11] it said that 楚越之地,地广人稀,饭稻羹鱼,或火耕水耨,果隋蠃蛤,不待贾而足 (People in the Chu-Yue region were so sparsely populated that they fed on

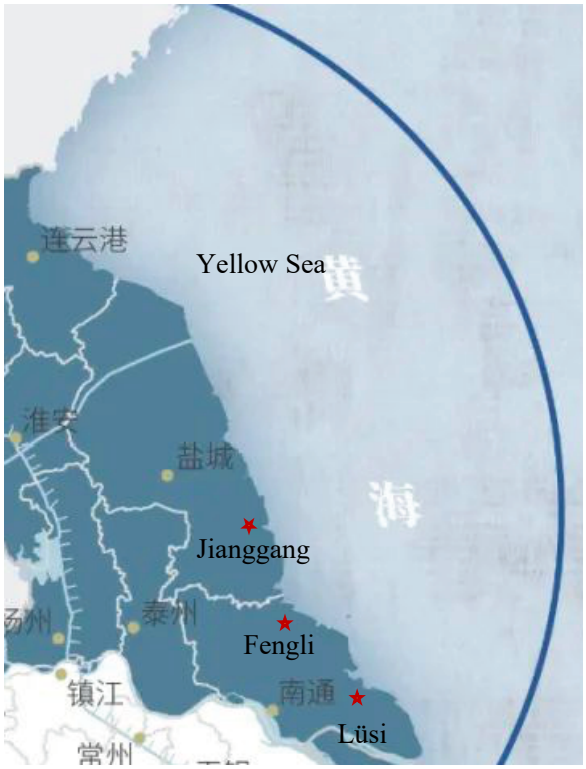
[9] This data is cited from Zhu Qingshun's "Jiangsu hupo yulei ziyuan xianzhuang jiqi hupo yuye" (Status of Fish Resources in Jiangsu Lakes and Their Lake Fisheries), 1992.
[10] Also known by its Chinese name *Shiji*, is a monumental history of China that is the first of China's 24 dynastic histories.
[11] 202 B.C.- 8 A.D.

rice and fish and harvested fruits, vegetables and shells by primitive farming and fishing methods, and were completely self-sufficient, in that they did not need to buy anything from outside). Similar descriptions can also be found in the history books of other dynasties, such as Fan Chengda's *Wujun zhi*[12] about Song Dynasty and Gu Qiyuan' s *Kezuozhiyu*[13] about Ming Dynasty. (Jiangsu Fisheries Bureau History Office 1993: 1-2).

1.1 Specific Locations and Waters

Beginning with Chapter Two, which focuses on fishermen's *haozi*, my specific research sites are the towns of Jianggang, Yancheng; Fengli and Lüsi, Nantong, which are all located on the coast, and belong to the waters of the Yellow Sea (see Map1.1).

[12] *Wujun* (*Wu* County) was Pingjiang Prefecture (Suzhou) during the Southern Song Dynasty, and *Wujun zhi* is one of the most important works describing the economic and cultural development of the area.
[13] *Kezuozhiyu* is a historical notebook written by Gu Qiyuan of the Ming Dynasty, which was written in 1617, the 45th year of the Wanli reign of Emperor Shenzong of the Ming Dynasty. The book is in 10 volumes with 467 articles, describing the geography of Jinling (Nanjing), the southern capital of the Ming Dynasty, its history, allusions, personalities, rules and regulations, institutions, customs, stories and legends.



Map1.1 The locations of Jianggang, Fengli, and Lüsi.

The Yellow Sea is a semi-enclosed marginal sea typical of the western Pacific Ocean between China and the Korean Peninsula. The name of the Yellow Sea derives from the yellow colour of its waters caused by the flows into the Yellow River in history. This history is mentioned in Bi Hua's article "Zhongguo zhuhai mingcheng de youlai" (The Origin of the Names of China's Seas):

> In the Southern Song Dynasty, Jianyan two years (1128), the Dongjing *Liushou* Du Chong decided to use the Yellow River to block the Jin soldiers, then the Yellow River was diverted southward, and entered the sea at *Huai* River. By the time the Yuan Dynasty came to power, the Yellow River had been entering the sea in northern Jiangsu for more than a hundred years, bringing a large amount of sediment, so that the near-shore waters were dyed with a particular yellow colour, hence local people named it *huangshuiyang* (Yellow Sea) (Bi 2015: 108).

The similar history of it is also mentioned in Li Wenwei's "Zhongguo bohai, huanghai, donghai mingcheng ji quhua yange kao" (Examination of the Names and

Zoning Evolution of the Bohai, Yellow, and East China Seas). Her article also traces the history of the name change from *huangshuiyang* to Yellow Sea in the late 19th century, citing the Treaty of Shimonoseki, an unequal treaty signed between the Qing government and Japan in 1895, the 1928 *Jiao'ao Zhi* and the 1936 revised edition of the *New Updated Map of Japan* as a basis. In addition, the exploration of the geographical boundaries of the Yellow Sea is also reflected in her article. (Li 2000: 77-79)

Jianggang Town is located in the east of Dongtai City and close to the Yellow Sea. It borders Nantong City in the South and Dafeng City in the north. There are eight fishing villages in total, and it is one of the essential fishing towns in the coastal area of Northern Jiangsu. As of 2017, there were still more than 7000 marine fishing employees and 556 marine fishing vessels in Jianggang (Dongtai marine fishery company, group interview, December 15 2020).

About the origin of the name Jianggang, the local culture series book *Fankai Jianggang* (Sail in Jianggang) has the following records:

> In the third year of the Reign of Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty (1738), the Mei, Wang, Han and Yang families moved successively here to catch fish and crabs. They built their houses at the high pier between the tides, constructed fences with reeds fixed with harpoons. Over time, local fishermen call this simple "wall" (Pinyin is *Qiang,* second tone) as *Qiang* (dialect, fourth tone, meaning block), and the high pier where the house is built is called *Jiangdunzi.* In the 33rd year of Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty (1768), 103 families settled down here totally. It was about the late Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty, *Jiangdunzi* was opened a hole by the tidal erosion of the sea. With the vigorous development of the fishery, this hole gradually evolved into a lively fishing port, and *Jiangdunzi* was renamed Jianggang (Editorial Board of *Fankai Jianggang* 2011: 125).

Jianggang is not only a famous fishing port in Northern Jiangsu but also has a long history of association with the communist revolution. In October 1940, the New

Fourth Army opened up the Central Jiangsu Anti-Japanese Democratic Base Area, including Dongtai. In September 1941, to win the strategic leeway, the New Fourth Army established the Coastal Defence Regiment of the Central Jiangsu Military Region, stationed in the Jianggang area for a long time. Later, the Coastal Defence Corps developed into a Coastal Defence Column. In 1949, the Chinese People' s Liberation Army officially established the naval force in Taizhou, based on the Coastal Defence Column. Therefore, Jianggang has become the birthplace of new China's maritime armed forces and is also known as the "place of weighing anchor" for the Chinese navy".

Fengli Town is located northwest of Rudong County, bordering on the South Yellow Sea, and is one of the five major fishing market towns in Rudong. Up to 2000, the county had a total fishing population of 16300 people and 2685 fishing boats (Rudong County Party History Work Office Rudong County Local History Compilation Committee Office 2000: 113).

During the reign of *ZhenGuan* (627-649) of the Tang Dynasty, Fengli Town was called *Yanhai* Village. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the Fengli was famous for its salt farm, which was on the top of the ten salt farms in the Huainan area. During the reign of Emperor Qianlong (1736-1796) of the Qing Dynasty, its name changed to Gufeng due to the subject to fewer natural and man-made disasters at this time. In 1929, it was renamed Fengli and continues to this day. From the 1950s and 1970s, the fishing industry in this region flourished, and the spread and popularity of fishermen's *haozi* peaked.

Lüsi Town is located northwest of Qidong City and at the Yangtze River and the Yellow Sea intersection. It is a famous marine fishing town in China, and its eponymous fishing ground ranks as one of the eight largest fishing grounds in China. As of 2005, the total marine fishery population and number of fishing vessels of Qidong City, including Lüsi Town, was 29,832 and 1,446 (Qidong City Local History Compilation Committee 2014: 259).

According to the *Qidong xian zhi* (Records of Qidong County), the origin of the name of Lüsi Town, there have been many different opinions, the more widely recognized one is related to the four arrivals of Lü Dongbin (he is one of the eight immortals in Han folklore), which is mainly based on the existing historical relics related to him such as *dongbin* Building, *chunyang* Bridge and so on in the territory of Lüsi.

At the end of the Tang Dynasty, Yang Xingmi, the envoy of Huainan, found this place as a natural salt production site and stationed his troops here to burn salt. Lüsi was officially set up as an administrative institution Lüsi Chang during the Hsien-Te period of the Later Zhou Dynasty, which is the earliest history of administrative settings that can be traced in the area (Qidong County chronicles Compilation Committee 1993: 94).

The second case-study of Chapter Three is focused on *paifu*; the specific fieldwork sites are the towns of Jianggang, Yancheng and Minqiao, Huai'an (see Map 1.2). Considering *paifu* is a ship-building technique of wooden boats, thus, I will add more information about the wooden boats industry in both towns.



Map1.2 The locations of Jianggang, Minqiao.

As one of the vital fishing towns along the coast of Northern Jiangsu. The wooden fishing boats widely used in modern fisheries production in Jianggang called *sha-type* ships (see Figure 1.1), also known as *fangsha pingdi chuan* (anti-sand flat-bottom ships),[14] and one of the four major types of wooden sailing ships in ancient China. This kind of ship took from the Tang dynasty and was the main ship used in the northern sea area of China. It is mainly suitable for shallow water and more sand. The sand ship has a unique structure, and the flat bottom, square head and square tail are the essential characteristics of its construction.[15] From the 1950s to 1960s, mechanised steel-hulled vessels in the Jiangang area began to be put into use gradually leading wooden sailboats to become progressively obsolete after 1965. According to the statistics of local Marine Fishery Department from 1949 to 1960, the number of wooden sailing boats in Jianggang increased from 115 to 171; from 1960 to 1980, the number of wooden sailing boats decreased sharply to 87; the latest statistics in 2016 were 35 (Marine Fishery Department of Dongtai Rural Agriculture Bureau, group interview, December 14 2020).



Figure1.1 The model of the Sha-type ship.

[14] In addition to the sha-type ship, the other three major ship types are *niao*-type ship, *fu*-type ship and *guang*-type ship, cited from the first paragraph of Pan Junxiang's "Shachuan hangyun shi Shanghai chengshi fazhan de lishi wenmai" (The Sha-type Ship is the Historical Lineage of Shanghai City Development), 2015.

[15] The introduction of the information about the sha-type ship in this paragraph is quoted from the article "Zhongguo mingchuan zhi shachuan" (The famous Chinese ships of the *sha*-type Ship), 2017.

Minqiao is located in the southeastern part of Jinhu County, which is surrounded by three lakes (Lake Baima, Lake Baoying and Lake Gaoyou) from its northeast to its southeast and its west to the east embankment of *Huai* River waterway, which is a typical water township in north Jiangsu Province. As of 2005, 1,065 fishing boats and 1,352 fishermen were in the county (Jinhu County Local Records Compilation Committee 2018: 515). In the Minqiao area, the wooden boats used for fishing were mainly large net boats called *lianghua* by local fishermen before the 1970s. In addition, there were other small wooden boats, such as silkscreen boats, to assist. Since the mid-1990s, fishing tools and boats of fishers in this area have changed significantly, with the rapid reduction of wooden boats used for fishing and the increasing number of motorized sailboats. According to the statistics of local Fishery Department from 1986 to 2005, the number of motorised sailboats was the largest in 2003, which was 2123. Motorised sailboats accounted for the highest percentage in 2004, about 84 per cent (Jinhu County Local Chronicles Compilation Committee 2018: 515).

The third case-study of Chapter Four on Hongze Lake yugu, my specific research locations are the towns of Bancheng, Suqian and Laozishan, Huai'an (see Map 1.3). It is clear that Hongze Lake is its specific water. Hongze Lake is located in the central-western part of the North Jiangsu Plain, in the middle and lower reaches of the *Huai* River, which is an integral part of the *Huai* Riverbed and is also the largest lake-type reservoir in the *Huai* River basin, ranking among the five largest freshwater lakes in China. In her article "Hongzehu de xingcheng yu deming shijian kaoshi" (The Formation of Hongze Lake and the Time of Getting the Name), Zhu Xiaojing discusses in detail the origin of the name of Hongze Lake, pointing out that the name of Hongze was given by Emperor Yang of Sui. Hongze Lake appeared and was officially recorded in the third year of the Tang Dynasty (768 AD) (Zhu 1991:125). As for the process and causes of the formation of Hongze Lake, Zhang Ruihu mentions in his article "Hongzehu de chengyin jiqi shuizai zhili"(Causes of Lake Hongze and its Flood Management) that the Hongze Lake was a product and part of the successive generations of the Yellow River management and conservation project, which evolved over 800 years. Then he further explains the reasons of its formation to geological, hydrological and artificial aspects (Zhang 2012: 73-74).



Map1.3 The locations of Hongze Lake, Bancheng, and Laozishan.

Bancheng Town is located southeast of Sihong County, east of Hongze Lake, with water and land transportation in all directions. The town's total area is 86 square kilometres, of which the water area of Hongze Lake is 60 square kilometres. The ancient name of Bancheng is Xu Cheng, the birthplace of Chinese Xu culture and Chinese Xu surname. During the reign of King Yu of the Xia Dynasty, Bo Yi, because he had been meritorious in assisting the Great Yu to cure the water, his son, Ruomu, was granted the land called Xu, and Bancheng was its capital. In the sixth year of Yuanhao of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty (117 years ago), Linhuai County was set up, and Bancheng was the county seat; in the Three Kingdoms period, it was called Gaoping County, and in the North and South Dynasties, was called Bancheng Town. Since then, the area around Bancheng has been the hinterland of Sizhou. During the Anti-Japanese War, Bancheng was one of the nineteen anti-Japanese democratic bases in China, with rich red history and resources. Bancheng Town has always been one of the fishery production bases in Jiangsu Province. Its economy is mainly based on fishing industry, with seven administrative villages under the town's jurisdiction and a total population of more than 18,000 people. The prominent gathering place of Hongze Lake yugu is Mudun Island in Bancheng, which is located in the southeast of the township and is the largest and only island on Hongze Lake,

with an area of 1.72 square kilometres, and is rumoured to be the hometown of Mu Guiying, a famous general and heroine of the Song Dynasty who fought against the Jin Dynasty. In May 2000, Mudun Island was transferred to the jurisdiction of Bancheng, with six village groups, 540 households and 2,100 people mainly engaged in aquaculture and fishing (Sihong County Local History Compilation Committee 2012: 1030).

Laozishan Town, commonly known as Laozi Mountain, is said to have been thus named name because Laozi practiced alchemy here in the *chunqiu* period. The town is located on the southern border of the county; shipping is developed due to its location at the mouth of the *Huai* River into the lake. It used to be the main transportation hub of the *Huai* River Basin. Historically, Laozi Mountain has been one of the main fish trading markets in the lake area, and the residents are engaged in commerce, fishery, and the production of fishing gear and reed weaving. (Hongze County Local Codification Committee 1999: 56). Relying on its rich historical and cultural background and hot spring resources, Laozishan Town has developed into a distinctive local recreational and ecological town.

1.2 The Origin and Composition of Fishermen

In this section, I will focus on the groups of fishermen who have long lived and produced in these places, tracing their origins and composition. I would like to conduct a certain literature review on the concept of fishermen and the identity characteristics attached to it, and on this basis, derive my understanding and awareness of the fisherfolk subject.

In Daniel S. Holland's article exploring on the risks of fishing for fishermen, he uses the example of New England fishermen to show and argue for the various uncertainties in their fishing decisions, and believes that uncertainty is a defining characteristic of fishermen (Holland 2008: 325-344). The article by Quang Nguyen and PingSun Leung also discusses the issue of fishing risk with the example of Vietnamese fishermen, compared to Holland's article, this article focuses more on the

collective nature of the fishing process of fishermen and points out the dominance of adult males in the fishing group and the inevitability about the inheritance of fishermen's identity in the context of fishing villages. The article describes this specifically as:

> A typical characteristic of Vietnamese fishermen is a strong sense of community. Adult males in fishing villages are fishermen, and fishing is expected to be the main occupation of men in the village. Consequently, men in a fishing village have little occupational freedom (Quang, Leung 2009: 522).

In Ayse K. Uslul, Shinobu Kitayama and Richard E. Nisbett's article on ecological perceptions, they discuss agriculture, fishing and pastoralism, respectively, in the Black Sea region of eastern Turkey. In the description of fishing communities, in addition to showing fishermen's collective nature in fishing labour, the authors also emphasise that fishing labour is often constructed in terms of the family unit (generally the immediate family). The specific descriptions in the text are:

> Fishing, which involves group engagement in the members of fishing communities... we predict that fishing exercised as an activity that requires cooperation will foster interdependence and a cognitive style more similar to that of farmers than to that herders... Ethnographic work in the region suggests that most of the fishing-related tasks are ideally handled within the immediate family. The family-based work on the boat also is the primary context for socialization into fishing and sharing of information. (Uskul, Kitayama, Nisbett 2008: 8553, 8555).

This way of characterising fishermen by comparing them to farmers in the primary sector has also been used in related Chinese articles, which mostly explore the realities of fishermen's situation from a livelihood perspective. For example, in an article co-authored by Tong Chunfen, Zhang Xixi and Huang Yi on the marginalisation of fishermen, the authors point out that:

> Although fishermen belong to farmers in a broad sense, the major difference between the two is that fishermen do not enjoy the right to contract land management and therefore cannot obtain livelihoods from the land, but rely on the waters, which they do not own. Therefore, they do not have a stable livelihood, nor any kind of job security (Tong, Zhang, Huang 2014: 67-68).

Meanwhile, Zhong Jing's article, she addresses the social reality of fishermen as a vulnerable group. The author points out that:

> In comparison with farmers, although they are both engaged in primary industries that highly dependent on nature. However, due to the single nature of the fishery products, which do not meet more of the multifaceted needs of production and livelihood, fishermen are not entirely self-sufficient and do not have a stable source of income. While most of these fishermen are professional fishermen, over-aged and less educated, therefore, they are vulnerable to marginalisation when facing unemployment (Zhong 2003: 19).

In fact, the marginalisation of fishermen is not a recent social issue. Historically, fishermen's up rootedness, hardship and low social status have reflected their normality of their lives. In his article discussing the impression of the bottom edge of fishermen's identity in Tai Lake, Wang Hua not only talks about the difficult situation of fishermen but also points out that the closed lake environment is an important contributing factor for this state of affairs. On the one hand, the isolation of the lake area has led to fishermen being less well-educated overall. On the other hand, it has restricted the communication between land people and fishermen, resulting in the long-term exclusion of fishermen from mainstream society and culture (Wang 2018: 39-41).

In conjunction with the above articles, I, therefore, argue that fishermen and their groups are characterised by:

a. extreme dependence on nature, leading to a high degree of uncertainty in life and production.
b. a life and means of production which is remote, restricted and closed
c. collective, family units, male-dominated.
d. low social status, hovering outside the mainstream.

The above is more about the general image of fishermen. In fact, fishermen can also be subdivided into marine fishermen and freshwater fishermen according to the characteristics of their waters. It is also true that there would be subtle differences between them depending on the waters. As the specific chapters of my thesis deal with both (marine and freshwater fishermen), I would like to expand on the literature that deals with their differences as appropriate in the following.

In the article focusing on Vietnamese fishermen, Quang and Leung cite Nguyen's summary of the differences between marine and freshwater fishermen, namely that freshwater fishing is characterised by simple boats and rudimentary equipment and requires much less capital than marine fishing, which is generally more advanced and expensive boats. In addition to fishing, most fishermen are involved in farming or aquaculture activities to earn additional income for their families (Quang, Leung 2009: 522). This characteristic of near half-farming, half-fishing, one-boat, one-household inner lake (freshwater) fishermen is also mentioned in Kong Weijie's paper "Waihai, neihu yuye shuangchong yingxiangxia de dongqianhu chuantong yucun juluo kongjian yanjiu" (Spatial Research on Traditional Fishing Village Settlements in Dongqian Lake under the Dual Influence of Outer Sea and Inner Lake Fisheries) (Kong 2020: 129). It is shown in the above literatures that freshwater fishers have more livelihood options than marine fishers and a more stable livelihood and invest less in equipment and capital than marine fishers.

In the next section, I will connect to the fishermen in my area and try to trace their origins, based on the characteristics of the fishermen mentioned in the literature above. Fishermen appeared very early in Jiangsu. As one of China's Neolithic archaeological cultures, emerged, developed in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River around the *Tai* Lake area of *liangzhu* culture. Archaeologists not only found

China's prehistoric longest, most complete canoe there, but also unearthed fishing and hunting equipment, fish bones, piles of snails, and mussels, all these can be speculated *liangzhu* culture ancestors have a wealth of experience in fishing. In the Eastern Zhou period, the people southern *Wu-Yue* kingdom (about the entire territory of present-day Zhejiang, south-eastern Jiangsu Province, Shanghai and north-eastern Fujian) became proficient in the use of oars and embarked on more active seafaring activities.[16] "Fishermen", "Fishing People", and other proper nouns have also been commonly seen in historical records within the region concerned, such as *Guanzi - Jincang*, *Wuyue Chunqiu*. In the Ming dynasty, *Hebo* (River and Lake) Office was established as a national institution, fishermen could have a special register there, their identity could also be inherited from generation to generation. The fish tax items levied by the *Hebo* Office to fishermen in the year include fish oil, plume, fish bladder and its converted white hemp, raw and cooked copper and iron and other materials.[17] Similarly, the management of fishermen on the sea was also included in the scope of fishing households registered in the *Hebo* office in the Ming Dynasty,[18] therefore, synthesising all of the above information, it is quite probably that the ancestors of Jiangsu fishermen can be traced back to the Ming Dynasty.

There is such a common saying among fishermen: "chuandi wujiao zou tianxia" (the bottom of the boat has no legs to walk around the world), meaning that fishermen go wherever there are fish. This common saying vividly describes the life normal of fishermen who take the boat as their home and drift around. Coupled with the fact that fishermen, have a low social status and are often outside of the dominant culture, it is therefore complex and challenging to trace the specific origins of the fishermen in a particular region. For marine fishermen in my research area, I did not find clear statistical materials. However, in my fieldwork (see Chapter Two), one of the bearers Lu Jiayou once mentioned that his ancestors migrated from Changmen, Suzhou.

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[16] More information on the oars and navigation of *Wu-Yue* can be found in Lin Huadong's article "Wu-Yue de zhouji yu hanghai" (The Boats and Navigation of *Wu-Yue*), 1988.
[17] Quoted in Yin Lingling's paper "Mingqing Jiangnan de hebosuo yu yuke zashui- yi ningzhen ji Yangzhou diqu weili" (The Hebo Office and Fish Taxes on Fishing in *Ming and Qing* Dynasties in Jiangnan - Taking Ningzhen and Yangzhou Areas as Examples), 2022.
[18] Quoted in Yang Peina paper "Cong 'jianmin rusuo' dao 'yizhou xiren': mingqing Huanan yanhai yumin guanli jizhi de yanbian" (The evolution of the management mechanism of the coastal fishermen in South China in the *Ming and Qing* Dynasties), 2019.

Based on this clue, I checked the relevant materials,[19]which all mentioned keywords such as Migration from Northern Suzhou, Hongwu[20] Expulsion, and searching for roots in Changmen. Although the specific historical parts involved among them are still controversial in academic circles, what is certain is that this large-scale migration was not directed at fishermen but was a regional migration from southern Suzhou to northern Suzhou that took place in the early Ming Dynasty. Changmen is more as a departure and distribution place for migrants from Jiangnan. In terms of the composition of marine fishermen, according to the *Jiangsu haiyang yuye shi* (History of Marine Fisheries in Jiangsu), there are three types of fishermen:

> First, professional fishermen who live on the seashore and are engaged in marine fishing by their grandchildren, which is also the main body of marine fishermen; second, part-time fishermen in coastal villages who fish as a side business, which also occupies a considerable part of them; third, seasonal fishermen who participate in fishing during the fishing season and they would return to home to farm at the end of the season (Jiangsu Provincial Marine Fisheries History Editorial Committee 1989: 85).

Concerning the inner lake fishermen in my research area, and taking Hongze Lake, the more prominent geographical location in the case, as an example. The source of the fishermen in question is described in the *Hongzehu yuye shi* (Hongze Lake Fishery History), namely:

> Fishermen mainly came from Su, Lu and Anhui provinces, with the most significant number of fishermen in southern Lu, northern Anhui and northern Su, followed by eastern Henan as well as Zhejiang, Gan, E and

[19] Including Chen Qidi's article "Changmen Hongwu gansanzhe de dahuaishu" (Changmen, The Big Sophora Tree of Hongwu Dispersers), 2011; Gu Xiaoping's article "Cong 'hongwu gansan' dao 'changmen xungen'" (From "Hongwu expulsion" to "Seeking Roots" in Changmen), 2022; Ge Jianxiong's article " 'Suzhou changmen'- subei yimin de gen" ("Suzhou Changmen"-The Roots of Immigrants in Northern Jiangsu), 2022.

[20] Hongwu (January 23, 1368 - 1398) was the year of the reign of Zhu Yuanzhang, the first Ming emperor, and the first year of the Ming dynasty.

> even north-eastern areas (Compilation Committee of Hongze Lake Fishery History 1990: 81).

And another local history book, *Hongzehu zhi* (Hongze Lake Records), describes in detail the division of fishermen's specific jobs:

> The fishermen of Hongze Lake are divided into professional and part-time fishermen. The latter one is semi-agricultural and semi-fishermen. Before the late Qing Dynasty, Hongze Lake had been a natural economic zone with shallow water, abundant grass and aquatic products, and fishermen on the water made a living by fishing all year round. Every year in autumn and winter, thousands of farmers from the lake area or abroad come to Hongze Lake to cut grass and catch fish, harvesting rhizomes. In the year of famine, more than 100,000 and 200,000 people were living on the lake. Therefore, the fishermen who have lived on the lake for a long time mostly wander and live by water and grass (Compilation Committee of Hongze Lake Records 2003: 555).

1.3 Fishermen's life and their Revolutionary History

As a supplement to the previous part in terms of real-life materials, in this part I will present a fuller picture of the fishermen's lives through local history, especially by means of the form of local ballads, and their contributions during the Revolutionary War years.

The *Jiangsusheng yuyeshi* (History of the Fisheries in Jiangsu Province), gives the following general description of the life of fishermen in the olden days:

> In the old society many fishermen were converted from peasants fleeing from bankruptcy, thus they still belonged to the peasant class, but were the most distressed and destitute. People discriminated against them and called them *yuhuazi,* and their social status was similar to beggars. They

had to fight against the winds and waves, drifting around without a fixed place to live; at the same time, they had to be exploited and plundered by fishermen, shipowners, officials, and bandits (Jiangsu Fisheries Bureau History Office 1993: 145-146).

During my fieldwork, I found many descriptions of fishermen's lives, which were also widely recorded and disseminated through the form of ballads in relevant regions. The folk ballads are the folk rhymes, which are collectively composed, sung or recited by the working people and passed down by word of mouth, and which reflect the people's lives, thoughts and feelings more truly and directly.

Here, I choose two representative ballads, the first one is about coastal fishermen, originated from the Lüsi area in Qidong. According to the *Jiangsu haiyang yuyeshi* (History of Marine Fisheries in Jiangsu), there was a fishermen's ballad called "*Kushui yao*" (The Ballad of Bitter Water), widely spread in the area, the details of which are as follows,

Jiu shehui, ku yucun, yumin kuchu shuobujin.
Shaodeshi nituzao,[21] zhudeshi gunlongting.[22]
Chaotiankun, mantianxing, fengsaodi, yuediandeng.
Chuanjian bushan mei beixin, yitiao kuzi jiutiaojin,
Toushang maozi kaihuangding, jiaoshang xiezi meihougen.
Lüsiyumin haoshangxin.
(Jiangsu Provincial Marine Fisheries History Editorial Committee 1989: 92)

旧社会，苦渔村，渔民苦楚说不尽。
烧的是泥涂灶，住的是'滚龙厅'。
朝天睏，满天星，风扫地，月点灯。
穿件布衫没背心，一条裤子九条筋，

[21] Nituzao refers to the stove made of straw and mud.
[22] Gunlongting refers to the house in which fishermen live. This kind of house uses bamboo or reeds to build the frame, then the roof is laid with thatch to form a shack, and finally, a grass curtain is hung as a door. Most houses are only one meter high, and people must bend to enter the room. The beds in the house are also just floor beds made of straw and broken cotton wool.

头上帽子开花顶，脚上鞋子没后跟，
吕四渔民好伤心。

Translation of the text:
In the old days, life in the fishing village was bitter and hard, and the fishermen suffered endlessly. The stove they used was made of mud, and the shed they lived in was called *gunlongting*. They are busy from morning to night, tired of not being able to open their eyes. They wore tattered clothes and shoes, hats with broken tops, and felt very sad.

Through a series of figurative descriptions, this ballad captures the extremely difficult life of the fishermen in Lüsi at that time, which also represents to a certain extent the living conditions of most fishermen near the sea. Due to the poor internal and external environment and backward production, which led to the economic ruin of the fishing village, the fishermen had no inclination or ability to send their children to school. On the seashore, boys would generally follow their fathers to the sea around the age of seven, while girls would start learning to weave nets at the same age, therefore, the majority of fishermen living in those days were illiterate, and had a simple life with a closed mind, trusting and relying much on the gods during their life and production.

The second one is about lake fishermen, who hail from the Hongze Lake area. According to the *Hongzehu yuyeshi* (Hongze Lake Fishery History), there was an untitled fishing ballad circulating in the area, which reads,

Yitiao xiaochuan bachichang, zusun sandai zhuyicang.
Yusibubiyan, wanggan qianyeliao.
Yumin toushang sanbadao, yuba, dizhu jia fengbao.
Chuanzai huxin pa fenglang, chuangdao matou pa liumang.
Chuankao shantou pa shanhu, chuankao anbian pa dizhu.
Kuangdao dayu shangjie mai, kuangdao xiaoyu ao xiancai.
Manhu yuxia, manhu feiba.
(Compilation Committee of Hongze Lake Fishery History 1990: 74)

一条小船八尺长，祖孙三代住一舱。
鱼死不闭眼，网干钱也了。
渔民头上三把刀，渔霸、地主加风暴。
船在湖心怕风浪，船到码头怕流氓。
船靠山头怕山虎，船靠岸边怕地主，
匡到大鱼上街卖，匡到小雨熬咸菜。
满湖鱼虾，满湖匪霸。

Translation of the text:
A small eight-foot-long boat, three generations of grandchildren live in a cabin. Fishermen always need to make sure they catch the freshest fish. Three “mountains” are pressed on fishermen: the fishing hegemon, the landlord and the storm. The boat sailed to the centre of the lake, fearing the wind and waves; the boat stopped at the pier for fear of encountering hooligans and docked at the shore for fear of encountering landlords. They catch big fish and take them to the street to sell, and catch small fish and take them home to eat. The lake is full of fish and shrimp and bandits and bullies.

Unlike the former one, which focuses on the details of the fishermen’s life, this lake-area ballad reveals more about the external factors that lead to the hardships of the fishermen. The boat described in the song, in which three generations of grandchildren live together, is locally known as the *lianjia* fishing boat, meaning it is both a houseboat and a fishing boat. Most local fishermen are family-oriented; usually, only one such boat is owned by a family. This challenging living environment has made the lake fishermen form fish gangs over the long history to coordinate their operations and get more catches. The *Hongzehu zhi* (Hongze Lake Records) has a more detailed explanation of the fish gangs mentioned above:

This kind of fish gang is neither an administrative organization nor a faction system, but a mutual co-op organisation of fishermen in the production work, according to different fishing gears, fishing methods, their own economic situation and the kind of tools they occupy; each gang

> has to work fluidly when fishing. There are times when they become a gang, and other times when they are scattered. Therefore, the production life of fishermen in the lake area is more mobile and flexible than that of coastal fishermen (Compilation Committee of Hongze Lake Records 2003: 75).

After founding New China, the government abolished exploitation, cleared banditry, and fully called on and supported fishermen to concentrate on developing production. The fishermen's lives have improved dramatically since then. According to the *Jiangsusheng yuyeshi* (History of Fisheries in Jiangsu Province):

> In the late 1960s, fishermen in the province gradually turned to land-based settlements, establishing production bases and developing a collaborative economy. After the 1980s, the state the adjustment of aquatic products purchase and sale policy based on the summary of advanced experience. The policy made fishermen more consciously accept and implement the integrated management of fishing, breeding, planting and processing. At this time, the fishing village economy has grown rapidly, fishermen's life has also been more substantial improvement (Jiangsu Fisheries Bureau History Office 1991: 148).

About fishermen's revolutionary history, firstly, the revolutionary war here refers mainly to the War of Resistance against Japan and the War of Liberation. This history is singled out in this part is not only because of the glorious revolutionary tradition of the fishermen in Jiangsu but also because more than half of the areas in my fieldwork have served as critical revolutionary bases. The fishermen in these areas, under the unified leadership of the Party, took advantage of their characteristics of water activities, fought the enemy bravely and wisely, and contributed greatly to the ultimate victory of the revolutionary cause. It is also because of this special red history that fishermen's life and culture have more official records and be seen and understood by the public.

Contribution of Coastal Fishermen in the Revolution:

Dongtai, Rudong and other areas involved in my project belonged to the maritime anti-Japanese base in anti-Japanese base in Central Jiangsu during the Anti-Japanese War.[23] The establishment of this base played an essential role for marine fishermen to assist the main force in carrying out maritime transportation, breaking the blockade, escorting the wounded, transporting troops, and ensuring the supply of military supplies for the New Fourth Army. The Jianggang in the area (one of my fieldwork sites) is even used as one of the main entrances and exits to the base. In August 1941, our army also established a maritime armed force, the New Fourth Army Central Jiangsu Military District Sea Defence Corps, centred on the Jianggang, which greatly held back the Japanese aggression in active cooperation with local fishermen. During the Liberation War, the region mobilised and organised over 1,000 fishing boats to build bridges for the PLA to cross the river, significantly contributing to our battle attack and strategic transfer.[24]

Contribution of Lake Fishermen in the Revolution:

In May 1940, the main force of the Sixth Branch of the New Fourth Army came to Hongze Lake. It established Hongze County, and since then, the Hongze Lake area has become a critical post-enemy anti-Japanese base. The lake fishermen also fully mobilised their enthusiasm and participated in their own way. They set up a self-defence team, using the steel plate on the bow of the boat as a cover to attack the enemy on the lake; and inserted wooden stakes at the forks of the rivers, throwing straw to hinder the enemy's boat advance; they also formed a wild duck gun team based on the fishermen gunners who usually hunted wild ducks, to fight the enemy.[25] All these actions strongly complemented the main force, protected the production in the lake area, and further consolidated the revolutionary base in the lake area. In terms

[23] The reason why Jianggang was chosen to establish a maritime anti-Japanese base in Jianggang was explained by Gan Ning in his article "Langzhan shiqi zhonggong haishang dihou youji zhanchang de kaipi yu douzheng — yi suzhong kangri genjudi 'tu haijun' weizhongxin de kaocha" (CPC's Establishment of and Struggles on the Maritime Guerrilla Battlefield behind the Enemy Lines in the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression: An Investigation Focused on the Offshore Force of Anti- Japanese Base Area in Central Jiangsu), 2021.

[24] The data comes from *Jiangsu yuyeshi* (History of Fisheries in Jiangsu Province), 1993.

[25] More historical details about the duck gun team are contained in Zhou shougao and Wu yaru's article "Hongzehu 'yaqiang dui' shuishang kangri xie chuanqi" (Hongze Lake "Duck Gun Team" Water Anti-Japanese Legend), 2022.

of logistical support, Hongze Lake made full use of its own resource advantages, exchanging local fishery and agricultural products for strategic supplies to be sent to the front. The full support and important role of Hongze Lake for the ultimate victory of the revolutionary war was revealed in a couplet given by Li Yilu, who was the Secretary-General of the New Fourth Army and Secretary of the Southeast Branch of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, to Xie Nan, the then governor of Hongze County: *yihuheqian weishengji, banbijaingshan laizhuchi* (a lake of *heqian* maintains the livelihoods and supports half of the country).[26] During the Liberation War, the Party, government, military and people in the Hongze Lake area bravely persisted in the local struggle, not only crushing many large-scale enemy sieges but also overcoming an unprecedented severe disaster during the period and strongly cooperating with and supporting the main forces in the war, making a significant contribution to the victory of the Liberation War.

1.4 Fishermen's Culture and Jiangsu Intangible Cultural Heritage Preservation

Although the material life of fishermen is relatively weak and difficult, they also produced a rich culture. These cultures are simple but powerful, niche but significant, and also disappearing quietly in the face of technological change and rapid development. While the concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage preservation is spreading in China, this group of people living in fishing villages is also working hard to record and continue their culture. In this section, I will review and synthesise the meaning of fishermen's culture starting from the concept of culture, and based on this, I will offer an understanding of fishermen's culture in relation to my research. In addition, I will also introduce the specific measures and achievements in the protection of ICH in the region I studied in recent years.

[26] "he" means lotus and "qian" means a kind of aquatic plant.

The term culture is complex, all-encompassing, and involves multiple fields and disciplines. Conscious of this, in what follows, I will provide a brief overview of this concept by only listing some representative views from home and abroad to give a preparation for a better understanding of fisherfolk culture.

The word "culture" in Chinese is made up of two single characters, "wen" (文) and "hua" (化). They appeared as separate characters back in the hieroglyphic period. The character *wen* is shaped like a person with a tattoo, hence its original meaning of texture and pattern, which was later extended to mean symbol. The character *hua* is like two people facing each other, so its original meaning is to influence each other and become one, and later it is derived to mean change and teaching. The combination of *wen* and *hua* can be traced back to the book of *Yi*, where the original Chinese text reads:

刚柔交错，天文也。文明以止，人文也。关乎天文，以察时变；关乎人文，以化成天下。

In this phrase, "天文" *tianwen* is contrasted with "人文" *renwen. Tianwen* refers to the natural law, while *renwen* is the social and human relations. The phrase means that by observing and analysing the various contradictory movements of nature and grasping their laws of change, while based on in-depth observation and study of human beings and the unique civilization that they have created to promote the sharing of these achievements by all people, thus ensuring that human beings and their society move forward along the right path. The culture in the sentence comes from the process that "人文化成". Clearly, culture is the essence of humanities and a dynamic process of education and influence. In the history of ancient Chinese thought, many other expressions link culture and edification, and Wang Zhenjun lists some in his article "Wenhua chuangxin yu wenhua zijue" (Cultural Innovation and Cultural Self-awareness), such as Liu Xiang's *Shuoyuan* in the Han Dynasty, Suzan's *Bu Wang Poems* in the Jin Dynasty, and Wang Rong's *Qu Shui* Poems in the Southern Qi Dynasty (Wang 2011: 23). Thus, culture in the traditional Chinese context seems to me to be an inner and soft force which serves to educate, regulate,

inculcate, and cultivate human thought and speech in line with the natural law and humanistic ways.

Since the modern era, the concepts of culture in the Western context were introduced into China successively, and the term culture began to undergo a process of localized integration and development. In his article on “Rang ‘shehui’ you ‘wenhua’” (Making Society Cultured), Zhang Xiaojun, a professor in the Department of Sociology at Tsinghua University, focuses on several directions in which Western cultural concepts developed during this period in the process of localization in China, including culture and civilization; the material/spiritual life of culture; the nation-state; and culture as a discipline. As such, the fishermen's culture in my study is closer to the direction of the material/spiritual life of the culture that he has summarised. In this perspective, he lists and cites the interpretations of culture by the American anthropologist Boas, the British social anthropologist Malinowski, the promoter of the new Chinese culture Liang Qichao, the contemporary Chinese sociologist Fei Xiaotong, and the contemporary Chinese historian Qian Mu (Zhang 2021: 48-50). In my view, despite these scholars having different interpretations, they all provide a similar definition of culture as a way of life developed by people in the process of adapting to a certain environment. Culture, as they see it is continuous and dynamic, and it retains both a substantial material vehicle and rich abstract spiritual expressions.

Based on the above meanings of culture, I associate it with fishermen’s culture. What is the fishermen’s culture? Is it sufficient to simply specify the subject as fishermen? What are the material and spiritual manifestations of fishermen’s culture?

In the process of conducting the review, I found that another phrase, fishing culture, is used more frequently in the domestic academic community than the phrase fishermen’s culture. Depending on the different interpretations of the word *yu* (fishing), fishing culture can be broadly divided into two categories.

One definition tends to be based on the substantial fishery activities, and a frequently related cited definition is from Ningbo’s description in “Shilun yu wenhua,

yu wenhua yu xiuxian yuye" (An Experimental Study of Fishing Culture, Fish Culture and Leisure Fisheries), which reads:

> In a broad sense, fishing culture refers to the various tangible and intangible relationships and outcomes created by human fishing activities with economic aquatic organisms, between humans and fisheries, and between humans and people. In a narrow sense, it is the sum of the spiritual wealth created by human beings in their fishing activities (Ning 2010: 25).

Another type of definition tends to understand fishing as a historical and cultural achievement related to fish and fishing, and a frequently related cited definition is from the article "Lun danshui yu wenhua de kaifa jidui chanye de cujin zuoyong" (On the Development of Freshwater Fishing Culture and Its Promotion of Industry), co-authored by Jin Zhangchao, Yu Jiale, Chen Xing, and Guo Jianlin, that:

> Fishing culture refers to the material and spiritual achievements made by working people during their long-term fishing production activities, including the history of the origin and development of fishing It includes the history of the origin and development of fishing, various fishing tools and methods from different eras, fossils of fish, fishing boats, fishing gear and fishing village sites, articles, poems, paintings and calligraphy about fishing, fishing villages and fishermen, historical allusions and legends about fishing and fishermen's lives (Jin, Yu, Chen and Guo 2008: 56).

Obviously, my research on fishermen's culture is closer to the first understanding of fishing culture. However, the difference is that the subjects in my research are explicitly groups of fishermen rather than just people involved in fishing activities, and the latter can cover a significantly more extensive range than the former. Thus, the fishermen's culture I research is a variety of material and immaterial relationships and achievements created by the fishermen's life and production in their long-term adaptation to the waterside environment, which is comprehensive, dynamic, and evolving. Its materiality is mainly reflected in the

fishermen's architecture and costumes, the fishing gear and boats they use, which are the material carriers, while its immateriality is mainly reflected in the abstract expressions of the fishermen's customs, arts and beliefs. This leads me to ask: what are the common features of such a culture, which is closely related to the productive life of a particular group? Combined with the characteristics of fishermen summarised in the previous section, the characteristics of fishermen's culture are their reliance on material carriers; confrontation with nature; content over form, emphasis on practical utility; collaborative atmosphere; with family characters; male dominance; closed and marginal. There features will be considered in more detail in specific chapters later.

The concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and its development that was discussed in the Introduction needs revisiting. The safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage here refers to more about introducing the specific measures taken by ICH safeguarding in Jiangsu and their results, which also provide contextual additions to the ICH projects in my paragraphs later.

Jiangsu is a major cultural province, and also a vast province of Intangible Cultural Heritage. It has always been at the forefront of the country. In July 2004, Jiangsu comprehensively launched the protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage; in January 2005, it took the lead in launching the local related legislation on the protection of it, and in September 2006, it passed the *Jiangsusheng feiwuzhi wenhua baohu tiaoli* (Regulations on Intangible Culture in Jiangsu Province). In the same year, the province actively mapped out a total of 28,922 Intangible Cultural Heritage resources, of which 11 items, such as *Kunqu*, *Guqin* and Chinese paper-cutting, were selected as UNESCO's *Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. Jiangsu has also taken the lead in formulating relevant rules on the identification of inheritors, namely, the *Jiangsusheng feiwuzhi wenhua yichan daibiaoxing chuanchengren mingming yu zizhu zanxing banfa* (Interim Measures for the Naming and Financing of Representative Inheritors of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Jiangsu Province), which was formulated in 2006. Since the Ministry of Culture announced the first batch of representative inheritors of national Intangible Cultural Heritage projects in 2007, a total of 178 people have been selected in Jiangsu. In terms of the construction of inheritance carriers, up to now, Jiangsu has

built a total of 50 national and provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage project inheritance bases and productive protection bases; 14 research bases in higher education institutions in the province; 10 training institutes; and a total of 583 exhibition halls, training centres and workshops. Since 2011, Jiangsu has implemented the construction project of provincial cultural ecological protection experimental zones, 10 provincial cultural ecological protection experimental zones have been built in four batches, and the declaration of the fifth batch was launched in December 2022. Jiangsu has also actively promoted the organic combination of the protection and inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the construction of the Grand Canal National Cultural Park and the Yangtze River National Cultural Park. All these efforts have played important roles in promoting the overall protection and inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the province.

Conclusion

My doctoral dissertation focuses on the development path of fishermen's culture in the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage in northern Jiangsu, China. Therefore, in this chapter, I focus on keywords such as Jiangsu, fishermen, fishermen's culture, and Intangible Cultural Heritage. I first summarize the relevant geographical, historical, and humanistic knowledge of Jiangsu Province above the geographical concept of northern Jiangsu. I then organize and summarize the relevant background of the six counties and districts involved in the three projects targeted for discussion later in the thesis. In addition to the general information, I also add background information and data on fishermen and fishing boats collected during the fieldwork. In the section on fishermen, in addition to organizing and summarizing my understanding and knowledge of the characteristics of fishermen's identities using the literature review, I also combine the interviews conducted in the field to trace the identities and compositions of fishermen in the areas relevant to this. In the section describing the fishermen's lives, I cite many historical regional records and folk songs. Considering the close connection between the fishermen in my project area and the Revolutionary War, this characteristic continues to influence the development and vitality of these projects. In this part, I have focus on tracing the contributions and achievements of

fishermen in the region during the Revolutionary War years. Finally, I also discuss the substantial contents of the fishermen's culture and summarize and organize the policies, regulations, and actions related to ICH in Jiangsu Province. All of the contents provide adequate background information and a solid foundation for the discussion of specific projects and groups in later chapters.

CHAPTER 2

Fishermen's *Haozi*: From Labour to Music Performance

Introduction

For thousands of years, fishermen's *haozi* have been formed, developed and fully utilized in various scenes of fishermen's work, becoming the necessary skills and means to support fishermen's life, production and survival. Therefore, in-depth exploration and understanding of fishermen's *haozi*, mainly focusing on its survival and development of in the context of the new era of ICH, is essential to entering, understanding and analysing fishermen's culture.

The *haozi* is one of the earliest and oldest varieties of work songs in human culture, most directly reflecting people's needs and most urgently meeting their needs in the present.[27] In China, its records could trace earlier back to the ancient Chinese

[27] This chapter explores about the *haozi,* which is one of the three major genres of Chinese folk songs along with *xiaodiao* and *shange* (mountain songs). Among them, the *haozi* is closely related to labour, belongs to the work song with both artistry and practicality. However, the work songs in China are not limited to one genre of *haozi*, but are also widely grouped in different genres.

text *Huainanzi*,[28] the original text in Chinese as "今夫举大木者，前呼邪许，后亦应之，此举重劝力之歌也" (Gu 2009: 192). The phrase describes the scene of people singing in response to each other while carrying a large log, where the *Yahu* (邪许) is what they are singing, and also the plain and simple form of *haozi* in the budding stage. In his collection of essays,[29] the writer Lu Xun, who was born in the late 19th century, also mentions the same scene of people singing a call-and-response while carrying a log though in his work, he gives a more vivid description of *haozi*. The original text tells of primitive people (ancestors), who initially did not even speak but who had to work together, as a result of which they learned to express their views, and gradually developed a complex voice. Suppose they were lifting wood together and felt the strain, and one shouted "*Hang-yu Hang-yu*" then this was the creation (Lu 1981: 93). The music theorist Jiang Mingdun directly interpreted the *Hang-yu Hang-yu* part as the earliest language, literature, and form of *haozi* (Jiang 2004: 29-30).

Whether it is *Huainanzi*, Lu Xun or Jiang's interpretation, in their descriptions, I find some common features of the *haozi* in its initial stage, namely physicality, function, and creativity. Physicality refers to the nature of the *haozi* as a human sound; a sound which originates from the natural physiological reaction of a person who is undertaking manual labour. At this stage, the *haozi* has almost no structure, it is so simple as it is only composed of a single word or a few words without any tone. The *haozi* gradually evolved, and even people were able to do some creations. The creation (in *haozi*) refers to any words or tones people could choose and match freely according to their different cultural backgrounds, it also emerged as a form of call-and-response. People used these words, tones, and the form of call-and-response to regulate the atmosphere, release stress, improve familial bonds, and merely for entertainment purposes.

Because of its good balance between practicality and artistry and its inclusiveness toward any kind of participant and any kind of musical materials, *haozi* rapidly gained popularity and acceptance among a wide range of groups working in different types of manual labour. As one of China's most ancient and representative folk music traditions, it naturally attracts music scholars from diverse backgrounds

[28] It was written by Liu An, the King of Huainan in the Western Han Dynasty, and his staff of scholars, before 139 BCE.
[29] This work was written in 1934.

who wish to study it extensively and through in-depth scholarly research. In what follows, I will first examine definitions of *haozi* that I have found and collected from some representative academic works.

Jiang Mingdun, the music theorist mentioned before, in his book *Hanzu min'ge gailun* (An Introduction to Han Folk Songs), defined the *haozi*:

> As a folk song composed and sung by laborers throughout production. As mentioned earlier, *haozi* is inextricably linked to labour. It is formed from and actively serves work. Its music is concise, straightforward, forceful, brave, and heroic. Its musical rhythms are inextricably linked to its labour origins and usage, as such, it is a straightforward depiction of labourers' thoughts and mental images (Jiang 2004: 29).

Miao Jing, one of the proponents of the idea of Han folk songs' colour division,[30] in her book *Hanzu min'ge xuanlülun* (Melody Theory of Han Folk Songs) offers a description of *haozi* as follows:

> *Haozi* is the most primitive kind of folk song. Once it was created, it had relative independence and its own aesthetic value, arousing people's interest in the sound and encouraging them to make it more beautiful and melodious, thus gradually leading to the development of, and production of, various forms of folk songs. Since the *haozi* is a product of labour, its singing form is also determined by the rhythm of labour. Unlike other folk songs, it is directly related to labour production, and has become an indispensable partner of people who work as manual labourers. When people sing *haozi*, the first thing they consider is not the beautiful melody, but how the music might best fit in with their movements, and how they

[30] The most representative work on the division of musical colour zone is *Lun hanzu min'ge jinsi secaiqu de huafen* (On the Division of Han Folk Songs' Approximate Colour Zones) written by Miao Jing and Qiao Jianzhong in 1987. They divided Han folk songs into ten approximate colour zones and one special zone based on various bases such as the geographical background of Han folk song distribution, the ancient cultural background of folk song production, the linguistic background and social background of folk song distribution areas, as well as Han population changes and folk song dissemination. They also define the colour zones as the areas where folk songs have the main common characteristics in terms of musical styles.

might encourage themselves, and others to move along with it (Miao 2002: 143).

Although Jiang and Miao point out that the *haozi* has independence and aesthetic value leading it to inspire other folk songs, most of their content still emphasizes the close connection between the *haozi* and manual labour. Mindful of that fact, such definitions also create a potential tendency in readers to overvalue (or at the very least prioritize) functionality of the *haozi* over its artistry and expressiveness. In my opinion, no matter what stage of development the *haozi* is in, even if it is initially only in the form of a single word, accompanied by shouting, it is still an expression of will and emotion. Its functionality and aesthetics are intertwined. In addition, in terms of the context in which *haozi* is used, the inseparability of *haozi* from the labour scene is accurate and reasonable, considering the era in which Jiang and Miao lived. However, with the progress of science and technology, many physical labourers have been gradually replaced by machines, and the trade has - as a result of this urbanization – all but disappeared. Nowadays, more and more people from non-labour habitats have also performed *haozi* - as such, its audience has further diversified. Therefore, in the context of the new period, I think the above definitions have some limitations and should be supplemented with the latest changes and developments of *haozi* in the modern context.

In his paper "Folk Songs of the Han Chinese: Characteristics and Classifications", Chinese-born American ethnomusicologist Han Kuo-Huang summarizes the essential contents of *haozi* as:

> Crying or shouting, labour-related origins, the function of accompanying or alleviating hardships associated with employment, powerful rhythms, and core rhythmic patterns, sparse melodic content, typical manners of performance, like solo, unison, duet, and call-and-response (Han 1989: 113).

Compared to Jiang and Miao's definitions, in my opinion, Han's definition aligns with his outsider identity, which is more image-focused and direct, his description of *haozi* as a form of music offers a welcome corrective to the older

emphases on *haozi*'s labour functions. In addition to Han's general definition of the *haozi*, for the specific region of Jiangsu, both the Dutch sinologist Antoinet Schimmelpenninck and the Chinese scholar Pu Hengqiang offer their own descriptions and definitions of the region's *haozi* in their respective scholarly works. Antoinet Schimmelpenninck, in her study of *Mountain Songs in the South Jiangsu area of China*, describes:

> *Haozi* was as a short cry such as '*heiya ho*', uttered loudly while lifting a weight or pulling a rope. Rhythmic cries in the antiphonal form are exchanged between groups of singers (Schimmelpenninck 1997: 17-18).

Pu Hengqiang, in his book *Jiangsu diyu yinyue wenhua* (*Jiangsu Regional Music Culture*), describes the *haozi* as follows:

> Its structure is brief and regular, and the majority of them employ a unique 2/4 rhythm. Both music and labour have a steady beat and a brilliant, forceful nature. In the *haozi* tune, characterized by a single leader and many followers, the leader sings the words in a high pitch with a varied melody and a fluid rhythm. And the bass portion sings additional lining words in a calm and forceful tone, repeating the melody and maintaining the material rhythm (Pu 2014: 126).

Synthesizing the descriptions of the above scholars, we see how they all emphasize the following characteristics in *haozi*: a. it used in collaborative work, b. it is a way of expressing an emotion, c. it has a specific rhythmic identity that is concise and direct.

As this chapter's title "Fishermen's *Haozi*" implies the *haozi* is used by fishermen in their productive labour environment in the eastern coastal area of northern Jiangsu Province. By combining other scholars' definitions of *haozi* with my fieldwork and understanding, I put forward my own definition of fishermen's *haozi* in this chapter, as an indispensable aid for fishers in the labour process in the eastern coastal area of northern Jiangsu province. With catchy melodies, lively rhythms, fixed structures, and forms, it is an essential outlet for fishermen in this region to express

their aspirations and reflect their collective strength in their long and tedious life at sea. In modern times, more and more people know and hear *haozi* from these musical and performance-based activities. It has gradually transformed into popular entertainment for fishers who use this particular folk song to display their identity and highlight their unique cultural characteristics.

In the next section, I will focus on introducing the main content of this Chapter. The three cases selected in this chapter are all from the representative Intangible Cultural Heritage projects list in Jiangsu Province, and are also the only three projects that focus on fishermen's *haozi* by the sea in this area. Among them, Fengli fishermen's *haozi* is a municipal representative project of Intangible Cultural Heritage, while Jianggang and Lüsi fishermen's *haozi* are provincial representative projects of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The fishermen's *haozi* in all three places have transformed from their manual labour origins, to musical performance in the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage. They all have the inheritors recognized by the official with the same responsibilities and have "ostensibly" presented the same results of inheritance under the guidance of unified government intervention. When I approached them in the field, although each shares the identity of an inheritor and carries out the same inheritance measures, I found they hold and present very different inheritance attitudes. These attitudes impact the inheritance projects they carry out, including that on *haozi*, and so will shape what is passed on and to whom in the future.

The core of this chapter is to reveal these inheritors' real self-identity perceptions before the title of inheritor I observed in the fields. I will show in detail and objectively the different outcomes caused by these self- identity perceptions. Specifically, I will start by presenting the basic historical and geographical backgrounds of the three locations, especially briefly describing the fishermen and fishing villages there. Then, in each example, I will delve deeper into the stories of the inheriting subjects (individuals/groups) to demonstrate in detail how they learned, disseminated, and inherited fishermen's *haozi*, which I will pay special attention to, before exploring how the people and events that had the most significant impact on the establishment and formation of their self-identity. In what follows I will examine a selection of scores collected and recorded from relevant publications and live

performances by the inheritors, before undertaking a musical analysis of them to demonstrate their unique appeal as musical performances. Finally, I will comprehensively analyse the different influences and effects on the results of the inheritance subjects led by their own identity perceptions, based on the results of the presentation of the vitality of the fishermen's *haozi* in each case in the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

2.1 Fengli Fishermen's *Haozi*

The two main inheritors, Chen Yonglong and Sang Nailin in Fengli fishermen's *haozi*, have been professional fishermen for a long time, they know and are good at singing these *haozi* above mentioned. Fengli fishermen's *haozi* became Nantong's third batch of representative Intangible Cultural Heritage projects in 2014. In 2017, Chen and Sang were chosen as the representative inheritors of this project at the municipal level (Nantong). In the next part, I will introduce their stories.

2.1.1 From Fishermen to the Inheritors

The first inheritor is Chen Yonglong, he was born in 1948 in the village of Huanyü in Fengli, Rudong. I still remember the day I visited him. After a few phone calls confirmed by the enthusiastic curator Geng, who worked in the local cultural museum, we immediately decided to set off from the county. Chen's house is located in a remote fishing village, and most of the roads to his house have no names; it is difficult to find it by navigation alone, so the local cultural centre assigned a staff member to accompany us and show us the way. After about an hour's drive, we came to a fork in the road close to the sea; what caught my eye were three or four rows of dozens of neatly arranged, little old-fashioned two-story buildings. The road to the buildings was so narrow that the driver had to stop the car at the junction. We got out and walked for a few minutes until we came to a house with white walls and grey tiles. A short, sturdy man, who looked to be in his 70s with dark skin, was waiting at the entrance of the small courtyard. He was dressed in the extremely common

costume of a fisherman - navy blue overalls and a pair of camouflage shoes. When he saw us, he greeted us warmly, shook hands, and gestured for us to sit inside. From the moment we left the courtyard door until we reached the house, Chen was nothing but warm and friendly.

I looked around and found his home to contain the most common architecture for a house situated in the fishing village. The high roof makes the space look large; the white and green patchwork walls are somewhat mottled, and the yellow diamond-shaped tiles on the floor are slightly faded. There are some simple pieces of furniture inside: a lacquered table with a couple of wooden benches aside, a brown double-door cupboard set in the corner, simple hooks made of wooden strips and iron nails on the doorway wall, leftover lunch under a plastic cover fastened to the table, and various things cluttering up the side of the plastic cover. Maybe because of its proximity to the sea, or perhaps because of the dimly lit interiors, somehow, I felt a little cold and sad.

Chen sat across from me; he said with some emotion that we were the first visitors he had had since becoming the inheritor of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Since his wife passed away, the house had not been this lively for a long time. Throughout the interview, Chen was all smiles. He was sincere, unpretentious, and quite like the elderly neighbours I often encountered in front of my house.

Maybe it's because he hardly ever conducts such formal interviews and questions, I could often sense his nervousness and unease. To break the scene's awkwardness and to help familiarize him with the situation, I suggested he sing some of the fishermen's *haozi* he uses in his work. Perhaps returning to the identity of the fisherman he was most familiar with, Chen Yonglong, although a little shy, cleared his throat and spoke, "Ok, I will sing then"(Chen Yonglong, 8 May 2019).

He sang the *lalansheng haozi*. Unlike the clear, high-pitched sound produced by many professional singers who sing *haozi*, Chen's voice was thick and raspy, especially at every start note, where he would make a sound similar to clear phlegm. However, when he sang in the middle part, his voice would change to full and round, supported by solid and long breathing. Although sitting across from him, some distance away from him, I was still struck by the volume of his voice. It seemed extraordinarily life-like in this high-ceilinged and empty room. After the song, those present applauded enthusiastically, and Chen waved his hand shyly. The tension was

instantly relieved; Chen calmed down and began telling me about his fishing experiences:

> My family has been fishermen for at least three generations; most of them have been captains. I got on board very early, about 8 or 9 years old, and there was no one to teach me *haozi*; I learned it naturally by boat. At that time, the giant boat could carry 18 or 19 people. Every time we worked on the boat, we sang *haozi* together (Chen Yonglong, personal interview, 8 May 2019).

When talking about his becoming an inheritor, he said he could not remember the exact details, except that five or six of his peers, including him, who also had experience as a boat captains, were assembled to participate in the performance. Later he was notified that he would become the Intangible Cultural Heritage inheritor. To this day, the fact is that he is not quite sure what an Intangible Cultural Heritage inheritor is or what he has to do; he only knows that when there are activities and tasks, he needs to cooperate and participate. He gave me a complicated and confused look when I mentioned preserving and passing on the fishermen's *haozi* in the future. "*Haozi* is just something I regularly sing on board, and I still insist on going out fishing, so as long as there are still people (working) on board, won't it be natural to learn it?" (Chen Yonglong, personal interview, 8 May 2019).

The other inheritor, Sang Nailin, male, was born in 1953, and also hails from Huanyü village, Fengli Town, Rudong. My meeting with him was quite convoluted by comparison. After several unsuccessful trips to and from Fengli Town, I eventually obtained his contact information with the help of Geng, the director of the local cultural centre. Geng told me that due to the birth of the third generation, Sang Nailin now lives in Nanjing (the provincial capital city). The first time I contacted Sang, he refused, repeatedly emphasizing that he was just an ordinary fisherman and could not really help me. The second time I contacted him after I arrived in Nanjing, Sang refused again, stating he was unavailable. I texted him that I would stay in Nanjing for a few days and that he could contact me anytime if he were free. I am not sure

whether he was impressed by my sincerity. A few days later, he took the initiative to contact me and sent me his current working address.

It was a hospital in the centre of Nanjing, with a towering inpatient building that stood out in the downtown area. After waiting for a while at the hospital entrance, I saw a sturdy and dark-skinned middle-aged man in a security uniform hurrying towards the entrance. He waved to me and said embarrassed, “sorry to have kept you waiting. I just took a leave of absence from the leader, I have about two hours free time, after I had to come back to stand guard” (Sang Nailin, 23 March 2021).

With strict sense of time, strong sense of responsibility and a dress code habit of buttoning up every button even when he was sweating furiously, Sang appeared extremely meticulous in my eyes. In order extend our interview time, I found a coffee shop near the hospital. During the whole interview process, Sang kept apologizing for not receiving my repeated visits, stressing that he was not uncooperative but felt unsure about whether he could provide me with helpful information. Our conversation began with the reason for his extended stay in Nanjing.

> I have lived in Nanjing for a number of years because my daughter works here. My daughter and son-in-law both have decent jobs. They have always wanted me to be able to enjoy my old age comfortably and they brought me over from my hometown after my grandson was born. Now that my grandson is at school and I am spending more and more time at home on my own, I thought I would make some money in the big city while I was still strong and healthy. I am very satisfied with my current job as a security guard at the hospital (Sang Nailin, personal interview, 23 March 2021).

Referring to his fishing experience, Sang said truthfully that:

> My family has been fishing for a living for several generations. I became a professional fisherman around the 1970s and learned *haozi* on board. In the 1980s, I was promoted to first mate. When I was 50, I decided to give up going to sea and chose to work at a gas station near my home for a few years. The life of a fisherman is tough and full of dangers. However,

> occasionally I still reminisce about the old days of fishing with my colleagues (Sang Nailin, personal interview, 23 March 2021).

The process of Sang Nailin becoming an inheritor is just as described by Chen Yonglong; he was also one of the several captains of the boats called back then. After several performances of *haozi*, he was chosen and appointed as an Intangible Cultural Heritage inheritor. For the protection of the fishermen's *haozi* as an Intangible Cultural Heritage project, he basically has the same idea with Chen Yonglong, but his attitude is a little bit more clear of motivation. "I did not think much about it; I am just an ordinary person; I cannot do anything. However, it would be a shame if the fishermen's *haozi* were lost, so I will try to participate in any activities in Fengli about *haozi* "(Sang Nailin, personal interview, 23 March 2021).

Combining the official reports and my interview observations, I found certain parallels between the two inheritors:

a. They are both born and raised in a fishermen's household. They are profoundly influenced by their male family members, such as fathers or uncles.
b. They have extensive experience as professional fishers, are skilled at fishing and hold leadership roles on board.
c. They were chosen as inheritors more by coincidence and timing rather than any premeditated decisions.
d. They are described as inheritors in only a few words in official records.
e. They are always conscious of their prior identities as ordinary fishermen rather than intangible cultural inheritors.

Since they were appointed inheritors, the local government has equipped them with basic and essential supports, such as providing them opportunities to perform, and organising mobilisation meetings. Performances, competitions, and media they've attended and been involved in over the years include, firstly, one or two regular performances that they've been asked to participate in every year. One is for the local fishery service company in the yearly safe production month (June). The other is the voluntary performance on national Intangible Cultural Heritage day. Secondly, other

dedicated performances such as CCTV's "Longteng Yangkou, Charming Rudong" large-scale art Gala on 22nd September, 2007 and the show called Rural World on 3rd May, 2014. They won the second prize in the First Original Folk Song competition in Rudong County on 7th October, 2009 and gave an interview to Hong Kong TV for a special TV program in Rudong in 2014. From the above regular and irregular inheritance activities mainly arranged by the government, I think it has the following characteristics: It is temporary; it responds to external pressure; it stems from organizational origins, it retains a special purpose.

2.1.2 The "Hidden" Third Person : Selection Criteria of Local Inheritors

During the visit with Chen Yonglong and Sang Nailin, I learned that a third person also existed in the fishermen's *haozi* performance team. He seems to be more qualified to be the inheritor, however, he did not appear on the list of inheritors (municipal level). With questions, I contacted him and visited his home in Huangyü, Fengli Town. Named Sang Naimao, he belongs to the same family clan as Sang Nailin. Since it was a temporary visit close to the end of the year, I planned to find a market near his home and buy milk, fruits and other daily supplies. It was nearly dusk when we arrived at the entrance to his village; we parked our car in front of a small supermarket at the village entrance, and after shopping and walking a few minutes further on, we arrived at his house. As it was late in the day, I could not see the house's exterior too clearly, except that it was a two-storey building on the side of the road, very close to the entrance to the village.

Sang Naimao waited at the door early and waved enthusiastically, gesturing for us to enter the house. I placed the milk and other things we had bought on his table, and he said shyly and pointed to the items, "Teachers (honorific words to us)! You have come a long way; you don't have to do that" (Sang Naimao, 23 December 2020).

After saying that, he hurriedly called his wife to boil water and make tea for us. He and Sang Nailin looked very much alike in terms of their physical appearance and

features, but Sang Naimao is much slimmer. Apart from the basic furnishings of his home, that resembled other fishermen's homes, I was impressed by the decorative objects such as maps, cut and pasted newspapers and manuscripts that hung on the walls of his house. Compared to Chen Yonglong's nervousness and Sang Nailin's self-deprecating modesty, Sang Naimao appeared to me both articulate and loquacious! As a result, I found it difficult to connect him to the stereotypical image of a fisherman I had carried with me until now. Consequently, I was even more curious about his life story.

> I started fishing at eight and kept doing it until I finished junior high school in early 1963. During this period, I learned *haozi*. Due to a severe scarcity of local teaching resources, I became a teacher in 1964. I have taught in kindergarten, primary school and middle school successively. Among them, My longest tenure was at the village's part-work, part-study primary school (established in 1959 and administered by the village's productive team; the school's lack of sophisticated equipment is also known as the simple primary school). In 1979, I transformed from a regular employee to a full-time teacher, and I continued to work at Yangkou Farm until I retired in 2004. Following retirement, I established a sports studio in my home at my own expense; all the neighbours could come here to do simple exercises, such as table tennis (Sang Naimao, personal interview, 23 December 2020).

When asked about the process of setting up the *haozi* performance team, his answer corresponded with Chen Yonglong and Sang Nailin's responses. However, he was able to provide more explicit details of the background and development of the story:

> It was sometime around 2014 when the Fengli Town called a meeting of all the boat captains. After the meeting, the former head of the cultural station took the opportunity to propose the idea of preserving the fishermen's *haozi* to the secretary of the town committee, Ji, and repeatedly stressed the urgency of *haozi* conservation. Under these

circumstances, the secretary approached me and put me in charge of organising a performing team as soon as possible. I soon found five or six fishermen of a similar age to me who were still or had been involved in fishing and started to rehearse the performance (Sang Naimao, personal interview, 23 December 2020). (see Figure 2.1)



Figure 2.1: Group photo of Rudong fishermen's *haozi* performance, photograph provided by Sang Naimao, 23 December 2020.

As he spoke, I could sense that he had a deep affection for the fishermen's *haozi,* which was also reflected in his thoughts and plans for the future transmission of fishermen's *haozi*:

It was vital to pass on the fishermen's *haozi*. There are fewer and fewer fishermen now, and the young people are leaving. No one will know *haozi* if we don't pass it on. I intend to contact the local fisheries service firm

> and the school where I taught and select suitable people to learn the fishermen's *haozi* (Sang Naimao, personal interview, 23 December 2020).

Throughout the interview, Sang constantly showed me his self-drawn maps, and the photographs and memorabilia he's collected, that were connected to fishermen's *haozi*. I also noticed that he had a pocket-sized notebook. Before my interview, he carefully wrote down the details of my visit, including the time, the number of people who visited and the reason for the visit. His notebook was also densely filled with various similar visits. I think it was this habit of documenting his encounters, visitors and interviews that enabled him to remember so many details and describe them vividly. Near the end of my visit, he proposed to present me with some seafood he had prepared (dried). After I politely declined a few times, he gave me a small but unique gift-a little dragon made of fishbone (see Figure 2.2). He explained:

> Fishermen like to make little things out of fish bones and hang them in the windows of their homes. Whenever they went out to sea, the family would pray to the fish bones until the fisherman in the family returned safely. I give this to you; please take it, and I wish you a safe journey (Sang Naimao, personal interview, 23 December 2020).



Figure 2.2: A small dragon made of fish bones presented by Sang Naimao, 23 December 2020, photographed by Li Weiyang.

On the way back, my conversation with Sang Naimao played back a few times in my mind, reinforcing my question at the beginning. Why did someone so attentive and talkative, who cared so much about fishermen's culture not become a municipal inheritor like Chen Yonglong and Sang Nailin? Could this have anything to do with the regional criteria for selecting inheritors? With this question in mind, I contacted and visited Shen Yang, one of the local people responsible for reviewing and selecting Intangible Cultural Heritage projects and inheritors, who was also the head of the department of the local media centre. His response was as follows:

> At that time, the candidates declared by Rudong County to the municipal level did include Sang Naimao. The judges also all reviewed their information. After repeated comparisons, all three sounded close to their

> more native, natural state based on their singing skills alone. However, we finally chose only two of them (Cheng Yonglong and Sang Nailin) because, considering that Sang Naimao has been a teacher for a long time and is basically removed from the fishing environment, we wanted the inheritor to be pure fishermen with fewer outside interference (Shen Yang, personal interview, 24 December 2020).

In Sang Naimao's case, I unexpectedly found the selection criteria that the local government prioritize for intangible cultural inheritors, especially in the upward declaration process, which are authentic, insider, and faithful to the cultural milieu. The question of whether such standards are universal or unique to particular individuals is still open to further investigation. But regardless of the selection criteria, I feel that people like Sang Naimao, who have both performance talent and conservation awareness, should be part of the ICH protection system. They may not have the opportunity to have the official title of the inheritor. Still, their existence deserves to be noticed and recognized by more people.

2.1.3 Witness of Folk Songs as Daily Life: Wu Yao and Rudong Folk Songs

Researchers and enthusiasts have been collecting folk songs on a large scale since the 1950s and 1960s, peaking in the 1980s; all these collections have been released and published successively later. They have become indispensable and essential musical materials for young scholars conducting relevant research and ICH nominations by the local cultural department. As vital witnesses to the historical development of folk music, these behind-the-scenes collectors' ideas and perspectives are as significant.

The following story is about Wu Yao, the collector and witness of development in Rudong's local folk songs; his stories and views on folk music preservation are representatives of the older generation of musicians to a certain degree.

Wu Yao, an editor and composer, was born in February 1930 in Chahe town. He joined the army in 1946 and joined the Party on the front line of the *Huaihai* Campaign in 1948. Wu was a war correspondent and a cultural backbone in the war against the United States and aided Korea. After returning to his hometown Rudong from the army in 1958, he kept writing songs while he visited almost all the villages around Rudong for collecting and recording. Wu recorded over 500 folk songs, including the Fengli fishermen's *haozi*. He retired from Rudong Cultural Bureau in 1990. In his nineties, he still keeps writing about three thousand words of reminiscence a year.

The *Rudong minjian wenhua congshu·min'gejuan (shangxia)* (*Rudong Folk Culture Series: Ballads and Proverbs*), edited by Wu Yao and published by Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House in 2011, is a vital reference document for studying Rudong folk songs and culture. In addition to the folk songs collected by Wu Yao, this book also includes folk songs by local songwriters, social and cultural figures, township cultural officials and other musicians who were active in Rudong in the 1940s, 1950s, 1970s and early 1980s. Notably, each score included is followed by a short description, analysis, or commentary about it, providing a more realistic picture of what musicians or collectors thought or felt on the collecting site. Some scores are even accompanied by informal notes written by the musicians during the year's field trips.

I had already heard of Wu Yao for a long time (when this research project was at its earliest stages) before I contemplated fieldwork to Rudong. As one of the most influential folk musicians in the Nantong, and indeed in the entire Jiangsu region, I was eager to visit him in person. However, considering his advanced age, I also prepared for a closed door. As such, he wasn't on my list of necessary interviewees. However, when Geng, the Curator of the local cultural museum, took the initiative to mention him, I felt it could be an excellent opportunity to ask for a visit. Then I mustered up the courage to make the request. Geng felt it might be possible based on the fact they had a good personal relationship, but he also admitted that since Wu was over ninety years of age, his energy levels would not be quite the same as before. In addition, Wu was doubly disappointed when, in his work with local scholars a few years ago, he found that some scholars had an unrealistic and eager approach to academics. As a result, Wu has not received any outside scholars for a long time.

After Geng repeatedly fought for me and vouched for my academic character to Wu, a few days later, I was fortunate enough to get the opportunity to visit Wu Yao.

Wu Yao's home was located in the old part of the county and although the surrounding facilities looked a little dated, the streets were lined with shops, and people were hurrying to and fro, making for a fabulously lively atmosphere. Our car eventually turned into an alleyway. We were greeted by rows of five-storey residential buildings with grey concrete facades; there was no dedicated security but or property management office. Older people sat in twos and threes in the open spaces in front of the buildings, chatting, picking vegetables and sunbathing. We then entered the middle block of flats and walked upstairs to an iron gate. After a few knocks, an older man with glasses, white hair and a tweed coat slowly opened the door. His expression was severe, and his posture was a little hunched. He waved his hand and gestured for us to come in. Inside was a plain and simple home, except for the basic table, chairs and appliances. As far as I could see, the space was filled with books, magazines and manuscripts. Books were piled up like mountains, randomly stacked together, each pile containing about 15 or 16 books, while some others were scattered books stuck horizontally on the shelves. The desk was cluttered with manuscript paper, envelopes, and a table calendar. The faint yellow light of the old-fashioned desk lamp, the scattered pens, the books upside down on the table with the corners folded, the rattan chair in front of the desk that had been pulled away all showed that he had just been writing. Somehow, I was overcome by a strong feeling of respect for this elderly gentleman.

My visit lasted only a short time, as Wu Yao was anxious to finish his daily writing schedule. When talking about his previous fieldwork experiences, he shared some blunt criticisms of the present schemes of ICH protection:

> Its concept (ICH) is still good. However, I am very much opposed to some over-staged conservation approaches or over-commercialization for conservation purposes. It changes too much, and the original stuff is out of existence (Wu Yao, personal interview, 10 May 2019).

He got more and more agitated as he talked, and when he learned that I was here for the fishermen's *haozi*, he was more blunt, sounding even a tad paranoid as he urged, "You should not look for it; there are no real fishermen's *haozi* left!" (Wu Yao, personal interview, 10 May 2019).

As someone who lived and felt through that era of folk songs and folk culture as daily life, I can understand the bitterness and anger of Wu's generation at some of the current innovations and changes in culture. The elderly gentleman's attitude is not a minority among his generation of folk musicians. How do we face tradition and innovation and adequately examine at a changing culture? This is no doubt the thorny question those committed to cultural preservation must contemplate and answer.
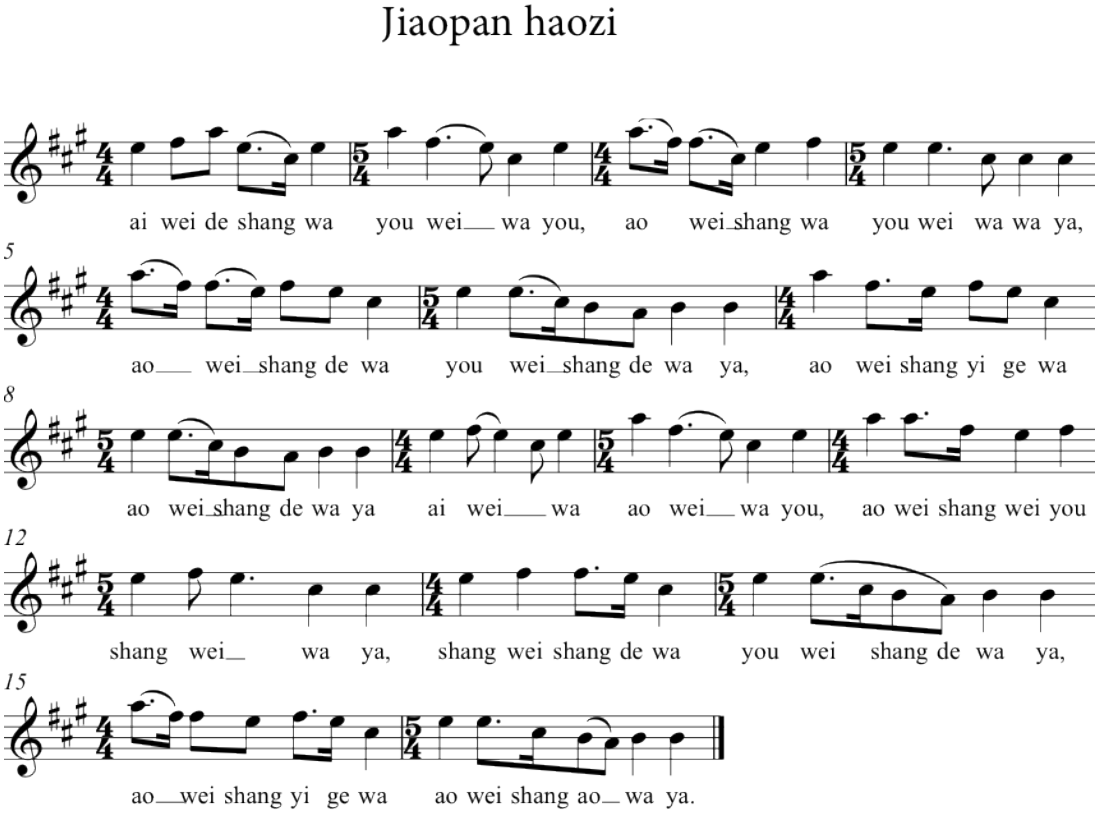
In the next section of this chapter, I will explore the unique musical appeal and essential attributes of these *haozi* as practical music, based on two parts, one is the published scores of Fengli Fishermen's Songs, and the other is the transcription written by me from the inheritor's live performance video.

2.1.4 Fishermen's Haozi in Collections of Folk Song

The representative music score examples I have included here are from the two published books. One is the *Rudong minjian wenhua congshu·min'gejuan* (Rudong Folk Culture Series & Folk Song Volume), editor by Wu Yao; the other is the *Nantong yuanshengtai min'ge jicheng* (Nantong Original Ecological Folk Songs Anthology), editor by Zhan Wan.
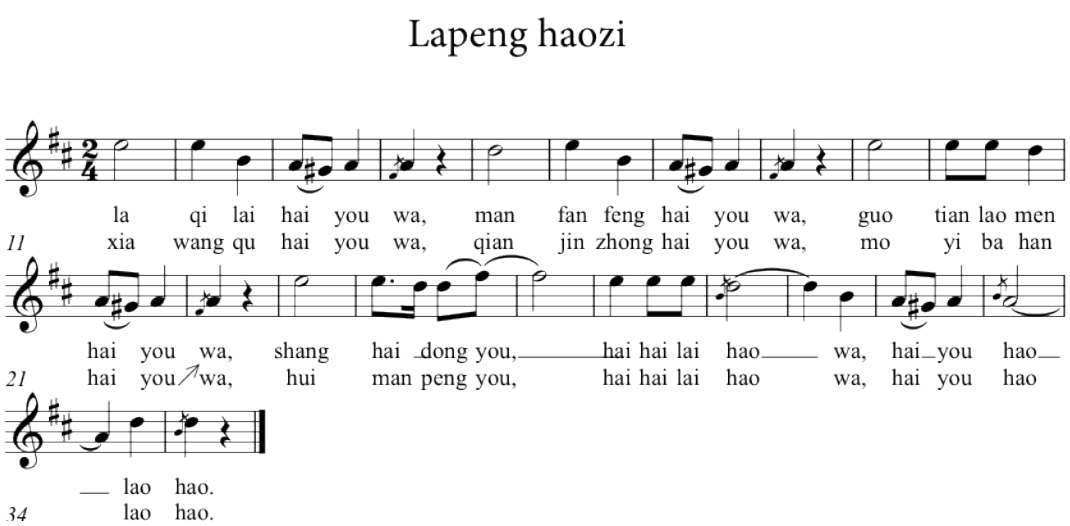
a. *Jiaopan haozi*[31]

[31] *Jiaopan* is also called *panche*, which is a tool specially used for anchoring. When fishers set sail, they need to lift the iron anchor from the sea to the ship. One end of the cordage is twisted on the turning gear, and the other is stuck on the anchor cable. Each 5-6 fishermen holds the turning gear bolt and pushes the turning gear to rotate continuously. In this process, they sing the *Panche haozi*.



Ex. 2.1 Provided by *Rudong minjian wenhua congshu·min'gejuan* (Rudong Folk Culture Series & Folk Song Volume), p. 234. sung by Shi Zhengxiang, Feng Xiaochun, transcribed by Yu Weiqing, Xu Shichun.
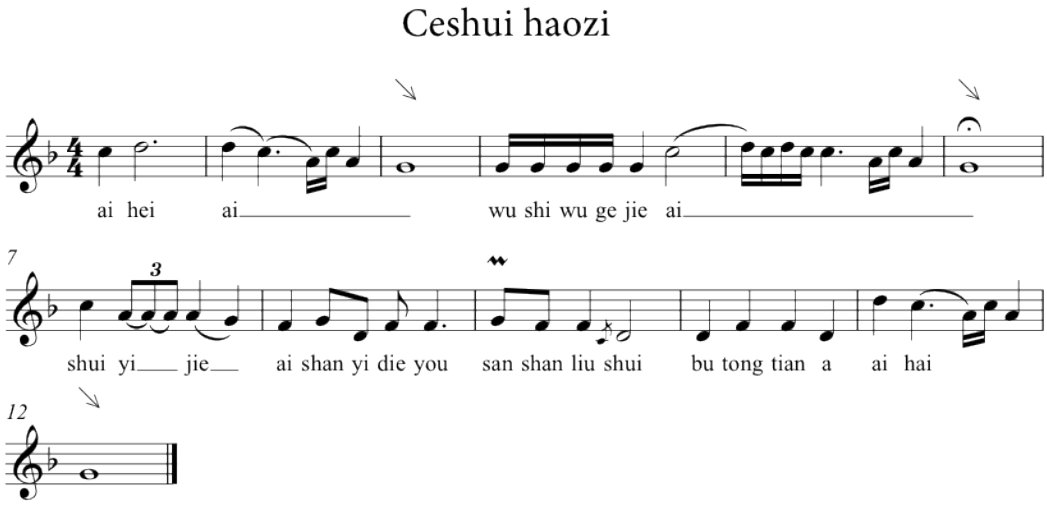
b. *Lapeng haozi*



Ex 2.2 Provided by *Rudong minjian wenhua congshu·min'gejuan* (Rudong Folk Culture Series & Folk Song Volume), p. 237. sung by Zhang Changlin, transcribed by Wu Yao.

In this *haozi*,[32] the first four bars can be considered as one phrase "a". Within it, the half note of the first bar is very much like the shout of a leading *haozi* player, it is a sign, a reminder, that everyone needs to push together next. In the next three bars, the melody shows a downward movement, a little melodic fluctuation. Similar phrases and structures are also found in bars 5 to 8, 9 to 12, and 17 to 20.

c. *Ceshui haozi*



Ex. 2.3 Provided by *Rudong minjian wenhua congshu·min'gejuan* (Rudong Folk Culture Series & Folk Song Volume), p. 224. sung by Chen Yonglong, transcribed by Su Min, Ren Naigui.
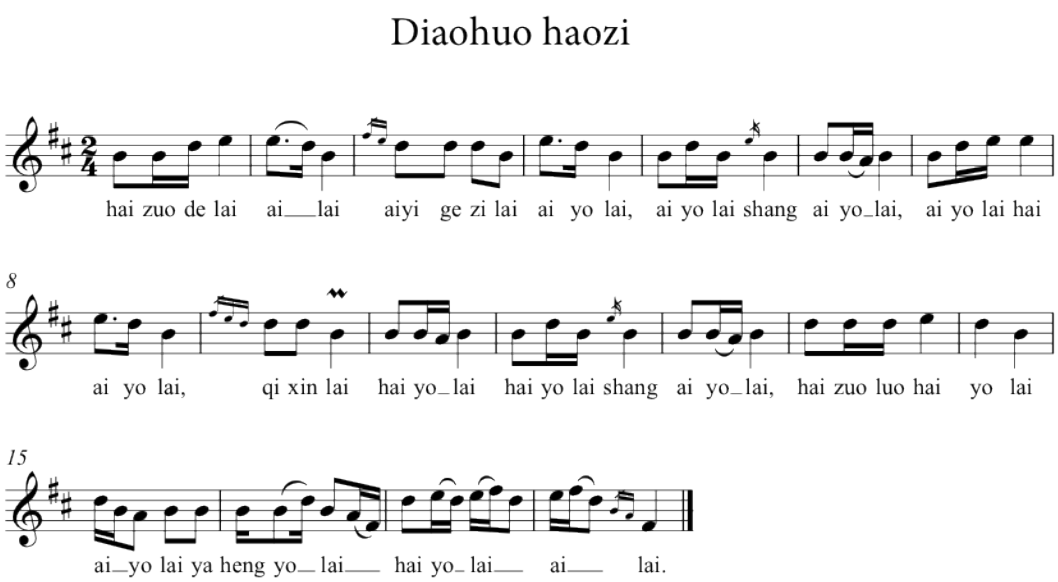
The water measuring *haozi*[33] is sung by single person (usually is the lead *haozi* player), and among all the fishermen's *haozi*, its melody is spacious and the rhythm is

[32] *Peng* means the sail. *Lapeng* has many other names: *ChePeng, QianPeng, ChengPeng. ChePeng haozi* is sung by fishermen when they raise their sails at sea. When singing, the strength and tone should be adjusted accordingly to the height of the sail. At the time, the experience of *haozi* leader is significant.

[33] *Ceshui* means the water test. In order to prevent the danger of running aground on the rocks or occasionally being caught in whirlpools when fishing boats are sailing along the coast, a fisherman is assigned to test the seawater depth at the bow of the ship. The fisherman holds a bamboo pole. Generally, a cloth strip or palm rope will be attached to the bamboo pole every 1.5m or 2m. The fisherman extends the pole into the water and sings the measured data to the Captain while measuring so that he can master the direction of the rudder at any time to avoid accidents. Then they call it the *Ceshui haozi.*

free, so it can be said to be the most personal sounding portion of the fishermen's *haozi.* In this *haozi*, combining the lyrics *ai hei ai* (intonation words) and melody, we can see that the first three bars are a downward phrase, which is similar to an introduction and has a reminder function, the real contents (water measurement data) will follow soon. From bar 4 to 12, as expected the *Ceshui haozi* is sung, so it can be seen as a whole. In the last two bars, the melody and lyrics are again similar to the first three bars, lyrically and at the same time, it seems to foreshadow entry of a new long phrase.

d. *Diaohuo* haozi
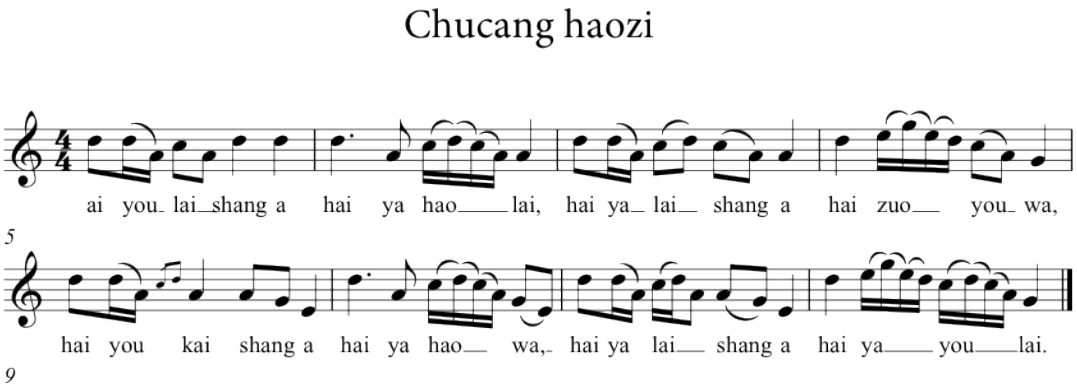


Ex. 2.4 Provided by *Nantong yuanshengtai min'ge jicheng* (Nantong Original Ecological Folk Songs Anthology), p. 249. sung by Shi Zhengxiang, Feng Xiaochun, transcribed by Yu Weiqing, Xu Shichun.

In this *haozi*,[34] by comparing the musical material, the first six bars can be clearly seen as divided into three phrases, which are bars 1-6, 7-12 and 13-18.

e. *Chucang haozi*

[34] *Diaohuo haozi* is used when the fish and shrimp caught by fishermen are in the net, they need to be loaded into the cabin or picked up from the cabin.



Ex. 2.5 Provided by *Rudong minjian wenhua congshu·min'gejuan* (Rudong Folk Culture Series & Folk Song Volume), p. 247. sung by Shi Zhengxiang, Feng Xiaochun, transcribed by Yu Weiqing, Xu Shichun.

This *haozi*[35] is twelve bars long, with a neat structure and clear rhythm. The rhythmic pattern and melodic direction between the upper and lower stanzas are basically the same.
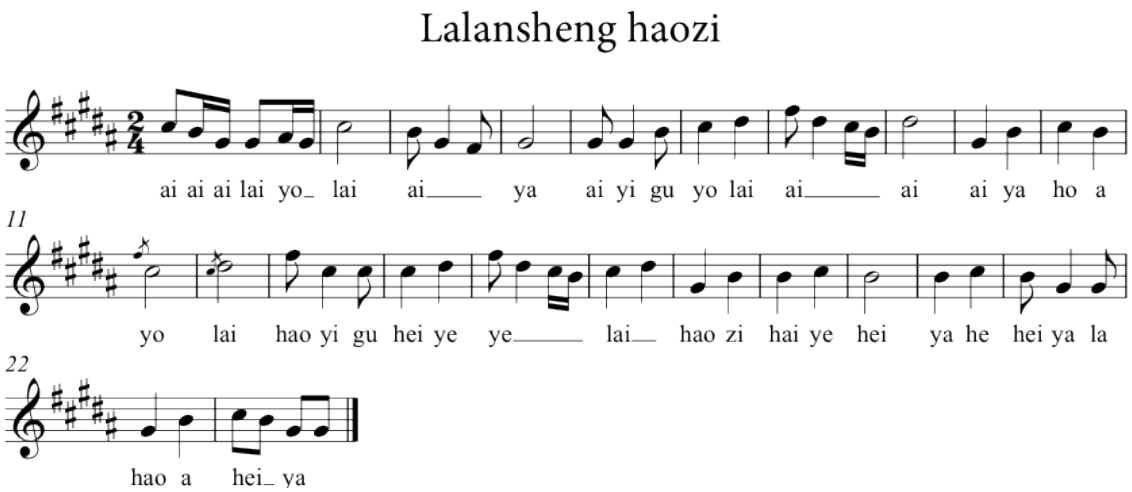
2.1.5 Fishermen's Haozi in Recorded Live Performance

In this section, I will focus on the state, sound quality, and vocal performance characteristics of the individual (inheritor) singing the *haozi* rather than on the basic musical characteristics examined in the previous section. As a cultural project that entirely relies on sound to express its content and show its musical charm, the different sound performance of different individuals actually represents their unique understanding and perception of the *haozi* to a certain extent, which may consciously or unconsciously become an important basis for them to transmit the *haozi* in different way or attitude in the future. In the Fengli case, I have collected only one song about the *haozi* in the performance state of the inheritor, which is called *lalansheng haozi*.[36] I picked two contrasting performances of it; one is sung by Chen Yonglong himself, recorded from my fieldwork on 8 May, 2019. The other is from the app *Douyin*,[37]

[35] *Chucang haozi* is sung by fishermen when left the cabin.
[36] *Lalansheng haozi* is sung by fishermen when they drag the fishing boat ashore from the water with cordage.
[37] The name of TikTok in China.
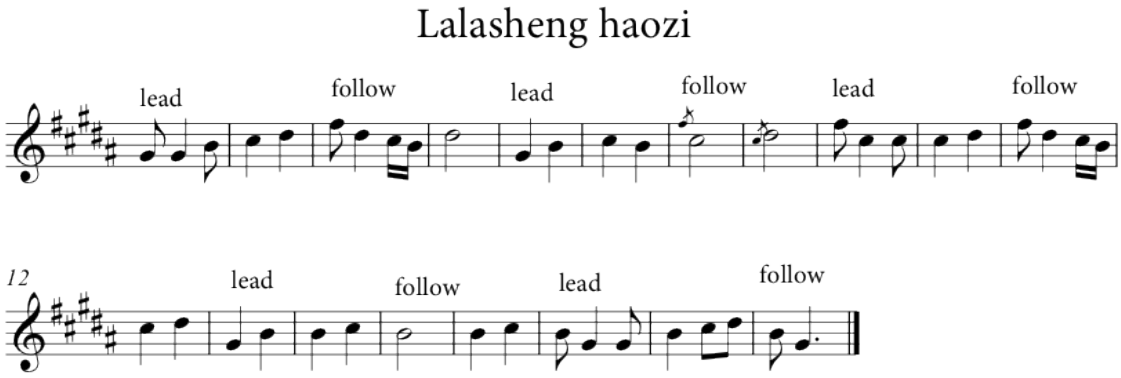
posted on 26 October, 2021, sung by Chen Yonglong and his co-workers; I transcribed the examples into staff notation, as seen below.

VERSION A



Ex. 2.6 Sung by Chen Yonglong, recorded in 8 May, 2019, from fieldwork, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

VERSION B



Ex. 2.7 Sung by Chen Yonglong and his co-workers, recorded in 26 October, 2021, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

In Version A (on the previous page) we see that the first four syllables form a part similar to the introduction, and three similar phrases starting from sol are formed from the fifth syllable. In Version B (above) the introduction is omitted, and the rest of the structure is as same as that of "A". During the actual singing, the syllable is

extended according to the specific situation, which is mostly repeated the musical phrases shown before.

Combining the live recording performance on *Douyin* with my field recording, the characteristics of Chen's live singing voice emerge as follows:

a. His singing pitch and overall tonality is always stable, equivalent to B major.
b. His vocal timbre is hoarse but his voice has an intensity of expression.
c. When he sang this *haozi* as a leader with others, his voice always descended a little at the end of each melodic phrase and he would use more breathiness to make his phrase endings sound like sighs. For the rhythm, he usually started his next note in the last one or two beats of the followers' part.

In my view, these vocal mannerisms consciously or unconsciously conform to his working habits and allude to his labourer roots. For example, the practice of perennial singing *haozi* formed his muscle memory of stable B, so he can always keep the same pitch. His "singing" phrase endings are in line with the natural physiological response of ordinary people when carrying heavy objects. Grabbing the beat is convenient for him to exert his strength to the following melody line, actively mobilising everyone's strength, and their capacity to work hard together. In his mind, regardless of the environment, the practicability of *haozi* is always ingrained and difficult to modify. So his performance is unmodified, authentic and depends on actual labour.

Following on from these observation, I would like to dwell a moment on the video version uploaded to *Douyin* in order to raise some more questions about this performance. Whether it was a wide-angle shot of the harbour, a close-up shot of the greatness of the fishing boats, or a detailed shot of the fishermen's expressions, under the frame of the camera, the video shows that this should be a carefully planned performance. However, I noticed that Chen and the other fishermen were focused on the front; they cooperated and pulled the rope with the sound of *haozi*; the boat was

adjusting its direction little by little and finally leaned towards the shore. Throughout the process, no one was looking toward or even caring about the camera; for a while, it was also tricky for me, who was watching as an audience, to tell whether this was a performance or actual labour. Perhaps, the answer is that only they themselves know.

So far, in the case of Fengli fishermen's *haozi*, whether the inherited environment provided by the outside, the negative and conservative attitude of local experts, or the strong identification of fishermen shown in the interviews and performances by the two main inheritors, all make the current status of the inheritance of this project is semi-active, and showing the characteristics of the job-oriented inheritance. In what follows, I will discuss the characteristics of this job-oriented heritage approach concerning field practice and my own reflections about the same, namely why this case presents such a heritage outcome, and the underlying reasons behind it.

2.1.6 Job-oriented Inheritance

According to the previous section, Chen Yonglong and Sang Nailin are involved in the regular activities of the ICH, mainly the annual training meetings of the inheritors held by the relevant cultural departments and the performance activities of the National Heritage day; other short-lived and temporary activities include participation in the teaching activities held by the local cultural centre, the local folk song competition and interviews with the relevant media. Based on the arrangement and content of the above activities, I outline the following features:

a. Most related ICH activities around the project are government-led, and the inheritors reflect a clear division of labour, obedience and cooperation.
b. In the above activities, whether the activities are conducted regularly or organised on an ad hoc basis, based on the fact that the dissemination frequency is low and the scope is narrow, the audience groups involved have a certain degree of randomness and mobility, making it difficult to

form a stable relationship between the inheritors and the recipients, and between different recipients.

c. The inheritors mainly focus on the exhibition and performance to promote ICH. Compared with the targeted learning in schools and art groups, this kind of way requires fewer skills for the recipients, and only a basic interest in appreciation is required.

As for the inheritors themselves, Chen Yonglong and Sang Nailin, due to their age difference, did not have any substantial work interactions before they were recognized as ICH inheritors, and only afterwards did they bond as a flexible community through the medium of ICH activities due to their relationship as inheritors. In their interviews and performances, both of them show, to varying degrees, their recognition of their identity as fishermen and the sense of security it provides. In fact, both of them are still in the developmental stage of gradually accepting and understanding their identity as inheritors, which is often manifested in their ICH activities with more obvious submissiveness and conservatism. In addition, the two inheritors have spent most of their time in recent years living with their children, who work in large cities due to caring for their grandchildren. Once the competent authorities organise ICH activities, they rush back to their hometowns to participate. This kind of living pattern centred on the nuclear family, which is prevalent in modern society, has been called by the scholar Li Hanzong “a scattered community”, i.e., “a variety of residential communities in which individuals or nuclear families live in a scattered distribution with their occupations as the axis” (Li 2013: 116). The emergence of scattered communities among the younger generation in modern society increasingly impacts and dismantles the established community patterns that traditional societies have built over the centuries. The mobility of the population caused by this settlement pattern has to a certain extent, fragmented the local-centred cultural system and further hindered the effective transmission and dissemination of locally relevant ICH. Therefore, the two people, in this case, are dominated by the autonomous identity of the fishermen and, at the same time, encounter the adverse effects of the rapid deconstruction of the traditional community on the preservation of the ICH. At this stage, fulfilling the obligation to pass on the

heritage for them is more like a special occupation than a mission driven by their hearts.

2.2 Jianggang Fishermen's *Haozi*

The Jianggang fishermen's *haozi* has been passed on for over 200 years. According to the official records (Jiangsu Provincial Department of Culture 2010), it can be traced back to the 1950s. There are six types of fishermen's *haozi* in Jianggang according to different labour contents and singing ways, which are the *Qizhong* (Lifting) *haozi*, *Chepeng* (pulling the sail) *haozi*, *Panche haozi*, *Diaohuo* (Transfer goods) *haozi*, *Ceshui* (Measuring water deepth) *haozi* and *Tiaodan* (Carrying the load) *haozi*. The first four are related to the heavy physical work on the fishing boat, so their rhythm is regular, and it is required to be neat, uniform and coordinated; usually, one fisherman leads, and others follow. The latter two kinds of *haozi* are sung by the lead person alone, more free and melodic.

2.2.1 From the Backbone of Local Culture to the Inheritor

There is only one inheritor in this case; a man by the name of Lu Jiayou, male, born in December 1943, and a resident of Jianggang. Despite not having any professional or formal musical training, Lu Jiayou has composed, taught, guided and performed quite a bit in his native cultural circles in Jianggang, especially the fishermen's *haozi* which he has known and sung through most of his life.

Lu Jiayou's home is located in the town centre on a commercial street and is one of many homes in a row of commercial and residential houses. The side of his house facing the street is used as a shop, which sells some necessary groceries and daily provisions, while the back and upper floors of the house are for domestic living. Because of my early invitation the day before, Lu Jiayou was expecting me in his shop, and awaited my arrival eagerly.

Upon first impression, Lu Jiayou was a decent and tidy older gentleman, looking particularly spry on the day in a blue and white striped shirt, a black tweed coat, and a black gentleman's hat. A small pile of materials that he had prepared in advance and placed in different folders was stacked on a small four-sided table in the store. After a friendly greeting and handshake, he gestured for me to sit down and began to tell his story:

> My ancestors first migrated from Changmen, Suzhou. We have been here for four or five generations, and most of my family members make a living by fishing. I was born and grew up in a fishing village. Influenced by my father, I naturally felt close to fishermen's songs and could sing a few lines from time to time in my childhood. I officially learned fishermen's *haozi* could trace back to 1962. Because of my outstanding performance in production, work and literary and promotional abilities, I was honoured to be selected as a counsellor by *Hongqi* Fishery Group, responsible for guiding other fishermen on board to study politics during their spare time. This experience lasted until 1967 (Lu Jiayou, personal interview, 17 December 2020).

Although he only spent five years as a professional fisherman, Lu was quite nostalgic for these old times and incredibly good at remembering the days gone by. He recalled the specific details of the fishing that went to sea during those five years, saying:

> The first half of the year, March, April and May, and the second half, from August to the end of the year, are the time for fishing. Each sea trip is a flood season with more than ten days. Every time, a large group set out together, with hundreds of fishing boats, more than ten people on each boat and more than 1000 people together. The area out to sea is divided into the offshore and distant sea. Each departure is accompanied by a command ship to lead and control the whole team. Early summer to the end of August is the resting time when the entire fishing fleet focuses on

repairing the boats and replenishing their daily supplies (Lu Jiayou, personal interview, 17 December 2020).

About the details of his learning fishermen's *haozi*:

I mainly followed Yang Jiushan, the *erdangjia* (the second leader), on the ship. There is no particular learning time. On weekdays, Master Yang would give me some advice when he had spare time, which was all the guidance. What I could do was observe and practice more by myself. Just like the previous inheritance from all walks of life, the essence of learning *haozi* was to hear and see and pass it on by word of mouth. Such a learning experience was also a collective memory of the older generation of fishers in Jianggang (Lu Jiayou, personal interview, 17 December 2020).

Since he was the only son in the family, his parents could not bear to let him work hard at sea all year round, so they offered him to learn the craft of bamboo weaving locally and become a craftsman. This is what he did from 1967 to 1977. During this period, he continued to pursue his love of art, joined the only literature and art publicity team in the town in 1970 and actively began to plan how to put the fisherman's *haozi* on the stage. At the end of the same year, he successfully composed a piece entitled "Sea Battle Song" based on the background of fishermen's *haozi*. He used it to participate in the Spring Festival Cultural Performance held by the county. After the performance, his song was awarded the gold medal, and he thus had the opportunity to perform on a bigger stage that year-a mass performance in Yancheng City.

In the years he has been a member of the literary propaganda team, Lu Jiayou has quickly become a local amateur musician with a little fame. He has conceived and created a series of literary artworks with various forms and rich content based on the fisherman culture with local characteristics. These artworks include *wo tiao haoxian chuang shichang* (I pick seafood to break into the market), which is based on *tiaodan* (carrying loads) *haozi*; it shows that under the active policy guidance of the government, the fishermen have embarked on the road to prosperity. The song and

dance performance *caibei* (picking shellfish) is based on the *qizhong* (lifting) *haozi* and vividly reflects the production life of fishermen in Jianggang. The *yugu shuochang huangyuyang de laili* (the origin of yellow croaker ocean), and the *Tianjin kuaiban baxian* (eight immortals), etc. The literature and art propaganda team dissolved in the early stage of reform and opening up, and then the town established a mass literature and art cooperative. With his outstanding literary and artistic talents and solid mass foundation, Lu Jiayou served twice as the art team leader and the cooperative president. In May 1977, he was selected to work in the local mobile screening team, mainly responsible for broadcasting movies in various towns and townships. This team consists of three or four backbones experienced in working at the grassroots level in townships and have outstanding literary and artistic talents. After working in the mobile projection team for more than ten years, Lu worked in the cinema in the town until he retired in 2002. Years of literary and artistic experiences and rich fishermen's cultural reserves have made Lu affectionately known as the "walking fishing cultural dictionary" by the local fishermen. After retirement, Lu actively devoted himself to mass culture; with his influence, more people joined the team to learn and publicize fishermen's *haozi*. Therefore, when the local government considered the inheritor of fishermen's *haozi* in 2012, Lu Jiayou naturally became their first choice.

Unlike Chen Yonglong and Sang Nailin, who have absolutely dominated the experience of professional fishermen, Lu Jiayou's life and work experience is extremely rich, and he has always been closely associated with art propaganda and art creation during the transformation of different occupations. Does this identity trait affect his transmission of the fishermen's *haozi*? And what are the activities of his inheritance? In what follows, I will review in detail Lu's efforts in schools, mass art groups, and tourism directed at the transmission and popularization of the fishermen's *haozi* based on interviews. Then, through further analysis of these events, I will contemplate his identity under self-perception.

2.2.2 Lu Jiayou's Inheritance Efforts for the Fishermen's Haozi

EFFECT A

Intangible Cultural Heritage Base for the Younger Generation: Campus Interest Groups

Here, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Base for the Younger Generation refers explicitly to two schools locally: the Jianggang Primary School (see Figure 2.3) and Jianggang Middle School (see Figure 2.4). Lu Jiayou insisted on going there every year to teach fishermen's *haozi*.

> The teaching activity for fishermen's *haozi* has lasted at least for over a decade. I don't remember exactly which year it started, but I can ensure it must have occurred before I got the inheritor title (2014). I realized at an early stage that the fishermen's *haozi* could only be sung widely among younger generation (students) that it could more easily develop a sustained soil of life. With this in mind, I took the initiative to contact the headteachers of the relevant local schools, and everyone was very supportive (Lu Jiayou, personal interview, 17 December 2020).

The specific format and details of his teaching are as follows:

> I usually teach students in Jianggang Primary School in the first half of the year, using students' extracurricular time before school ends in the afternoon. The school provided me with a particular classroom and called my class "Fishermen's *Haozi* Interested Group". There are no mandatory requirements for this kind of teaching; students can participate as long as they are interested. Generally, there are 30 to 40 students in total who are willing to participate in it each year. I mainly choose Grade Three or four, including a few Grade Five students. I did this because Grade One and Two students are too young, and their vocal conditions and understanding are relatively weak. In contrast, the students in Grade Six face the entrance examination for Middle School with heavy schoolwork burdens and do not have enough time to attend the rehearsal. My teaching usually starts in May and lasts for two weeks. The end teaching date would be as

> close as possible to the June 1 Children's Day, which allows me to take advantage of the June 1st performance to test students' learning effects, and both the parents and the school are satisfied with this way of performing (Lu Jiayou, personal interview, 17 December 2020).

In addition, in order to make students better understand fishermen's *haozi* and facilitate Lu's teaching, Jianggang Primary School used the form of text description with music notes introduce the *haozi* and fishermen's culture in its school-based books *Yujia de haizi ai dahai* (Fishermen's Children Love the Sea) and *Jiangxiao-hongfan yaolan* (Jianggang Primary School- the Cradle of Red Sails) and published in 2004.

> For the students in Middle School, I usually teach them in the second half of the year. The middle school also set an interest group for my teaching. My teaching time there is more flexible than in primary school, usually arranged after school. I have intentionally reduced my teaching in the middle school in recent years, partly because of the reality of not having enough energy as I get older and partly because I have found that many of the middle school students come from the Jianggang Primary School, where they have learned the fishermen's *haozi* with me in primary school and could sing well (Lu Jiayou, personal interview, 17 December 2020).

Besides fixed teaching formed in primary and middle school locally, Lu Jiayou also conducted special training for students with good vocal conditions to expand the rich inheritance cascade reserve team. Such as Lü Jia, from Dongtai secondary vocational school (also in Jianggang town), attended the provincial talent competition under his careful purport guide and won first prize in the guide intelligence competition in Yancheng City.

When I held my second interview with Lu Jiayou, it was during a tense period of the Covid pandemic in China, and most of the schools had consequently made adjustments to their teaching programs, which also affected Lu's *haozi* teaching program, to which his response was:

The students could not return to school in the year's first half. I have contacted the Principal Yang of Jianggang Primary School. Yang told me that the time might be tight this year. Students must catch up on previously missed work so that no extracurricular activities will be scheduled this year. However, everything will be back to normal next spring (Lu Jiayou, personal interview, 17 December 2020).



Figure 2.3: Lu Jiayou taught fishermen's *haozi* in primary school, photograph provided by Lu Jiayou, 17 December 2020.



Figure 2.4: Lu Jiayou taught fishermen's *haozi* in middle school, photograph provided by Lu Jiayou, 17 December 2020.

The promotion and dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage to student groups is not a unique phenomenon but has even become an almost standardized means of inheritance in recent years under the strong promotion and requirements of national laws and regulations.[38] Behind the standardization, it can be seen that these kinds of activities take place after the person concerned has been identified as the inheritor in many cases and the government is primarily responsible for liaison, which is usually maintained for a period of time, but hardly sustained in the long term. It is also difficult to test the effectiveness of student learning in a substantial way. As a result, the effect is also mixed.

[38] These laws and regulations include the *Zhonghua renmin gonghe guo feiwuzhi yichan fa* (Law of the People's Republic of China on Intangible Cultural Heritage) (Article 34) promulgated in 2011, *Guanyu shishi zhonghua youxiu chuantong wenhua chuancheng gongcheng de yijian* (the Opinions on Implementing the Project of Inheritance and Development of Excellent Chinese Traditional Culture) issued by the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council in 2017, and Guanyu kaizhan zhonghua youxiu chuantong wenhua chuancheng jidi jianshe de tongzhi (the Notice on the Construction of Inheritance Bases of Excellent Chinese Traditional Culture) issued by the Ministry of Education in 2018.

In the case of Lu Jiayou, however, his school heritage activities have distinctly different characteristics, which I summarize as follows:

a. Lu's school inheritance activities predate his role as an inheritor; the inheritance activities were initiated by him and are still in progress.
b. The schools chosen by Lu are all located in Jianggang Town, and most students are descendants of fishermen.
c. Lu's school heritage activities include both universal education in primary and secondary schools and special training for vocational schools.
d. Lu's heritage activities have been fully integrated into the school's daily teaching schedule, and there has the substantial performing way (school art's festival on Children's Day) as the mean of testing the effectiveness of his teaching.

EFFECT B

Activity Centre for the Middle-Aged and the Elderly: Mass Art Group

The mass art group's full name is *Zhenhaitian* Mass Art Cooperative, led and organised by Lu Jiayou. It was founded in 2005, and was formerly known as the Jianggang Harbour Red Sail Folk Art Troupe. This group focuses on excavating, performing, creating and promoting local fishing culture. Up to now, the group has accumulated more than a dozen well-established programmes that are well-loved by the local people.

My first meeting with Lu Jiayou occurred just as his mass art troupe performed. The performance was to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy (see Figure 2.5). The stage that day was set up at the Jianggang Primary School. The performers were mainly the students and local art groups. In addition to some invited government officials, the audience is mostly residents, many of whom were parents of the students. Lu's team was in the middle of the twenty-one shows; they performed the suite of Jianggang fishermen's *haozi*.

Accompanied by the cacophony of the crowd and the video of the Jianggang scenery playing in the open-air stage LED display, Lu Jiayou and his members took to

the stage. They formed up in five rows of two, shoulder to shoulder. The first six members, including Lu, played the roles of fishermen. Among them, the three male members wore white waistcoats, orange work trousers, and long black rubber shoes. The three women were dressed in the same way, except for the black and white printed long sleeves on their tops and matching headscarves. The rest played the role of the New Fourth Army and were uniformly dressed in New Fourth Army uniforms. The programme lasted about 5 minutes, of which specific details of their performance will be highlighted in the section on the music proper below. After the performance, I conducted a group interview with them.

Under the dictation of Mr Lu, I first recorded and compiled the basic information of the art group members, including their names, gender, age, occupation, years of work, education level and time of joining the group. The detailed table is below, made by Li Weiyang, April 23 2019.

NAME	GENDER	AGE	OCCUPATION	RETIRED?	EDUCATION	TEAM ENTRY TIME	WHETHER COULD SING *HAOZI*
Lu Jiayou	male	76	Fisherman Film projectionist	Yes	Middle School	2005	Yes
Wan Weisheng	male	70	Fisherman (Captain)	Yes	Primary School	2005	Yes
Wu Zhongming	male	71	Carpenters Shipbuilders Fishermen	Yes	Middle School	2005	Yes
Ding Jinsheng	male	67	Machinery Factory workers	Yes	Middle School	2005	No

Cui Yisheng	male	70	Bamboo strip craftsman	Yes	Middle School	2005	No
Wu Bangrong	male	71	Fisherman	Yes	Middle School	2005	Yes
Lu Dong'an	male	63	Electrician	No	Middle School	2018	No
Chen Xiaoju	female	58	Worker	Yes	High School	2010	No
Pan Lanzhu	female	61	Housewife	Yes	Primary School	2010	No
Kang Guixiang	female	61	Worker	Yes	Primary School	2005	No
Chen Changying	female	58	self-employed person	No	Primary School	2005	No
Liu Fang	female	52	Worker	Yes	Primary School	2005	No
Ding Guixiang	female	68	Worker	Yes	Primary School	2005	No

As seen from the above table, the members of the art cooperative have a similar proportion of men and women, ranging in age from 52 to 76 years old, covering the middle and old two generations. In terms of occupation, only four people have been or are still engaged in fish production. These four individuals are also unique in the group in that they have to help out from time to time during the peak fishing season, so they are more mobile in the group. The rest are mainly workers, handicraftsmen or families of fishermen. Most have low education levels, and have studied only up to primary or junior high school. Before joining the art cooperative, they had only heard about fishermen's *haozi* or knew the fundamental tone but did not know how to sing it. After several years of continuous study, rehearsals and performances, all troupe members have mastered the fishermen's *haozi* and can perform well.

The group visit was arranged in the Intangible Cultural Heritage conservation room of the local town's cultural and broadcasting centre. Inside the room, the windows were clear, the tables and chairs were neatly arranged, and a few certificates of Intangible Cultural Heritage items issued by the government and exhibition boards introducing the items were prominently displayed on the white wall. Lu Jiayou told me here is also a cultural activity centre for residents.

Most members felt nervous and overwhelmed as it was their first time being interviewed. However, after I explained the purpose of my interview and showed sincerity in accepting them being themselves, the atmosphere began to warm up.

Lu introduced the basic performing information of his art group first:

> The group currently has 16 or 17 members who can consistently participate in rehearsals and performance activities. We almost rehearse every day from 6:30 to 9:00 in the evening. The rehearsal time will be extended appropriately if there is a performance task. We have two places for rehearsal, the odd-numbered days in this room (the Intangible Cultural Heritage protection room) and the even-numbered days in the activity room on the second floor, all provided by the local government for free. We have a dozen stage performances every year (Lu Jiayou, group interview, April 23 2019).

To my surprise, the dozen stage performances Lu mentioned were his group's exclusive performances. Other performances include the "sending drama to the countryside" series of activities planned and organised by relevant government departments, the mass weekend performances held regularly by the local, and the cultural and artistic activities organised spontaneously by neighbouring fishing villages. Lu Jiayou contacted most of these performances by himself, and some took the initiative to invite them because of their excellent reputation. In addition, the group also participates in some "platter" performances. In recent years, it has also continued to recruit new members.

About the purpose of joining the group, one member said, “it is out of interest. We are happy to have a stage to perform on. Most of us are retired at home; I feel singing fishing *haozi* is better than playing poker” (*Zhenhaitian* mass culture cooperative, group interview, 23 April 2019). Another member replied, “after hearing (*haozi*) so much, we are convinced by him (Lu Jiayou). He is a good leader and a good singer!” (*Zhenhaitian* mass culture cooperative, group interview, April 23 2019). A third member even shared a story with me straight away, “I remember the year we went to Nanjing to perform. After the show, one elder was so excited that he went backstage and shook Mr Lu’s hand, saying that he was a wanderer who had been away from his hometown many years and was grateful to hear the familiar *haozi* today”(*Zhenhaitian* mass culture cooperative, group interview, 23 April 2019).

Other members have also talked about it. In general, most people join the art group based on self-entertainment and enriching their spare time. In addition, Lu’s charisma as an organiser and performer is an important factor that attracts members to come.



Figure 2.5: Performance Celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy, Lu and his art group members, 23 April 2019, photographed by Li Weiyang.

From the above information and interviews, Lu's art group shows similar characteristics to his school heritage activities:

a. The establishment of his art troupe predates his inheritor status, and even the predecessor of his art troupe may be related to his early work as a local literary propagandist.
b. The members are mainly residents, with a few professional fishermen and no professional performers.
c. Through years of development, the art group has developed a more mature performance style, with sufficient programs to support its special performances.
d. In addition to some mass performances in cooperation with the government, a significant proportion of the performances of the Art Troupe are organized by Lu Jiayou alone.

EFFECT C

Cultural Display for the Outsiders: Local Tourism Platforms

At a time when the country is vigorously developing eco-tourism, Jianggang is rapidly growing into a hot tourist town in the Yangtze River Delta region with the three business cards of "Bird Paradise", "Yellow Sea Wetland", and "Plain Forest".

Lu Jiayou and his mass art group have taken full advantage of this tourism development opportunity, performing mainly in two natural scenic spots in Jianggang: the Yellow Sea Forest Park and the *Tiaozini* scenic spot.

The Yellow Sea Forest Park is the largest artificial ecological forest park in East China. The State Forestry Administration approved it as a national forest park in December 2015 and selected it as a national forest health base in March 2020. The

park received 620,000 visitors cumulatively during the Mid-Autumn Festival and National Day holiday in 2020 alone. The Yellow Sea Ecoregion, where the *Tiaozini* Scenic Area is located, is one of the world's most important coastal wetland ecosystems and an essential area in the migratory route of migratory birds from East Asia to Australia. Before it developed, it attracted many bird watchers and photographers from home and abroad. At the 43rd World Heritage Conference on July 5, 2019, the *Tiaozini* Wetland was successfully declared a World Natural Heritage Site. In 2020 alone, the scenic area received nearly one million visitors.

Lu Jiayou and his art group's performances in the two scenic spots are mainly concentrated during the peak tourist season in May and October every year. Their performances sometimes appear arbitrarily on the beach to interact with tourists. Sometimes they perform more formally on a stage in the central area of the scenic spot. Their performances continue to be dominated by the suite of fishermen's *haozi*. Lu Jiayou believes such performances can take advantage of the unique natural environment to give visitors a more immersive feeling, which is a good way for visitors to understand the fishermen's *haozi* and culture.
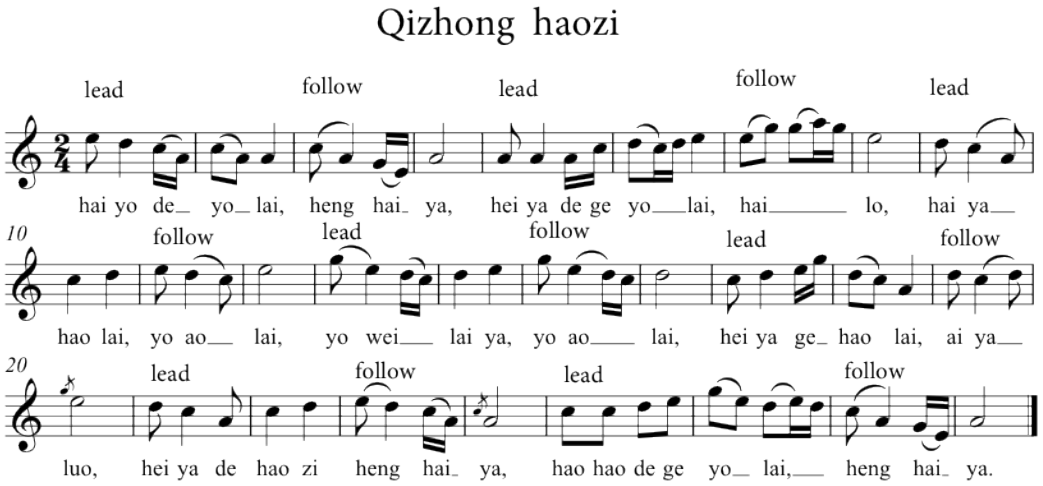
So far, synthesizing the above-mentioned rich life experience of Lu Jiayou and the diverse heritage activities he has carried out over the years, in my opinion, shows the characteristics of relevance, diversity and precognition. Before being an official inheritor, he already had multiple identities as a performer, teacher, organiser, and creator in his inheritance practice. These identities all present a continuous, stable, and balanced state. Therefore, when revealing his self-perception identity, I can only give an abstract generalization based on his multiple identities rather than a particular figurative identity. That abstract generalization is that of practitioner. I define this as a person who, based on self-knowledge, self-reflection, and self-confidence, consciously and sincerely practices the duties and responsibilities assigned to him by himself under the action of certain external forces with his innermost love and pride.

After analysing the self-identity of Lu Jiayou, in the following section I will focus on the music of these *haozi*, with examples of the scores coming from both publications and videos of live performances.

2.2.3 Fishermen's Haozi in Collections of Folk Song

These detailed music scores are from the two official records. One is the *Zhongguo minjian gequ jicheng · jiangsujuan* (Chinese Folk Songs Anthology · Jiangsu Volume), the specific music is notated by Yu Qinxiang, Wan Tiaishan, Zhu Xinhua in the 1980s; the other is the composer Zhou Keqin's fieldwork in the 1990s.

a. *Qizhong haozi*
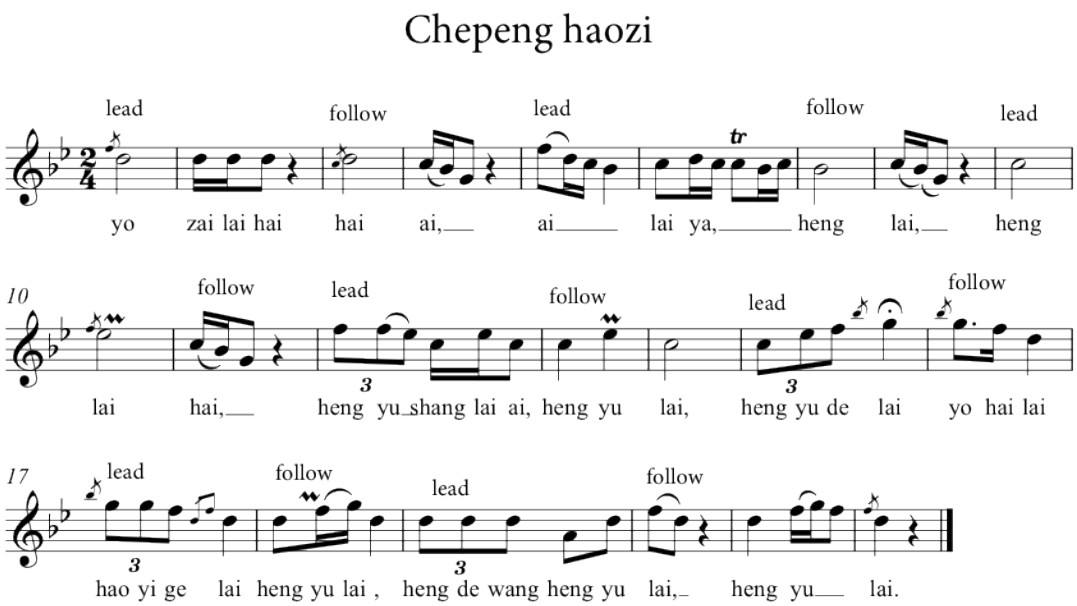


Ex. 2.8 Provided by *Zhongguo minjian gequ jicheng · jiangsujuan* (Chinese Folk Songs Anthology · Jiangsu Volume), p. 397-398. sung by anonymous, transcribed by Yu Qinxiang, Wan Taishan.

The *haozi*[39] revolves around the classic Chinese pentatonic scale of C, D, E, G, A. Among the seven musical phrases composed of 28 bars, the final notes are all single tone with two beats, and the melody almost falls on the two tones of A and E. Each musical phrase starts with the syncopation rhythm and combines the most basic quarter and eighth notes. It has strong repeatability and is easy to learn.

b. *Chepeng haozi*

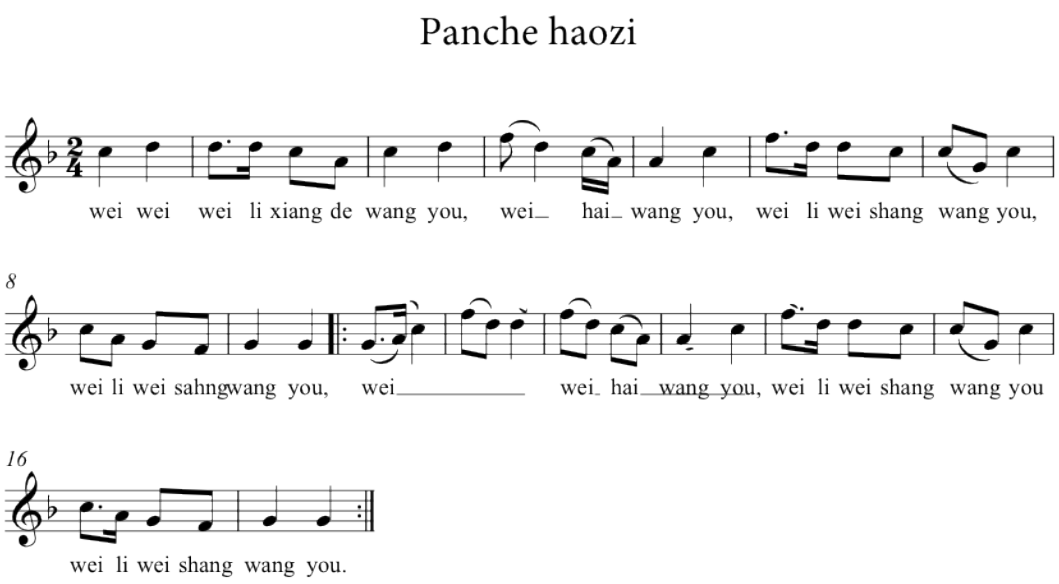
[39] *Qizhong haozi* is mainly used when fishermen carry large instruments, such as mast, anchors, nets, sails and so on.



Ex. 2.9 Provided by *Zhongguo minjian gequ jicheng · jiangsujuan* (Chinese Folk Songs Anthology · Jiangsu Volume), p. 388. sung by Lu Jiayou, transcribed by Zhu Xinhua.

The combination of the half note and the first sixteen notes in the first two sections of the song repeatedly appears as the music motivation of the song, with an intense rendering. Secondly, it is worth noting that in each following part; the starting sound is the same as the ending sound of the lead part; in the actual situation, the followers only need to follow and keep the same pitch of last note by the leader each sentence, which is very easy for novices to understand and learn.
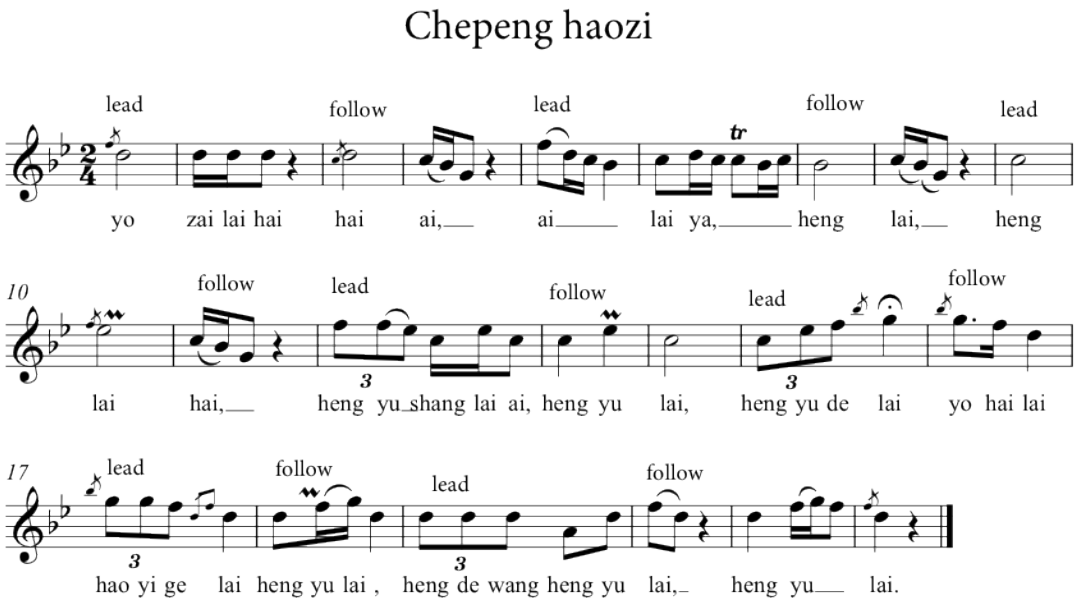
c. *Panche haozi*



Ex. 2.10 Provided by *Zhongguo minjian gequ jicheng · jiangsujuan* (Chinese Folk Songs Anthology · Jiangsu Volume), p. 386. sung by anonymous, transcribed by Yu Qinxiang, Wan Taishan.

This *haozi* repeatedly forms melody around the four tones of G, A,C, E and the rhythm adds more swing feeling when singing because of the addition of dotted notes and syncopation. The structure of the whole song is simple and clear. The part before repetition can be regarded as a, and the repeated part is a1. The second half of the two sentences are basically the same.
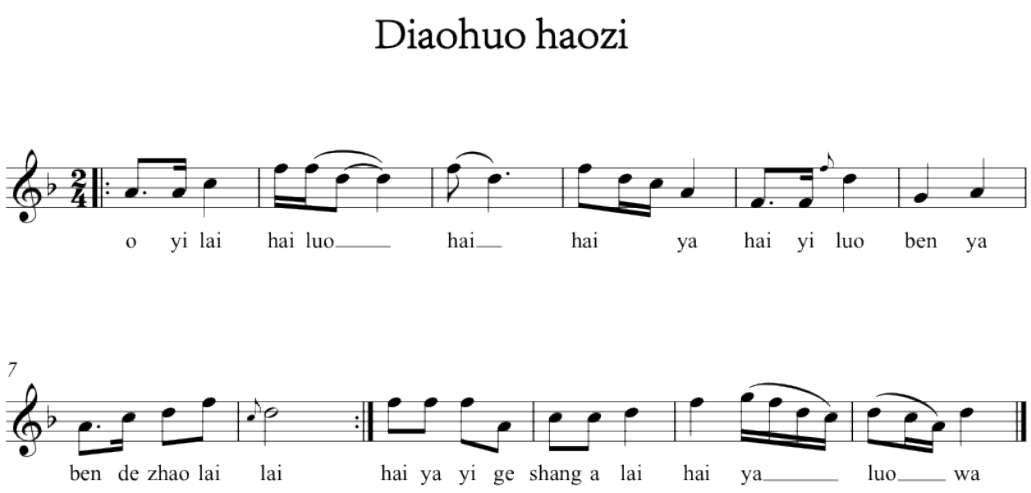
d. *Ceshui haozi*



Ex. 2.11 Provided by Lu Jiayou, sung by Lu Jiayou, transcribed by Zhou Keqin.

Ceshui haozi is the only solo song sung by the lead singer. It has a long melody and a free rhythm. In this score example, it is clearly seen the three music phrases (each has four bars): A, A1 and A2. The first and fourth bars of each phrase basically use the same sound structure and melody trend, and the middle parts are slightly different. This difference often depends on the lead singer's personal style and voice characteristics. In addition to judging by the musical material, the basis for such a division is also reflected in the lyrics, where all three lines are structured with a tone adjunct plus the data of the water measurement (contents) plus the tone adjunct.

e. *Diaohuo haozi*
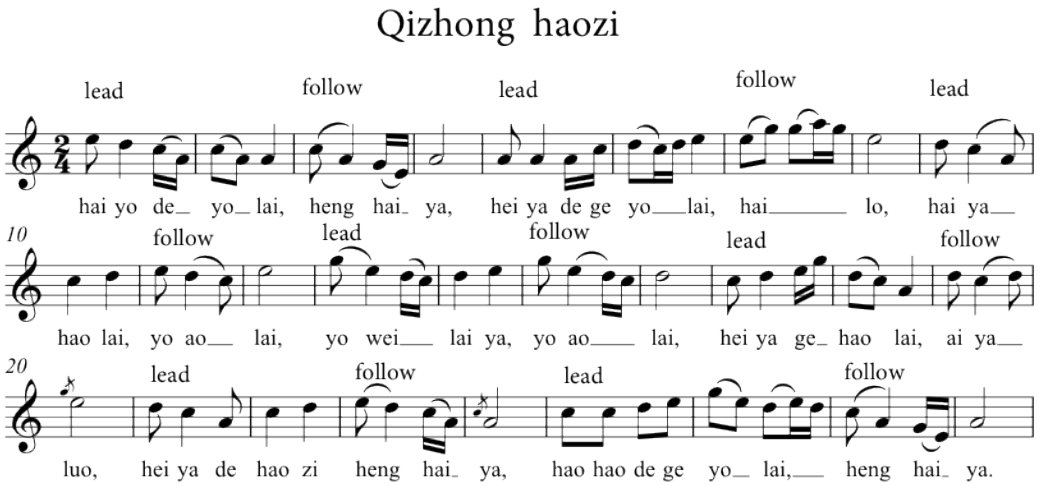


Ex. 2.12 Provided by Lu Jiayou, transcribed by Lu Jiayou et al., scored by Zhou Keqin.

2.2.4 Fishermen's Haozi in Recorded Live Performance

In this part, all the performance are from Lu Jiayou and his members. There are three versions, two videos released by the app *Douyin*: one is Jiangsu Intangible Culture Exhibition, posted on 20 November 2020; the other is the local cultural exhibition in Jianggang Primary School, posted on November 3 2021. The remaining version is from my fieldwork, recorded on 23 April 2019.

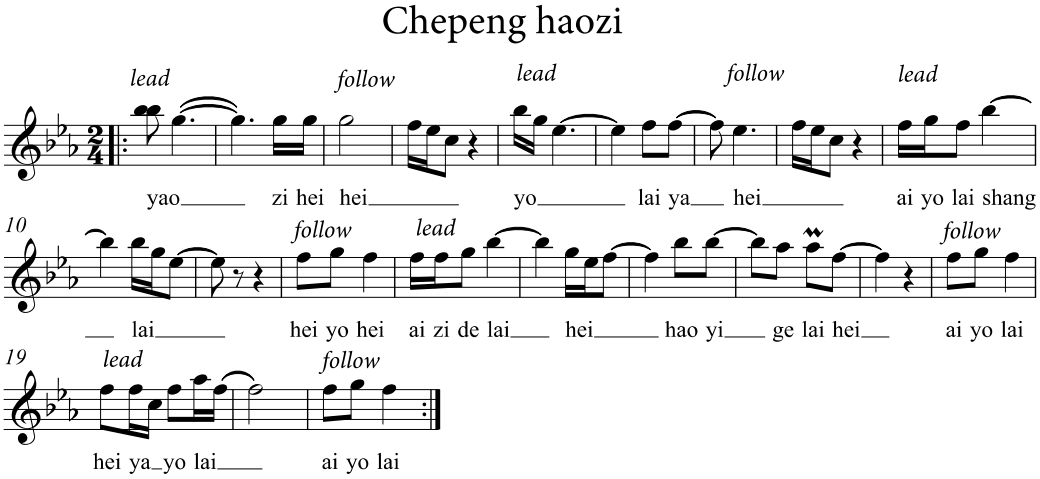
Through my repeated comparison, I found that the musical scores recorded for each *haozi* in the three versions are essentially identical, and the difference is negligible, therefore, only the one final version of the musical scores is offered in the following.

a. *Qizhong haozi*
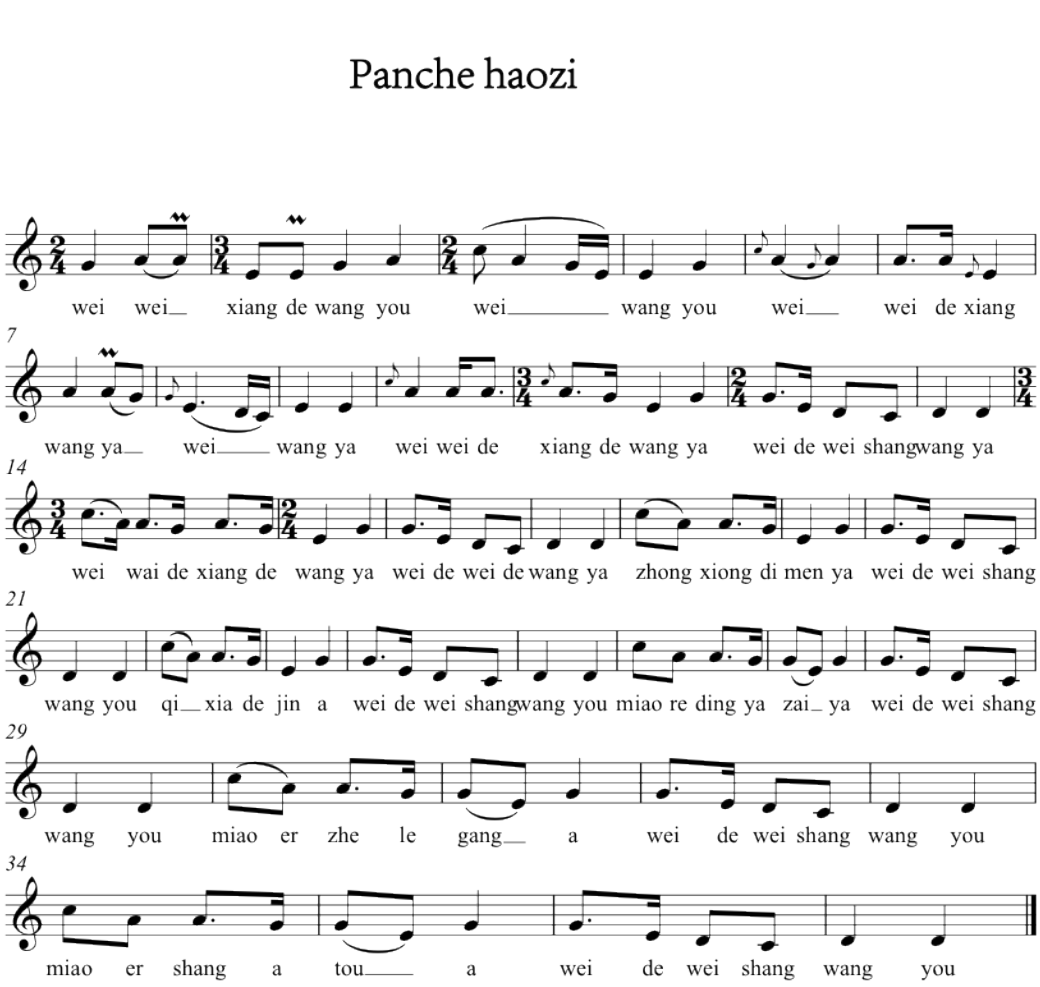


Ex. 2.13 Sung by Lu Jiayou and his members in *Zhenhaitian*, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

b. *Chepeng haozi*
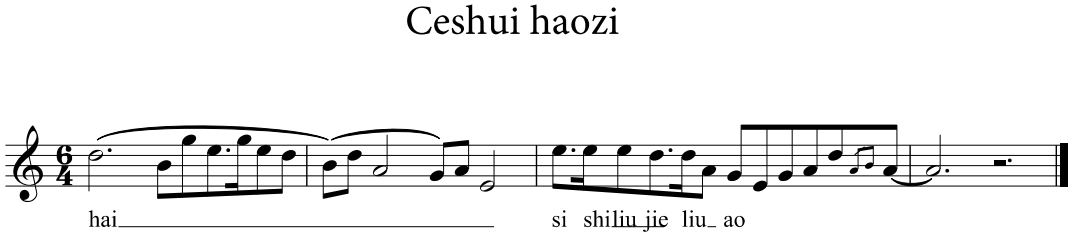


Ex. 2.14 Sung by Lu Jiayou and his members in *Zhenhaitian*, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

c. *Panche haozi*



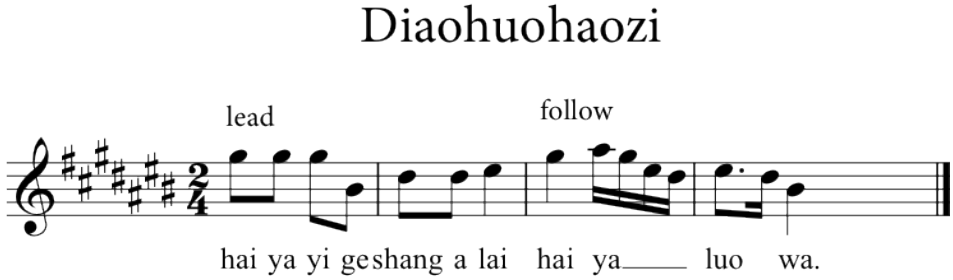
Ex. 2.15 Sung by Lu Jiayou and his members in *Zhenhaitian*, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

d. *Ceshui haozi*
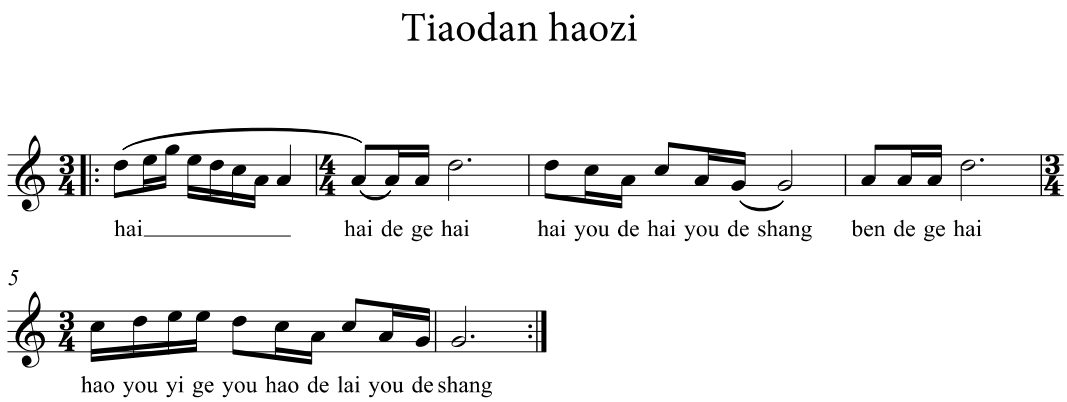


Ex. 2.16 Sung by Lu Jiayou and his members in *Zhenhaitian*, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

e. *Diaohuo haozi*



Ex. 2.17 Sung by Lu Jiayou and his members in *Zhenhaitian*, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

f. *Tiaodan haozi*



Ex. 2.18 Sung by Lu Jiayou and his members in *Zhenhaitian*, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

The Fishermen's Haozi Suite: Reproduction and Restoration of a LabourScene

Unlike the actual operation of Fengli Fishermen's Music Chen Yonglong and Sang Nailin on the ship, the fishermen's *haozi* suite presented by Lu Jiayou and his team members is based on the shaping and reproduction of fishing scenes and the whole process of labour by combining sound with figurative movements, which is essentially an artistic creation and artistic performance.

The fishermen's *haozi* suite consists of six fishermen's *haozi*. The order of performance is the same as the order of analysis of the above music scores: *Qizhong haozi, Chepeng haozi, Panche haozi, Ceshui haozi, Diaohuo haozi* and *Tiaodan haozi*, which cover the whole process of the actual fishing operation.

Its musical details are as follows:

Each time, according to the live demands, 12 to 15 people usually attend the performance. In the actual live performance, they do not have any musical accompaniment. Lu is the only one who can decide the musical pitch.

Through careful and repeated observation, I found an interesting fact about Lu, whether in the actual performance, rehearsal or teaching process, he basically kept the same melody and rhythm, in other words improvisation was rare in his performances. However, he would unconsciously adjust his start pitch according to his vocal condition and the atmosphere that day, which usually makes the whole group's pitch change. Take *Qizhong haozi*, for example. On 20 November, 2020, at the Jiangsu Intangible Culture Exhibition, his pitch was equivalent to E flat major. On 7 October, 2021, the show for tourists on the beach of *Tiaozini* travelling spot, his pitch was equivalent to D major. On 1 May, 2021, the show for tourists on the stage of *Tiaozini* travelling spot, his pitch was equivalent to B flat major. On 3 November, 2021, his pitch was equivalent to C major at the local cultural exhibition in Jianggang Primary School.

I thought there are two main reasons for this fact:

a. From his professional experience, his identity is more related to music and culture than that of a professional fishermen. He is an amateur musician and did not accept professional training or form muscle memory by perennial fishing work.

b. According to my interview, Lu Jiayou was more interested in the completeness of his actual performance than in the perfection of his musical pitch. Because the reproduction of different fishing links is involved, the stage movement line adjustment and action coordination are often carried out according to different *haozi* in the performance. Therefore, whether each member can master *haozi* and the tacit cooperation among members has always been his focus.

In a word, Lu did not care much about whether his pitch should be perfect or whether people should sing as high as he could. His inheritance standard of fishermen's *haozi* always been to let more know, understand, participate and be able to feel the joy of performing the *haozi*.

Additionally, if we compare the scores from the publication above to the scores from the actual performance here, we can see that Lu Jiayou largely adheres to the tune that has been passed down for generations or, at the very least, keeps the song's core melody, without resorting to improvised embellishments. Over the years, the musical fixity (a template or blueprint) of his singing and teaching have also greatly promoted and secured the widespread popularity and dissemination effect of fishermen's *haozi* in Jianggang.

2.2.5 Locality-oriented Inheritance

In addition to the self-identity of Lu as a practitioner in this case, his inheritance activities, whether performance, guidance or teaching, the scope of inheritance are centred on the town of Jianggang, and the participating groups are mostly residents who are descendants of fishermen or fishermen's relatives. It seems that as long as someone wants to learn the fishermen's *haozi*, they can follow Lu Jiayou for a period of time, and they will soon be able to sing the same as he does.

I still vividly remember Lu Jiayou's murmur during my fieldwork when he happened to talk about the next inheritor, "I haven't considered who will be the next inheritor. Many members and the students could sing the *haozi*! Maybe everyone in Jianggang has a talent for learning and singing fishermen's *haozi*! "(Lu Jiayou, personal interview, 24 April 2019).

In my eye, his confidence stems from his choice and maintenance of locality-oriented inheritance. This choice and persistence may stem from his initial concern for the effectiveness of the event and the ease of dissemination, or it may be based on the fruitful results of his local heritage and the positive feedback from the local

community over the years. But more than that, it comes from his love and trust for his hometown and its people.

However, of the “talent” in his words, my interpretation is that Jianggang fishermen’s *haozi* is deeply rooted in Jianggang’s embedded fisherman culture. The “self-consciousness” of local people converged into a certain degree of “collective consciousness” in the same region or specific groups. It gradually formed a standard aesthetic orientation among regions after naturally being influenced by local history, culture, language and other elements. Moreover, this aesthetic orientation affected and strengthened regional music so that individuals in regions or groups finally formed a stable music aesthetic with prominent regional characteristics. Therefore, when they heard or learned about the fishermen’s *haozi*, they would have experienced a natural sense of closeness and acceptability, especially for the fishermen's families and descendants.

As for Lu Jiayou himself, I found some of his music habits also facilitate locality-oriented inheritance. For example, his special background as an intermediary with multiple identities, that is, he has been a fisherman, a local literary backbone and an amateur musician at the same time. He knows enough about fishermen’s culture and has ability to recreate and spread it widely. His voice is less rough and primitive than that of a long-term professional fisherman, more bright and mellow, close to the aesthetic needs of ordinary people for sound, so the inexperienced public could more easily accept his teaching. Moreover, Lu Jiayou’s own singing did not add too many elements of personal improvisation. He often used the way of seeing the music scores in his teaching. This approach is more efficient than word-of-mouth and ensures that teaching has maximum effectiveness.

2.3 Lüsi Fishermen’s *Haozi*

Lüsi fishermen’s *haozi* has four chapters, thirteen songs in total. The four chapters involve all aspects of fishermen’s lives: going to sea, fishing, catching tide, and returning to port. The first part is mainly *Dacao* (mowing) *haozi*, *Longsheng*

(gathering rope) *haozi*, *Lawang* (pulling) *haozi*, *Dianshui* (water measuring) *haozi*, *Qimao* (anchor) *haozi*, etc. The second part is generally made up of *Wangbang* (slipping net) *haozi*, *Shouyü* (loading) *haozi*, etc. The third part is mainly composed of *Jiechao* (catching tide) *haozi*, *Tiaoxian* (carrying fresh goods) *haozi*, and most of them are sung by women. The last part is mainly composed of *Chengxian* (weighing) *haozi*, *Buwang* (darning) *haozi*, etc. Lüsi fishermen's *haozi* has no fixed music scores, its performance features are natural, instant lyrics, instant emotion and flexibility.

2.3.1 From Cultural Officer to the Inheritor

The main inheritor's name is Xia Aling, and he has rich working experience at the local cultural grass-roots level. Here is his basic information:

Xia Alin, a male born in July 1954, is currently the representative inheritor of the provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage of Lüsi fisherman's *haozi*. He is the local person in Lüsi. He had been farming at home before 1976. He worked in the local literary troupe from 1976 to 1979. He was the head of the cultural station in many towns(Tianfeng/ Qintan/ Dayang Port/ Lüsi) from 1979 to 2004.

After a few unsuccessful trips to Lüsi Town to interview Xia Alin, I returned to Qidong. One day, while collecting peripheral materials, I suddenly received a notice from the Lüsi Culture Museum that Xia Alin would return home from Wuxi this afternoon. I immediately called a car to Lüsi, and called on Xia at his home. When I walked to his door, his wife was cleaning the open space in front of the door with a broom. She was well-dressed and stylish compared to the middle-aged women usually seen in fishing villages. She greeted me warmly and indicated that Xia Alin was already waiting for me on the second-floor balcony. After a narrow staircase, I arrived at the balcony, which it recreated as a space to rest, chat and drink tea, with the sunlight coming straight in through the roof's large panes of glass, making it warm and bright. Xia Alin looked even thinner than in the photo. He wore plain clothes and had a heavy blanket over his legs. While gesturing for me to sit down, he explained that he is now living permanently in his son's home in Wuxi for health reasons. He has returned this time for the regular performance checking that the local cultural museum conducts for the Intangible Cultural Heritage inheritor.

After exchanging pleasantries for a while, he started to tell me the reasons for his learning *haozi* and how he came to learn it:

> I learned *haozi* from my father, but not just for fishing labour. At that time, the reality of a difficult life situation made my father realize that fishing could not fully support the family's livelihood, so he chose to work out of town. One day, when he returned, he found I had nothing to do at home. He asked me whether I wanted to learn *haozi* and told me its benefits. He said Lüsi is a special place, *haozi* in all walks of life, master *haozi* is equivalent to having the great ability and can get more working opportunities. The family can also rest assured when they hear the sound of *haozi*, knowing their children must be working and have not done anything terrible. Moreover, the *haozi* can strengthen the body and help you breathe sufficiently, not hurt yourself when doing heavy work. That is the beginning of my learning *haozi*. Later, I became an officer of the cultural station; because of the need for stage performances, I went on board and learned specifically from the captain for a while (Xia Alin, personal interview, 31 December 2020).

There are two points worth noting in the above account of Xia Alin:

a. Although he was born into a family of fishermen, he did not take it for granted that he would naturally get on a boat to inherit the status of a professional fisherman and learn fishermen's *haozi*. He was motivated to learn because *haozi* was an expression of local competence, especially for the labour market.
b. It was only after he became a cultural officer that he actually went on board and learned by the captain, as other fishermen did, not for the sake of labour, but for the sake of adaption for the stage performance.

However, one organisation has become more famous and representative of Lüsi fishermen's *haozi* than Xia Alin. This is the Xiajiaban, which he organised and established.

2.3.2 Xia Alin and the Xiajiaban

Xiajiaban is an honorary title to describe Xia's family performing team, which, in addition to Xia Alin, consisted of his father and his five uncles, Xia Wenbin, Xia Wenfu, Xia Wenfa, Xia Wengui, Xia Wenzong and Xia Wenzhong (names in the order of the brothers). They were all born and grew up in Lüsi town. Four professional fishermen are in the Xiajiaban: the Xia family's second, third, fifth, and sixth sons. Among them, Xia Wenfu and Xia Wenfa are the *haozi* leaders in the team. The former has long been known locally for its high-pitched, emotionally charged voice. Xia Alin describes and comments on this as follows:

> My second uncle did not learn fishermen's *haozi* from my grandfather, his *haozi* formed naturally, and no one could imitate his voice. In the past, even if I could not see him, whether he was on board or the shoreside, as long as I heard the voice, I knew it was him and what he was doing. There are no more than five people in Lüsi with such a good voice like him. His *haozi* was shouted out; shouting and singing are different. Singing *haozi* is the technique; shouting *haozi* is about life. In those days, only shouted *haozi* could make everyone hear on boats and make people work together. Only by working together could people catch fish and feed the family. On windy or stormy days, shouted *haozi* could even be life-saving. So shout *haozi* means living and surviving (Xia Alin, personal interview, 31 December 2020).

However, the excellent voice of Xia Wenfu and the Xia family's rich fishing tradition was not the direct motivation for the establishment of Xiajiaban. Its establishment dates back to the 1980s, started by a "questioning".

> At that time, I worked as the head of the cultural station in Qintan Town, Qidong. One day, relevant cultural personnel in Nantong City came to investigate the culture and tradition in Lüsi. On their way, they heard that everyone in Lüsi could sing *haozi*; they doubted it, so they asked me if I could organise the locals in Lüsi to perform a *haozi* program at the next mass gala. I was at a loss where to start with this sudden request. Facing the tight preparation time and the high quality, I suddenly thought of my father and five uncles. They were professional fishermen and were familiar with fishermen's *haozi* so much; more crucially, because of the blood ties and long-term work together, their tacit understanding of voice and physical coordination is much beyond the average person. It would be enough to convince everyone if I could persuade them to perform *haozi* (Xia Alin, personal interview, 31 December 2020).

The process of persuasion was not as easy as it might expect. Xia's Brother was eventually willing to go on stage because Xia Alin offered the remuneration and guaranteed that their work points would not be affected. The good thing was that they hardly had to spend any time rehearsing. Their usual appearance with a little retouching was carried straight onto the stage, completing the performing task successfully. In this way, Xiajiaban was officially established.

In the following section, I will focus on the achievements and impact of the Xiajiaban as a family performing group.

2.3.3 The Assistance of the Times: the Prosperity of Xiajiaban

In Lüsi Town's fishing sector, there is an unwritten law. Considering the older people's health safety, the elderly above sixty usually are not permitted to return to work onboard. As a result, Xia's Brothers gradually departed the boat and concentrated on the performances. From 2000 to 2012, Xiajiaban's stage performance was its golden period, reaching its peak between 2010 and 2012. Among them, two performing experiences (awards) became the turning points in their life.

Song King Award

In July 2004, the Xiajiaban went to Zuoquan County, Shanxi Province attend the "National Folk Song Challenge Competition" held by the Ministry of Culture (see Figure 2.6). The competition attracted nearly 200 singers from 25 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government signed up, with a total of more than 100 programs. The requirements for the competition were to sing in national languages or dialects; without accompaniment; wearing distinctive national costumes; advocating non-professional and singers to attend; emphasising the traditional singing method and traditional form of original ecological folk songs. The Zuoquan County folk custom performance, outstanding award-winning artistic performance and "folk song academic seminar" were also held during the event. After some fierce competition, Xiajiaban won the only "Song King Award" in the Han region.

The competition and the subsequent academic symposium are important landmarks in the history of Chinese folk songs, with far-reaching consequences, especially where the exploration of original folk songs is concerned . In his article, Xu Tianxiang summarizes the background, content and significance of the academic symposium triggered by this competition, i.e., Chinese folk songs are standing at a crossroads, whether to protect? Develop? Or should we leave them to their own devices? Against this background, a group of educated people who cared about Chinese folk songs took the opportunity via the Ministry of Culture to hold the "Second Chinese North-South Folk Song Competition" which met in Zuoquan, Shanxi, the "Hometown of Folk Songs", from August 24 to 25, 2004, to discuss the history, current situation and future of Chinese folk songs, the conference focused on the survival and measures of folk songs, the significance and problems of folk song competitions, the definition of folk songs, the concept of original ecology, etc (Xu 2005: 124). The immediate response brought by this competition and symposium was the rapid popularity of the term "Original Ecology" in China. This original fervour also led to phenomenal programs, individuals and works, such as the 12th National Youth Singer Grand Prix, the original singer A Bao, and the Impressions series directed by Zhang Yimou.

Thus after the competition, the Xiajiaban also gained great attention and repute; many high-profile performance invitations came one after another. In August of the same year, they went to Beijing as the singer king to participate in the “National Original Folk Song Concert” co-sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, Education, and Finance. In December 2004, at the invitation of CCTV, they participated in a special interview in the artistic life column of Warm 2004.



Figure 2.6: Xiajiaban Participated in the 2nd China North-South Folk Song Competition, photograph provided by Xia Wengui, 15 May 2019.

Star Awards

In September 2007, as a representative of Jiangsu Province, XiaJiaban participated in the semi-finals of the national "Stars Award" in Foshan, Guangdong, and successfully entered the finals of Yichang, Wuhan in November of the same year (see Figure 2.7).

The Star Award is the highest government award in the field of mass literature and art in China. From 1991 to 2002, one or two categories were selected each year. Since 2004, the awards have been incorporated into the Chinese Art Festival, which is

held every three years and is divided into seven categories and three groups. Xiajiaban won the performance award of the elderly group of the 14th Stars Award.

The honour enabled Xiajiaban to strengthen its social influence and reputation further, establishing it as a representative of local mass culture. Since then, Xia's image has appeared many times in national television programs, stages, and video works. In Lüsi, the most important fishing festival every year proclaims the start of the new year's harvest order with the sound of the Xia family's *haozi*. Additionally, Xiajiaban also performed in various commercial performances.



Figure 2.7: Xiajiaban participated in the 10th Group Star Award Music Final, photograph provided by Xia Wengui, 15 May 2019.

Responding to the busy performance schedule of Xiajiaban, Xia Alin's wife, who was juggling a carer's role and a management role in the team, added that,

> When the Xiajiaban is at its peak, we were busy almost all year round. There were three to five significant performances a year and countless smaller ones. In addition to some of the platforms provided by the government, we also performed in private events such as corporate openings (Xu Jindi, personal interview, 31 December 2020).

Two top government performance awards, a large number of high-level and high-profile stage practices and a variety of media, scholars and observation teams coming every year made members of Xiajiaban's visibility far beyond the ordinary fishermen and even professional performers in general. The recognition of the performer's identity in their hearts also subconsciously exceeds that of the fishermen. In the following, I will show through two field examples their different attitudes when confronted with public performances versus individual interviews.

The two visits mainly focused on the second (Xia Wenfu) and fourth (Xia Wengui) uncles of the Xia family. One visit was to know the general situation of Xiajiaban accompanied by the director of the local cultural station; the other was for the individual situation of the two Xia brothers in the meeting room of the village committee for a targeted supplementary interview.

In my first visit, when I informed him of my intention to visit Xia's family to the local cultural station manager, his light-hearted eyes and easy gestures showed that I was just one of many visitors. He said a few words to the people around him, took the car keys and said follow me.

We drove all the way to the entrance of Xia's village, and went to Xia's house on foot. The road from the village entrance to Xia's house was not too close, but every villager we met on the way seemed to know our destination, greeting the head of the cultural station familiarly while pointing the way to Xia' house. The homes of the two Xia brothers were very close to each other. We first came to Xia Wenfu's house, which is a two-story tiled house. Entering the house, we noted that Xia Wenfu and Xia Wengui had been waiting for a long time. In addition to the basic furniture furnishings in the house, two things immediately caught my attention. One was the

wooden storage cabinet next to the refrigerator; through the glass, a variety of Chinese baijiu placed inside. The second was a row of wooden photo frames placed against the wall on two dappled desks by the window. Inside were group photos of important Xia's performances and large reports from the paper media. I looked around for a while and then sat down. At this time, I found that besides the head of the cultural station and me, some other people I didn't know had come into the room. Everyone greeting each other familiarly in dialect, and in a short while, the few benches next to me were filled with people. The arrival of the guests and friends created a lively atmosphere, and after a few simple pleasantries, 84-year-old Xia Wenfu got excited and instantly asked for an impromptu performance of a piece of *haozi*.

At that time, he came to the centre of the room, set his mind, cough a few times, and say jokingly, "Let me warm up!" This confidence and ease of performing in front of a crowd made me ashamed of myself, a so-called professional with many years of vocal performance training. Throughout the performance, he was passionate. Sometimes adjusting his posture with the rise and fall of his voice, sometimes making eye contact with the crowd, sometimes pacing slightly and changing his gestures; his performance was completed with a flourish, naturally and smoothly. No matter how he moved, his performance status remained stable, and his sound of *haozi* remained high, loud and impressive. It was clear that he was enjoying the performance. After the song, he bent down and bowed, and the crowd applauded and applauded. Xia Wenfu said with great pride, "this is the *haozi* where we got the award; we welcome everyone to come and listen often!" (Xia Wenfu, personal interview, 15 May 2019).

Compared to the outgoing and straightforward character of Xia Wenfu, Xia Wengui was more introverted and steady. He asked me to visit his house, a bungalow with simple facilities, only a few meters away. The wall of his inner room is also hung with the same photos of important performances of Xiajiaban. The difference was that he sorted and pasted the other paper news and reports in a notebook. All the materials were the same as Xia Wenfu. In addition to the introduction of the North-South Folk Song Competition and the Star Award, Xia Wengui also shared with me an experience they had teaching *haozi* at university:

> We (Xiajiaban) were hired by the Music Department of Nantong University in 2007 as singers of the Nantong Folk Music Research Office and taught the students of the Music Department to sing the fishermen's *haozi* in the form of lectures. After teaching it once, we all felt it was not effective to teach in this way. First of all, not many college students there can understand our dialect. Secondly, *haozi* is not just about singing; it is impossible to learn in a few days; students must follow us to eat and live with us and understand the labour process. It is not a wah-wah sung indiscriminately (*wawa luanjiao*) (Xia Wengui, personal interview, 15 May 2019).

The Xiajiaban and Lu Jiayou are diametrically opposed in terms of how they conduct ICH activities in school, both in terms of teaching effectiveness and teaching attitudes. It reminds us once again that the individual characteristics of seemingly similar cases of ICH often would lead to different results. Therefore, we must try to discover and respect these differences, whether in research or in formulating strategies, and refrain from viewing and guiding them in a standardized ground on the basis of subjective idea alone.

It was a few months before I saw the Xia Brothers again; this time I specially brought Chinese Baijiu as a gift for their agreeing to accept to be interviewed again. This time, the meeting was arranged in the meeting room of the village committee. After waiting more than ten minutes, I heard the roar of a motorcycle and the greeting sound of a TongDong dialect[40] coming from the door. I knew they were coming. After pouring tea and lighting cigarettes for them, the interview began. To my surprise, the interview was not as smooth and unproblematic as it could have been. The second uncle (Xia Wenfu), who should have been lively and encouraging, showed some impatience after hearing me ask questions about his fishing, family and study details. He answered sporadically, and always gave me the same reason (stating that he couldn't quite remember, because he was now older!). The fourth uncle (Xia

[40] Lüsi dialect refers to the dialect spoken in the eastern part of the old Nantong County (the county seat of which is the present-day Nantong City), which is an extremely rare dialect with a population of no more than 500,000 speakers and is in the process of gradual extinction.

Wengui) also responded in the same way. The interview lasted more than forty minutes and finally ended abruptly. When I reviewed and reflected on it that night, I thought the following reasons might have led to such a result.

a. As the core members of Xiajiaban, the second and fourth uncles have always been known for their performances and usually face the media, scholars or observer groups with live performances. Therefore, they lost most of their interest when they found it was only a one-to-one interview.
b. In the Xiajiaban, except for Xia Alin, the rest are all authentic and old fishermen with many years of fishing experience. They can perform but are not good at speech; therefore, over the years, the team has formed a habit of perceiving Xia Alin as the main speaker.
c. The interview that day was arranged in a severe and cold meeting room without any familiar people present, so the Xia Brothers, who like to be lively and are used to being noticed, naturally felt uncomfortable, bored and impatient.

Such a response is also more consistent with the above-mentioned attitude towards their teaching *haozi* in schools. In both interviews, the initiative, confidence, and proficiency displayed by the Xia brothers when performing in front of a crowd contrasted with the indifference, impatience, and disinterest displayed in the interviews that complemented their backgrounds, a contrast that also clearly reflected their self-perceived preference for and affirmation of their identity as performers.

2.3.4 Solid Helpers Behind the Scenes： Jiangsu Native Musicians and Huang Yunzhen

The success of Xiajiaban not only originated from the irreplaceable acting style and artistic charm constructed by blood ties, but also benefitted from the academic and cultural influence of the Lüsi fishermen's *haozi* itself, which has been accumulated

and laid down by a large number of folk musicians and university scholars through years of excavation, collation and later publication of their dedicated fieldwork.

The systematic and professional collection of Lüsi fishermen's *haozi* can be traced from the 1960s to the late 1980s.

In 1962, Zhang Zhongqiao, Deputy Secretary-General of the Jiangsu Musicians Association, led relevant musicians Wang Xiaotao, Guo Zhen, and Fei Chengjian to collect and sort out a total of eighteen fishermen's songs. In 1978, Chen Ruqing, a famous musician in Jiangsu Province, organised and led more than ten songwriters to visit Lüsi for fieldwork. In 1980, the Nantong Regional Bureau of culture organised folk song-collecting activities. The Qidong collecting group went deep into the fishing area for eight months to collect and record Lüsi's fishing songs and compiled and published a selection of folk songs in Nantong the following year, including 53 Lüsi's fishing songs. In 1987, the three sets of integrated census activities （Chinese Folktales collection, Chinese ballads collection, Chinese proverbs collection）with the enormous scale and the most significant number of people participating in collecting activities in Qidong history further improved the text reference materials of Lüsi fishermen's *haozi*.

The above series of collecting activities is based on fieldwork with high academic value, organised and participated by professionals in the early years. These collecting activities have the characteristics of extensive coverage, long duration, established an excellent interactive relationship with local people from all walks of life, including fishers, and published several influential music works. It has laid a solid text foundation and good influence for Lüsi fishermen's *haozi*.

However, it has attracted academic attention widely and is recognized as a masterpiece of the Yellow Sea fishermen's *haozi* is inseparable from the dedication and active promotion of Professor Huang Yunzhen of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music.

In 1985 and 1986, Huang led a folk music rescue group at the Shanghai Conservatory of music and went to Lüsi twice to collect fishermen's *haozi*. They not only recorded the melody and lyrics of *haozi* but also recorded the whole fishing labour production process on-site. When she went back to Shanghai, she published two academic papers based on fieldwork: "Lüsi yuhao de xuanlü xingcheng- xunmi

yinyue qiyuan de zongji" (The Melody Formation of Lüsi Fishermen's *Haozi* - Looking for the Trace of the Origin of Music) and "Chunchao gungun yuhao shengsheng" (The Spring Tide is Rolling, the Fishermen's *Haozi* is Heard).

On the subject of Huang's contribution to Lüsi fishermen's *haozi*, I had the honour to interview Huang Hui, former director of Qidong Municipal Bureau of culture, who accompanied Huang Yunzhen to collect back then, he said,
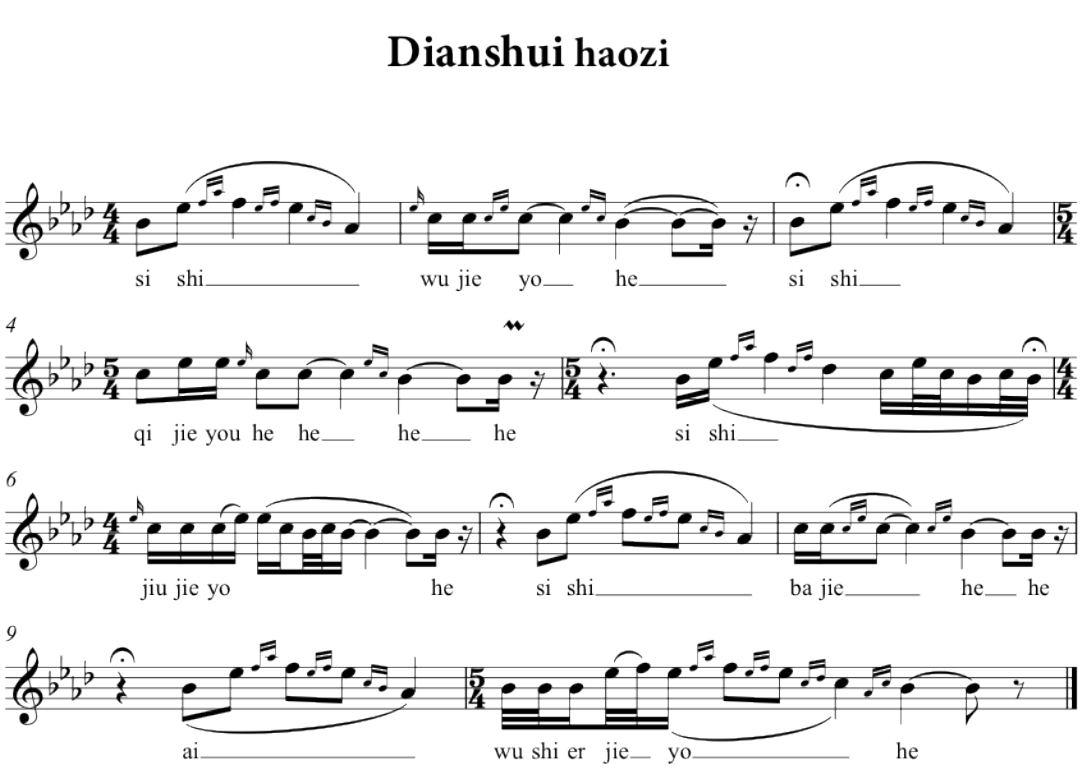
> At present, the relevant music scores and materials sorted out of Lüsi fishermen's *haozi* are mainly based on the recording and notes written by Huang Yunzhen, who came from the Shanghai Conservatory of music in the 1980s. Her contribution to our fishermen's *haozi* is great (Huang Hui, personal interview, 30 December 2020).

In the next section, I will focus on the music of Lüsi fishermen's *haozi*, especially the version of Xiajiaban's interpretation. The music scores are mainly derived from publications and my records based on their representative stage videos. Through analysing its music itself, I will summarize some performance habits and characteristics formed by the individual and collectives of the Xiajiaban during their live performances over the years, which have also become their irreplaceable marks and symbols as performers.

2.3.5 Fishermen's Haozi in Collections of Folk Song

The representative music score examples I picked are provided in this case are from the one published book- the *Nantong yuanshengtai min'ge jicheng* (*Nantong Original Ecological Folk Songs Anthology*), editor by Zhan Wan.

a. *Dianshui haozi*
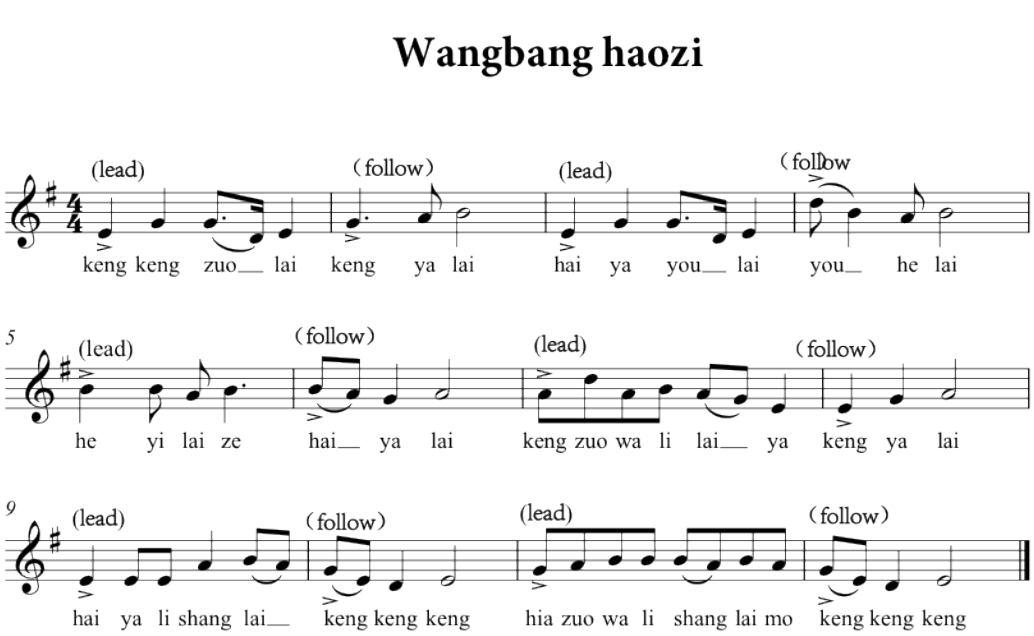


Ex. 2.19 Provided by *Nantong yuanshengtai min'ge jicheng* (Nantong Original Ecological Folk Songs Anthology), p. 747-748, sung by Peng Miaochen, recorded and transcribed by Huang Yangeng, Yu Gensheng, Fang Weiping and so on, edited by Zhan Wan.

In this *haozi*, we will find five obvious musical phrases and use the technique of *Hetou huanwei*[41]in traditional Chinese folk songs. The first half of each musical phrase is basically fixed and high pitched, and the second half is mostly improvised according to the specific labour situation of the measure water depth in the actual work. Free rhythm and wide range.

b. *Wangbang haozi*

[41] In the first half of each phrase, the melody rhythm, etc. basically remains the same, and in the second half, the music changes.
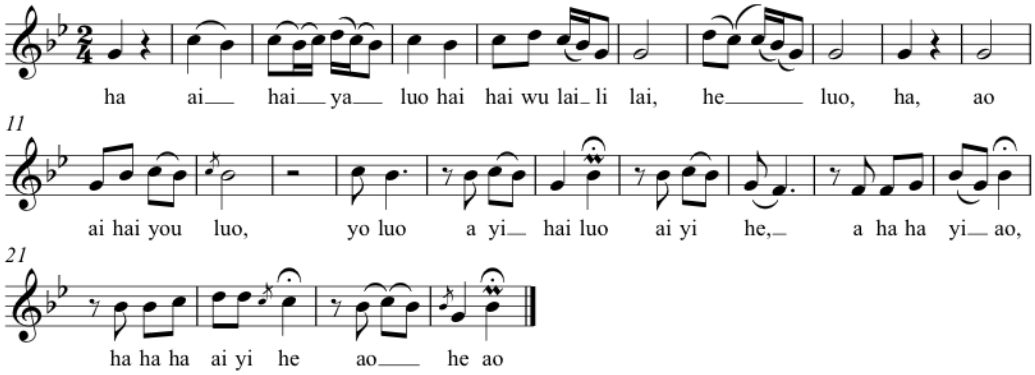


Ex. 2.20 Provided by *Nantong yuanshengtai min'ge jicheng* (Nantong Original Ecological Folk Songs Anthology), p. 746, sung by Tang Juesheng, recorded and transcribed by Huang Yangeng, Yu Gensheng, Fang Weiping, Fang Weiping, Huang Yunzhen, edited by Zhan Wan.

This *haozi*[42] uses several Chinese traditional technical of folk songs. the first and second phrases use the technique of *Hetou huanwei* , that is, the notes of the first and three bars are the same, and the second and fourth bars are different. However, the fifth and sixth phrases use the corresponding technique of *Hewei huantou*; namely, the notes of the tenth and twelfth bars are the same, the nine and eleven bars are different. From the fourth bar to the sixth bar used the technique of *Yaowei* (bite tails); namely, the last sound of each bar is the same as the first sound of the next bar. This structure is quite regular, catchy and easy to remember.

c. *Jiechao haozi*

[42] *Wangbang haozi* is called *Lawang haozi*, fishermen sing it when lifting the net.
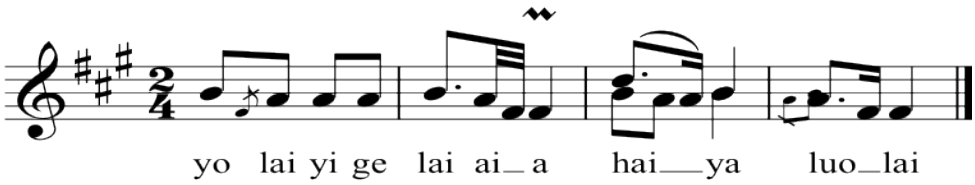
Jiechao haozi



Ex. 2.21 Provided by *Nantong yuanshengtai min'ge jicheng* (Nantong Original Ecological Folk Songs Anthology), p. 745, sung by Xia Alin, recorded and transcribed by Huang Yangeng, Yu Gensheng.

d. *Chucang haozi*

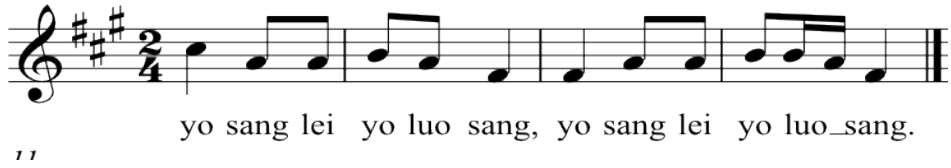
Chucang haozi



Ex. 2.22 Provided by *Nantong yuanshengtai min'ge jicheng* (Nantong Original Ecological Folk Songs Anthology), p. 752, sung by Zhang Haigen, transcribed by Li Yuan'e, Zhu Xiuwen, Li Weimin, Su Shuiya.

e. *Xiehuo*（discharge cargo）*haozi*

Xiehuo haozi



Ex. 2.23 Provided by *Nantong yuanshengtai min'ge jicheng* (Nantong Original Ecological Folk Songs Anthology), p. 753, sung by Wang Hejian, transcribed by Li Yuan'e.
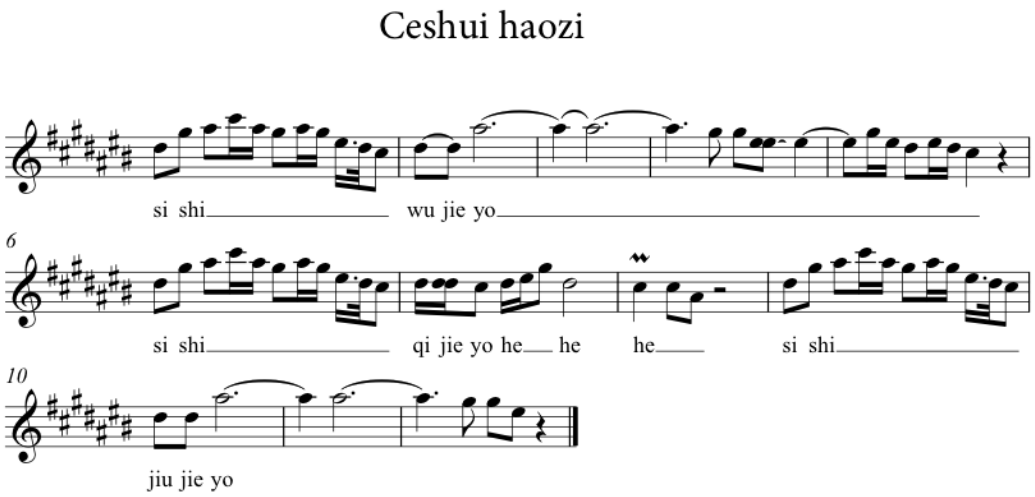
2.3.6 Fishermen's Haozi in live performance

Xiajiaban's live performance included two *haozi*: *Ceshui haozi* and *Wangbang haozi*. They use some spoken words like "*Kaichuanle"* 开船了(the ship is sailing), "*Qimaole"* 起锚了 (heave short) connected each other to make the show more storytelling and theatre effects.

Ceshui Haozi：*Xia Wenfu's own show*
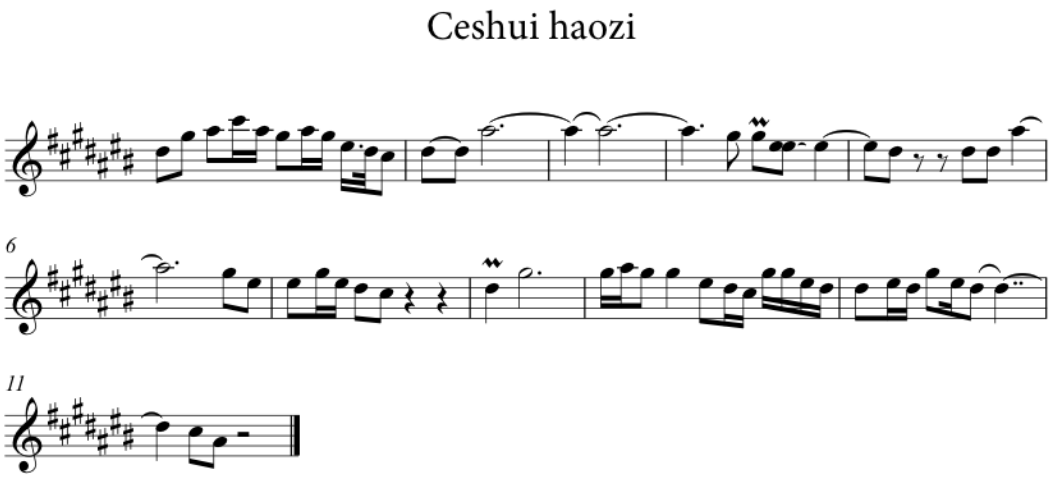
I picked three versions of *Ceshui haozi*. The first was recorded by me, during my fieldwork on 15 May, 2019. The second is from the promotional film *Ingenuity- Lüsi Fishermen's Haozi* produced by relevant governments on QQ video, posted on October 30, 2019. The third is the video by the invitational competition of Xiangshan National Fishermen's Song (*Haozi*) in September 2006, posted on Youku video, on May 3, 2014. The transcriptions below are notated by me.

VERSION A
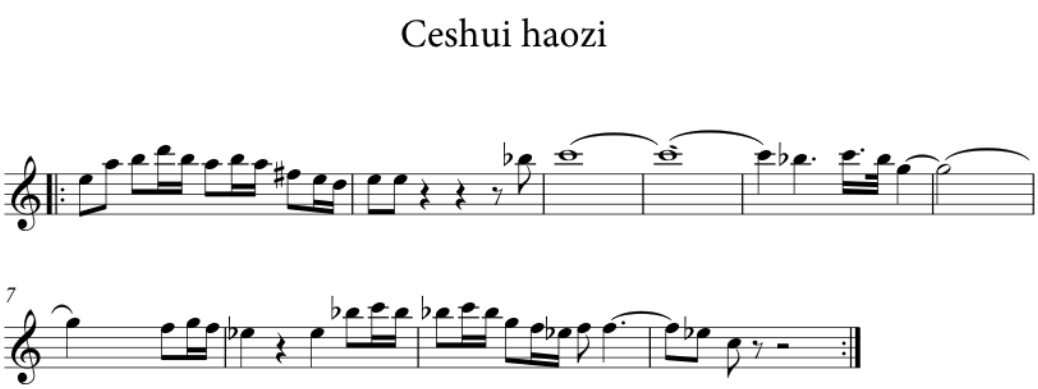


Ex. 2.24 Sung by Xia Wenfu, recorded in my fieldwork on 15 May, 2019, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

VERSION B



Ex. 2.25 Provided by QQ video, sung by Xia Wenfu, from the governmental promotional film *Ingenuity- Lüsi Fishermen's Haozi*, posted on 30 October, 2019, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

VERSION C



Ex. 2.26 Provided by Youku video, sung by Xia Wenfu, from the invitational competition of Xiangshan National Fishermen's Song (*Haozi)*, posted on 3 May, 2014, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

The *Ceshui haozi* is the pentatonic scale and its range of more than octaves. Its melody line twists and turns down at the treble and always adds the fisherman's individual unique drawl pitch at the end in the live performances. According to the actual situation of water measurement, the sentence pattern can be long or short, the number of sentences can be more or less, the note distribution between sentences can
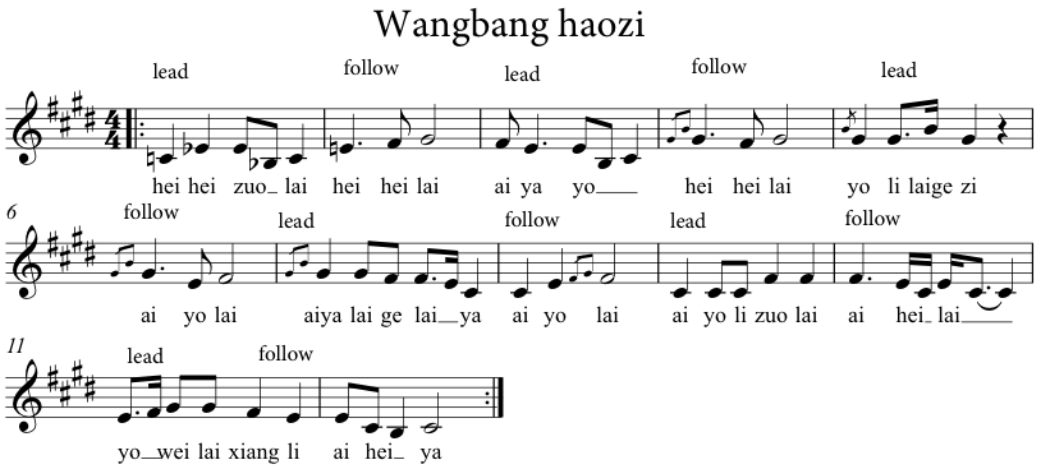
be sparse or dense, and the phrases can be repeated or changed. It often has strong personal characteristics and is richly embellished.

Ceshui haozi was always sung live by Xia Wenfu, and based on my live experience and repeated comparisons of its performance video, I believe his performance embodies the following characteristics:

a. He has a stable musical tone and a wide range; the highest pitch in the performance is equivalent to High D.
b. He is driven by an intense desire to perform. When he is in front of an audience, particularly during large-scale concerts and competitions, his musical tone is changed by a half-degree up and down. When confronted with certain pause sounds, he purposefully lengthens his phrases. The video's longest sound value is 15 beats, and when he extends the rhythm, he instinctively picks up on the audience's reaction and changes the pace in time with its clapping and cheers. This behaviour is similar to the audience's applause when a Peking Opera performer sings the highlight, which is doubles as a mark of recognition for the performer's performance. When he is excited to sing, he modifies closing sections by shouting rather than singing them.
c. He has a substantial gift for improvisation. Three different versions of music scores above in *Ceshui haozi* are pretty similar, but all have slight differences, including increase or decrease number of notes in the melody line, the strength of rhythm, the use of decorative sound, etc. These differences are all from Xia Wenfu's live improvisation. This kind of improvisation comes from his mood, state and occasion at that time, and it is hard for one to record the exact same versions from him.

Wangbang Haozi：The Tacit Cooperation of the Xia Brothers

I can only find one version of *Wangbang haozi*, which is the video by the invitational competition of Xiangshan National Fishermen's Song (*Haozi*) in September 2006, posted on Youku video, on 3 May, 2014, sung by the Xia brother.



Ex. 2.27 Provided by Youku video, sung by Xia Wenfu and the Xia's brothers, from the invitational competition of Xiangshan National Fishermen's Song (*Haozi*), posted on 3 May, 2014, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

I find that the Xia's brothers as a group have the following characteristics of tacit cooperation when singing *Wangbang haozi*:

a. The Xia brothers have a high degree of sound shape matching. In the *Wangbang haozi*, their mellow and magnetic voice complements Xia Wenfu's passionate and high-pitched voice.
b. Most of the members of the Xiajiaban have many years of experience working together on ships, so their performance is more natural and authentic. They know each other's rhythm and body expression. In the interpretation of the *Wangbang haozi*, they constantly repeat the follower's musical phrases tagged above. Under the guidance of Xia Wenfu, the Xia brothers' voices become more and more majestic with the acceleration of rhythm and finally end in an enthusiastic atmosphere.

The Director Shi of Qidong Municipal Bureau of culture and tourism said about the high tacit understanding of the Xia brothers when singing, "In fact, I can sing the fishermen's *haozi*, many people here can sing, too. But our voices cannot be like Xia's family, they have their own charms and irreplaceable" (Shi Huangjie, personal interview, December 30 2020).

In recent years, as the older generation in Xiajiaban has aged, their chances for collective appearance have dwindled. As this point, we must ask: where will they go at the intergenerational inheritance fork in the road?

2.3.7 Blood-oriented Inheritance

Throughout the Xia family's inheritance of fishermen's *haozi*, it is not difficult to find that the older generation has always adhered to the family inheritance linked by blood. In today's popularization of Intangible Cultural Heritage inheritance, it is still quite rare. For the next inheritance issue, although the old Xia brothers had no definite action, their attitude explained everything. Xia Wengui said, "My brother Xia Wenfu, his son still working on the ship, he can sing. There are also several long distant relatives' children working on the sea, and they can sing, too" (Xia Wengui, personal interview, 15 May 2019).

As the only young generation of the team and the only government-awarded inheritor of Intangible Cultural Heritage, Xia Alin has started to teach his son and his grandson fishermen's *haozi* at home and has achieved initial results. In the recent performance, including his father, four generations of Xia Alin's family performed *haozi* on stage with the rest of Xiajiaban's members together, surprising and exciting everyone (see Figure 2.8 and Figure 2.9).



Figure 2.8: Four generations of the Xiajiaban took the stage to perform the fishermen's *haozi*, photograph provided by Xia Alin, 31 December 2020.



Figure 2.9: Four generations of Xia Alin, photograph provided by Xia Alin, 31 December 2020.

Careful exploration of the formation causes, personnel structure operation mode and personal performing cognition of Xiajiaban show that it is very similar to the music club or class club in traditional Chinese society, namely, relying on blood ties, mainly male family members and certain mature performance styles.

In my opinion, there are the following factors for their choice:

a. The Xia family's distinctive and difficult-to-replicate voice qualities and singing ability are mostly controlled by their DNA. Therefore, the inheritance based on the blood tie is the most primal and effective means to perpetuate their core music traits.
b. The incomparable tacit cooperation formed by the blood ties of the Xia brothers as a performance group and the mature operation mode formed in their perennial performances have provided a realistic basis and laid a solid foundation for future generations of the Xia family to continue this inheritance mode.
c. Great acclaim and special social influence acquired by Xiajiaban do provide them with extra rich economic income and certain social positions. Based on their assessment of the current situation, the selection and preservation of blood inheritance is the most stable option to secure the transfer of maximizing the interests in this respect.
d. The local cultural brand image formed by Xiajiaban and the positive cultural influence for locals also prompted the outside world, especially the local government, to encourage and support its sustainable development through the way to maintain blood-based inheritance.

Conclusion

I started to think about this Chapter during the early stage of desk work when searching for reference materials for the fishermen's *haozi* project. In the process of going through a large number of Intangible Cultural Heritage Projects and their inheritors' declarations, I found that regardless of the level and categorization of these projects, the initiatives taken by various localities were almost patterned and procedural; the images of the inheritors displayed tended to be the same, i.e., actively participating in exhibitions and performances, cooperating with campus publicity, being good at responding to the media, and being brave in making innovative breakthroughs. It caused me to think - what does an inheritor really look like in real life? What are the real thoughts of these people behind the framed identity of the inheritors after being evaluated by the officials and experts from outside, and do they recognize it, or what kind of attitude do they have to face all the things brought by the new identity? How do these affect the actual cultural heritage activities? I have striven to provide answers to these questions in throughout this chapter. In the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage, the fishermen's *haozi* is ultimately presented, passed on and transmitted as a performance. And in this chapter, all the core materials I have collected, compared, and analysed, whether in the form of music scores, performers' videos, or interviews, revolve around the focus of the fisherman's *haozi* as a subject of performance. In the case of Fengli, the inheritor was repeatedly put into performance scenes, both on stage and on camera. The framed performance in the eyes of outsiders was, in fact, just an ordinary job in his mind, and he still retains a strong sense of identity as a fisherman. In the case of Jianggang, the inheritor is not only good at performing *haozi*, but he is also even more concerned early on with many issues beyond performance, such as its spreading, developing, popularizing and inheriting. All these issues have been put into practice and achieved results in Jianggang town one by one over the years, so he is more like a practitioner. In the case of Lüsi, the inheritor is actually closely connected to a kinship collective. They seize the opportunity of the times together to bring their talents to the forefront, and they are given the biggest stage and the highest recognition as performers, which makes them later appear firmly as performers no matter how small the stage or how

many audiences. These inner perceptions hidden behind the identity of the inheritors guide, influence and change their perceptions and understanding of the *haozi* and lead to the different directions and characteristics shown by the transmission paths from the three places under the seemingly identical implementation of ICH measures. And these identities are only a microcosm of thousands of ICH projects.

CHAPTER 3

Paifu: From Ship Crafting to Musical Expression

Introduction

As an indispensable production tool in fishermen's labour, the fishing boat is a vital material carrier that carries fishermen's culture and enriches its content. As a representative of shipbuilding skills, the *paifu* symbolizes the fishermen's highest material pursuit and their most simple expression of peace and abundance. In recent years, sound-related performances created using *paifu* rhythms have appeared more often in ICH preservation scenes, making me wonder if this is the new life of this traditional skill that has sprung up in the context of the new era.

If fishermen's *haozi* is a form of singing expressed via the combination of human voice and labour, then the *paifu* is a sound art that derives from a combination of rhythm and boat-building technology. In its cultural context, the *paifu* can represent both a specific step in the shipbuilding process and the folk culture unique to shipbuilding. Currently, both attributes of the *paifu* are listed in the Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

As the shipbuilding technique, *paifu* denotes the last stage of a process in which carpenters make wooden boats. *Paifu*'s goal is to prevent water seepage through the gaps of wooden boards. The carpenters usually use filling materials such as oil, hemp silk, and lime, mixed, which are processed and embedded them in the gap of ship boards. Subsequently, with repeated blows between the axe, chisel and the boards, the material in the gaps in the boards is reinforced and filled. The whole process is also called *Nianchuan* (twist boat). The orderly and clear jingling sound between axes and chisels by carpenters is affectionately called "Fisherman's Percussion Music" by local

fishermen. The book *Zhongguo yuhe zhi du* (The Capital of China's Canals), Liu Yuping, Jia Chuanyu and Gao Jianjun have described a scene they witnessed of *paifu* on the banks of the canals, as follows:

> To begin the *paifu*, the boat is placed upside down and secured to the ground. The craftsmen sat around the hull, holding an axe in one hand and a chisel in the other. At this time, the leader puts a nail in the middle of the bottom of the boat and strikes it with a hammer. He started to sing the *haozi*. When the *haozi* sounded, everyone started (Liu, Jia, Gao 2003: 199).

As a folk culture representing the shipbuilding process, *paifu* also takes on ritual significance. Local fishermen believed that only the boats that had been the step of *paifu* by the carpenters would be blessed by the spirits who would protect the boats from being drowned and ensuring that the fishermen safely. Therefore, *paifu* is always accompanied by elaborate planning and the owner's sumptuous hospitality.

The development of the technology of *paifu* and the high demand for it are inextricably linked to the opening of the Grand Canal. Thus, its traces are usually found along the canal. One of the cases in this chapter is located in one of the water towns along the canal. However, I also found it on the eastern coast of Jiangsu Province during my fieldwork, which is unusual. *Paifu* in these two places also represents the only two cases of *paifu*-related Intangible Cultural Heritage projects in Jiangsu Province. The differences between the different waters of the Lake and the Sea did not have much impact on the basic characteristics of the *paifu* as a boat-building technique and folklore activity. However, there are still differences between the two areas in terms of the *paifu*, the technical steps, the focus of the folklore display, and the interpretation of its rhythm as the core of musical expression, which are important if we try to compare and explore to the same projects (*paifu*) in different places. Regarding Intangible Cultural Heritage preservation, the inheritors in the two cases have chosen different static and dynamic conservation and transmission paths based on their individual professional backgrounds, life experiences and personal interpretations of the *paifu*. In the following section, I will give an account of the real stories of culture-bearers which align with each of the points mentioned before,

aiming to provide some possible practical experiences for other ICH projects that are also facing the loss of their material carriers but which have the potential to develop their potential musical characteristics.

3.1 Jianggang *Paifu*

The *paifu* as a shipbuilding technique appears as the declaration of Intangible Cultural Heritage locally. Two local bearers Master Cui and Lu, used the static physical display and stage dance re-enactment different inheritance methods, respectively. The former fully translates the intangible shipbuilding techniques into tangible wooden ship models and eventually introduces *paifu* to the public in the form of a model exhibition. The latter makes full use of the stage dance form, incorporates the rhythmic elements of the *paifu*, and with the actors' costumes, props and movements, vividly reflects and reproduces the noisy and festive scene when doing *paifu*. Although they are entirely different, they both stem from the rich red history[43] and vibrant fishermen's culture of the Jianggang area.

In the local area, whether in the folk tales I heard from the fishermen, the government-managed Intangible Cultural Heritage declarations I consulted, or the publicly published local culture series I read, the *paifu* was always inextricably linked to Lu Ban, who was worshipped as a god by the carpenters. Consequently, I was curious about the precise relationship between Lu Ban and the *paifu*, and keen to discover the story behind it.

3.1.1 Paifu's Rule-The Myth of Lu Ban

The local culture series book *Fankai Jianggang* (Sail in Jianggang) described the origin of Jianggang *paifu*:

[43] The red here refers to the revolutionary.

One day, Lu Ban, the God of the carpenters, led his disciples to Shangdong via Jianggang by boat. Suddenly a storm appeared on the sea. The undulating waves caused the fishing boat to sway from side to side and tremble constantly. At this time, the boatmen found fireballs moving fast at the bow of the ship, stern and mast. Everyone on ship panicked. The boatman rushed to the cabin to inform Lu Ban and ask for help. When Lu Ban heard this, he put his hands together and murmured, 'This ship is timid. It is afraid of storms and waves. I am afraid there is danger!' Hearing this, the people on board hurriedly knelt and prayed to the Sea Dragon King. The wind was blowing harder and harder during the prayer, and the ship was rocking much more violently. At this time, the boatman begged Lu Ban for help again. Lu Ban sighed and said, 'Well, it seems that the only way to do it is to call on the Divine Axe to cheer the ship up.' With that, Lu Ban led his disciples to beat the planks of the boat with the summoned divine axe. The louder and faster they hit. The air seemed to freeze, leaving only the sounds of knock. Finally, the ship stopped shaking, the fireball on the stern and mast disappeared, and people safely arrived in Shangdong eventually.

Later, the story spread in folklore. Whenever local people build new boats, they must ask for respectable carpenters to do *paifu* to bless the smooth sailing and people safe (Editorial Board of *Fankai Jianggang* 2011: 162-163).

From this mythology of origin, I found some important information about the *paifu* in Jianggang:

a. The leader of *paifu* has supreme status and power (the leader was Lu Ban in the myth).
b. The axe-bearer must be the carpenter (descendant of Lu Ban).
c. The process needs more than one person to complete (Lu Ban leads his disciples).
d. *Paifu* should be knocked on the wooden ship with loud sound and

precise rhythm.

e. After *paifu*, the ship can enter the water safely.

To the best of my knowledge, the above-extracted information also aligns with the characteristics and requirements passed down from generation to generation in the actual *paifu* operation in the Jianggang area. In Jianggang, the quality of the *paifu* directly affects the quality of the planking filling, which is crucial to the future smooth sailing of the fishing boats and even more closely linked to the crew's safety. Therefore, in the era of wooden boats, whenever a fishing family builds a new boat, they always hire the most reputable local carpenters, known as *lingzuo* (leader) masters, to be the *paifu*. These *lingzuo* masters needed extensive practical experience, including familiarity with the structure of wooden boats, proficiency in various carpentry skills, and excellent leadership and organizational skills. They always maintained the highest authority and absolute power in the *paifu* process; therefore, even at the peak of the Jianggang shipbuilding industry, there were no more than five such *lingzuo* masters.

Cui Guangming, the first inheritor in this chapter, is one such *lingzuo* master. I visited him twice and was fortunate enough to get the opportunity to interview him in 2019. Due to his advanced age (he was 90 years old in 2019), he could not recall many details of the *paifu* during the interview, and sometimes he could not even hear my questions clearly because of his deteriorated hearing. However, when I asked him about the origin of the *paifu*, he answered with exceptional clarity, and his gaze was firm and stern, "Lu Ban handed it down; we imitate and execute his actions, and he has always blessed us" (Cui Guangming, personal interview, 25 April, 2019).

In his book *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, Mircea Eliade explains mythology in this way:

> Mythology tells a sacred history, i.e. the primordial events that took place at the beginning of time. Mythology reveals the absolute sacredness as it relates to the creative activity of the gods, revealing the sacredness of their work. Each myth shows how reality came into being, whether it is a whole

> reality, a universe, or just a fragment - an island, a plant species, or a human institution. Mythology tells people how things come into being and explain them (Eliade 1957: 95-99).

According to my understanding of Eliade's words, to abide by the myth and to reproduce all the details of the myth, is to restore the original events that took place at the beginning of time, and thus to connect with God and be granted divine patronage. At the age of 90, Master Cui still remembers and insists that the *paifu* is handed down from Lu Ban, the god of carpentry and everything in it, not a single move, cannot be changed. Isn't this precisely the real case of Eliade's interpretation of mythology?

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, *paifu* can be used as the last process of fishermen's boat building, and it can also refer to the whole folklore of shipbuilding, from choosing the boat wood to naming the boat after the completion of *paifu*. In the following section, I will put flesh on the bones of this, by providing the full picture of *paifu* as a shipbuilding folk culture in Jianggang.

3.1.2 Paifu in Jianggang

Paifu[44] is the grandest event in the fishing village, and, as I sought to show in the introduction, it isn't merely the last step of shipbuilding, it also denotes the folkloristic culture and craft of shipbuilding. The date of commencement of shipbuilding generally falls on an even number. Before shipbuilding begins, the *Chuanlaoda* (Captain) and the shipowner must worship the Water God. At this time, the carpenter will send the three to five pieces of wood selected to match the size of the boat, wrapped in red and green cloth, to the boat owner's house. Afterwards, the

[44] The content of the following description comes mainly from the interview with Master Cui and video material that the local government asked the local TV station to film and produce for preservation in order to record the culture of *paifu*, which was narrated by Cui Guangming and Lu Jiayou and filmed on June 22, 2015, provided by the TV station Lu Jun, with appropriate text finishing by Li Weiyang.

ding longgu,[45] *shangliang,*[46] *he longkou*[47] sessions follow. Each session is completed with a banquet. At last, they need to free up the whole day finish the final step- *paifu*. Usually, depending on the size of the boat, the team of *paifu* is temporarily organized by the *lingzuo* master. The whole process will last for 10-15 minutes. During this period, the host has to paint eggs red, and boil *zongzi* so that the carpenters can eat them when it ends. When *paifu* finishes, the *lingzuo* master will offer a verbal blessing, before christening the ship. For the ship's name, there is an unwritten local rule that whether the owner likes it or not, he has to accept the name.[48] At the same time, the *lingzuo* master will light firecrackers, prepare steamed bread, cakes, candy and others which will then be distributed amongst those attendees who turned up at the proceedings to offer their congratulations.

How did Master Cui learn to do the *paifu*? And how did he become a *lingzuo* master? The following part will offer access to a remarkable moment in red history by engaging directly with Master Cui's real-life experience.

3.1.3 Craft and Memory : Red Sailboat and Coastal Defence Regiment

The history of *paifu* in Jianggang town has lasted for more than 200 years. Since then, it has been preserved through oral teaching traditions. Unfortunately, due to the poor record-keeping of the fishermen themselves, and the fact that most of those who mastered it have passed away, the local cultural department, after much effort, has only been able to trace *paifu*'s lineage back to the period before the liberation, as follows:[49]

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[45] *Longgu* is a longitudinal member that connects the bowsprit and stern sprit in the center of the hull's base, and it is located at the bottom of the ship. It is usually the first part of the hull to be built.

[46] shipbuilding step, i.e. after the bottom of the ship is laid out, a number of bulkheads are erected.

[47] Closure of all ship wood.

[48] Adding specific details of the new ship naming here. *Lingzuo* master was often guided by the owner's character, appearance, financial status or family anecdotes. According to Cui's recollection, "when the ship owner's family was relatively wealthy, the ships were usually named *mi tunzi*, *mi douzi* (both are rice utensils), *jinyuanbao* (gold ingot). When the boat owner's family's was very hospitable and generous, the name of the ship most likely came from the dishes served at the banquet, such as *bawacai* (eight dishes) and *rouging* (meat jar). Other names of ships could derive from owners' characters, appearances and original occupation, such as *houwang* (monkey king), *dingpan* (shop merchant). There were also names derived from the owner's shortcomings such as petty and defeatist, and the ship name would be *bandun* (half meal)."

[49] Sources from the Report of declaration of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Jiangsu Province, Jianggang *paifu*, 2017, provided by Dongtai, Jianggang Township, Cultural Station.

a) Pre-1949: Yang Siqing, Lu Zengyu (deceased)
b) 1949-1980: Xu Congde (born in 1934)
c) 1980-onward: Cui Guangming (born in 1929.4), Lu Jiayou (born in 1943.12)

The following is the crucial study and work points about Master Cui that I have compiled based on visits, interviews and access to relevant text and video materials.

A man from Jianggang Town, Dongtai City in Jiangsu Province, Cui Guangming was born in April 1929, and remains the current representative inheritor of the municipal Intangible Cultural Heritage of Jianggang *paifu*. Born to a family of carpenters, at eleven years of age, he was sent by his parents to the Shunzhou, local boat company where he served as an apprentice. Since then, Cui Guangming has followed in the footsteps of a master named Yang Sihai, with whom he shuttled the fishing port and wharf to learn the skills of ship repair and shipbuilding until the outbreak of the war against Japan.

In the second half of 1941, the Japanese invaders carried a sweep of the Anti-Japanese base areas in central and northern Jiangsu. As a tribute to the 60th anniversary of the Republic, a large-scale documentary film, The *Red Sailboat*, which was filmed on location at Jianggang, profoundly depicts this period of history. Two of the interviewees, Li Jiahe and Chen Ersheng, recalled related details of that period. Li said that "their base was divided into many small pieces, and the Japanese and puppet forces occupied the main market towns, roads and rivers" (Chen Mingkui, documentary *The Red Sailboat,* personal interview, Li Jiahe). Chen added at that time, "the situation was tense and it was vital to master the coastal base" (Chen Mingkui, documentary *The Red Sailboat*, personal interview, Chen Ersheng).

In the spring of 1942, Su Yu, the commander of the 1st Division of the New Fourth Army, went to sea for two investigations successively and decided to establish a coastal base and a maritime armed force. Jianggang was fortunately chosen, and soon afterwards, the first coastal defence brigade of the Chinese People's Liberation Army was established there. In the summer of 1943, Cui Guangming was favoured by Sun Zhongming, who was then the head of the second regiment of the Coastal

Defence Regiment and was invited to accomplish the task of ship repair and shipbuilding there. The ship he designed and built with many boatmen was called the red sailboat. This kind of ship can both travel near the beach and perform a long-distance voyage. It can be responsible for sea transportation, fishing, and salvaging simultaneously, which is a genuine dual-use ship for military and civilians. Since its design and construction, it has become the main force of the Coastal Defence Corps. Master Cui Guangming also used this skill of *paifu* in constructing the red sailing ship to ensure its smooth and stable entry into the water. In the documentary The *Red Sailboat*, Master Cui proudly mentions the advantages of the this sailboat:

> In shoal terrain like ours, the enemy's pointed-bottom boats were trapped at once. Our flat-bottomed boats, on the other hand, had no problem. The enemy's ship had a draft of 56 meters, while we only had 1.5 meters. We can attack the enemy, but the enemy can't attack us (Chen Mingkui, Documentary *Red Sailboat*, personal interview, Cui Guangming).

Master Cui stayed in the Coastal Defence Brigade for a total of seven or eight years. During this time, he also joined the militia and was responsible for guard duty when he was not repairing ships. After liberation, Master Cui served as a platoon leader of the Jianggang Sea Defence Militia Company, leading the militia to participate in socialist construction actively. He designed and built a series of sailboats, power boats and fishing boats, which excelled in military training, duty, fishing and transportation tasks until his retirement. When he was seventy years old, he made an important decision.

> It was April 19, 1999, which was also my 70th birthday. In front of many relatives and friends, I said that I have nothing to miss, only have one wish: leave a few red sailboats to the next generation so they can remember that heavy history and understand that a good life is hard-won (Cui Guangming, personal interview, 25 April 2019).

Considering the actual situation, the red sailing boats that Master Cui built later, were model boats rather than real sailing boats. The model-making work started on 18

May, 2000. Master Cui purchased the various materials needed for model boats at his own expense. When the first ship model was finished, many old fishermen boasted that the model was exactly the same as the red sailing ship back then.

On 2 April, 2009, on the 60th anniversary of the Chinese People's Navy's birth, the Chinese Navy Museum curator, Xue Longkui, made a memorable trip to Jianggang to accept a red sailboat model named "*Xiaocaipiao*" presented by Cui Guangming. In the donation ceremony, as a return gift, the Naval Museum also personally presented a model of the latest missile destroyer named "Qingdao" to Cui Guangming.

Facing the large and small boat models on display at home, Cui Guangming said passionately "as long as I can move and speak, I will continue to build red sailboats and tell the story to the younger generations" (Cui Guangming, personal interview, 25 April 2019).

In my opinion, Cui Guangming's life is inseparable from the Red Sailboat and the Coastal Defence Regiment. This unique experience and the lifelong affection for the Chinese Navy that he developed from it led him to devote all his energy to ship model-making in his later years. As an intangible shipbuilding technique, *paifu* was eventually displayed and introduced to the public in a material form. Master Cui has also used these ship models as the basis for establishing his own family military history museum. From ship models to patriotic education bases, he has advertised and promoted *paifu* through the static conservation of material displays.

3.1.4 Intangible to Tangible: Ship Models and Family Military History Museum

Since master Cui decided to build a wooden boat model on his 70th birthday, some fifteen years on, he has made more than eighty red sailing models alone, most of which have been donated to the local government, troops, and local museums for free.

On 15 August 2015, his own family military history museum was formally constructed and opened to the public with the assistance of local border guards and the government. The museum (see Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2) was converted from its humble origins as a small house in master Cui's yard. Above the entrance to the museum hung a plaque of honour issued by the Dongtai Municipal People's Government. To the right of the door frame hung the wooden signboard "Cui Guangming Family Military History Museum" written in red letters on a white background. Once inside the entrance, various models of red sailing ships were in eye-catching positions. Most of them were surrounded by wooden carvings of fishermen and New Fourth Army figures, each with a corresponding background story, such as "maritime lifeline", "Japanese invasion of *Longwang* Temple in Jianggang", and "New Fourth Army and fishermen as close as a family". Numerous writings, reports, and images of red sailboats and *paifu* are posted on the wall. Cui's Family Military History Museum has welcomed over 100,000 visitors from all walks of life, including active service members, coastal defence militia members, and youths.



Figure 3.1 Cui Guangming Family Military History Museum, 25 April 2019, photographed by Li Weiyang.



Figure 3.2 An interior view of Cui Guangming Family Military History Museum, 25 April 2019, photographed by Li Weiyang.

As I have mentioned above, Cui's *paifu* is an example of a static way of protecting this heritage, one that has produced substantial impacts. These results stem from the fact that not only the Jianggang have a long history with the Coastal Defence Regiment, but it is also the officially certified birthplace of new Chinese maritime armament, i.e. the place where the Chinese Navy anchored. Thus, the red meaning and status it carries is profound and irreplaceable. As the designer and builder of the Red Sailboat, the symbol of this unique red memory, Master Cui was naturally given a meaning and status that is difficult for ordinary shipbuilders to reach. In other words, the far-reaching influence of the red sailing ship as a material carrier of red memories can effectively bring wider attention to Jianggang *paifu* and also provide a real possibility for Master Cui to make ship models and establish a family military history museum. Secondly, according to my visits, in addition to Cui Guangming's Family Military History Museum, several other red historical sites in Jianggang

Town, including the Jianggang Primary School, have all been awarded the title of Patriotic Education Base by the local government. When national and local governments vigorously promote patriotic education and propaganda, Jianggang's rich red resources can guarantee a continuous and steady flow of visitors to his family military history museum, so it can produce practical effects of propaganda and popularization.

3.1.5 Paifu's Musical Language: the Key of Rhythm

The musicality of Jianggang *paifu* is mainly reflected in the staggered rhythmic sound produced by the striking. When you listen carefully, there are not only obvious rhythmic changes but also the adjustment of strength and speed when striking, which, in my opinion, is both functional and entertaining. This adjustment is usually judged and led by the *lingzuo* master. On the one hand, the *lingzuo* master adjusts the strength and speed of the *paifu*'s striking process according to his experience and the actual situation, which actually corresponds to the light and heavy strength and sparseness needed when filling the seams of the shipboard. In other words, this adjustment is directly related to the quality of the final filling of the shipboard. On the other hand, when carpenters build ships, they are in a challenging, tedious and difficult working environment for a long time, so adding rhythm changes in the last process can re-energise carpenters constantly re-energise as they strike, also adding a certain amount of entertainment.

Carpenters have special naming methods for how to familiarise themselves with and remember these rhythms, in addition to mechanical muscle memory. They use onomatopoeic markers associated with animals similar to the rhythm of their striking to help them remember and distinguish between roughly fixed rhythmic patterns. These rhythm names include *Mofang tache* (rice pounding cart of the mill), *Xique shukou* (magpie gargle), *Mofang lüzigu* (mill donkey bray), *Laoshu jiao guogai* (mouse chews pot cover), and *Maque zaoyuan* (sparrow makes garden).

In what follows, I will use the Western staff notation to record the rhythm of *paifu* by the carpenters during the actual boat-building process. This actual

shipbuilding process was filmed on-site at the Xu Xirong shipyard by local in 2014 by Dongtai TV reporters Xu Shuqing and Cui Minghua and provided by Lu Jun, the person in charge of the TV station (see Figure 3.3). Unfortunately, two of the carpenters in the video have passed away in recent years, making it become the only panoramic record of *paifu* in a natural production state in the area.

In the video, a giant wooden boat is standing on its side on the empty sand, revealing the bottom of the boat. Upon closer inspection, the width of this board at the bottom of the boat alone exceeds the height of two adult men. Five master carpenters stand apart in a line. Four benches are placed behind them, and the masters sometimes stand and sit during the striking process. The second master, counting from the right, is Cui Guangming. He was wearing a beige sweater, dark pants, black cloth shoes, white gloves, a severe look, and a stern gaze.



Figure 3.3 Master Cui and other carpenter were doing the *paifu*, Xu Xirong shipyard, 2014, the image intercepted from the video material taken by the Dongtai TV, taken by Dongtai TV reporter Xu Shuqing and Cui Minghua, provided by Lu Jun.
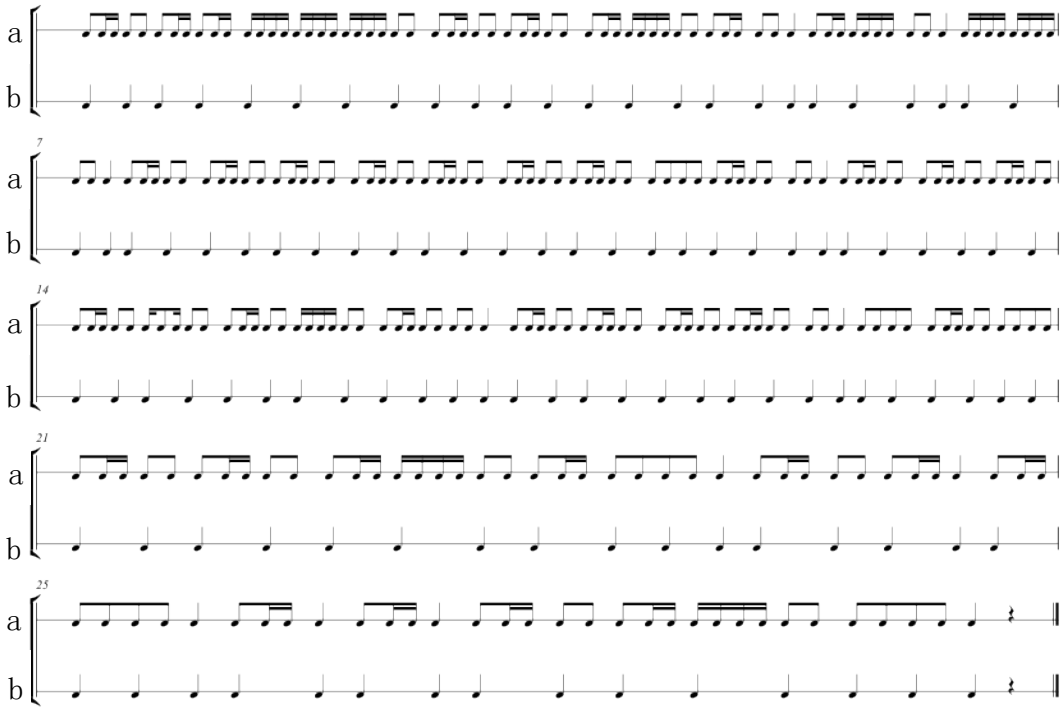
Throughout the whole process, there are clearly two rhythm lines present. One was struck by Master Cui and contains more rhythmic changes and speed

adjustments. The other is struck by other woodworkers together with a neat, powerful sound. They follow Master Cui's changes during the striking process, sounding more like a steady beat. These two rhythmic lines are marked as "a" and "b" in the specific paragraphs blew, "a" by the *lingzuo* master and "b" by the rest of the carpenters in the team together. I will transcribe the complete rhythm of the Jianggang *paifu* as presented in the video. The specific division of the rhythm section is based entirely on the narrative of Master Cui Guangming in the video.

⑴ ***Mofang Tache***

"It's like the sound (*Dinggedong*) of a stone mill pounding rice in a mill"(Cui Guangming, interview by the government promotional film, May 2008).

According to the video material, there are 111 syllables in this section, as follows:
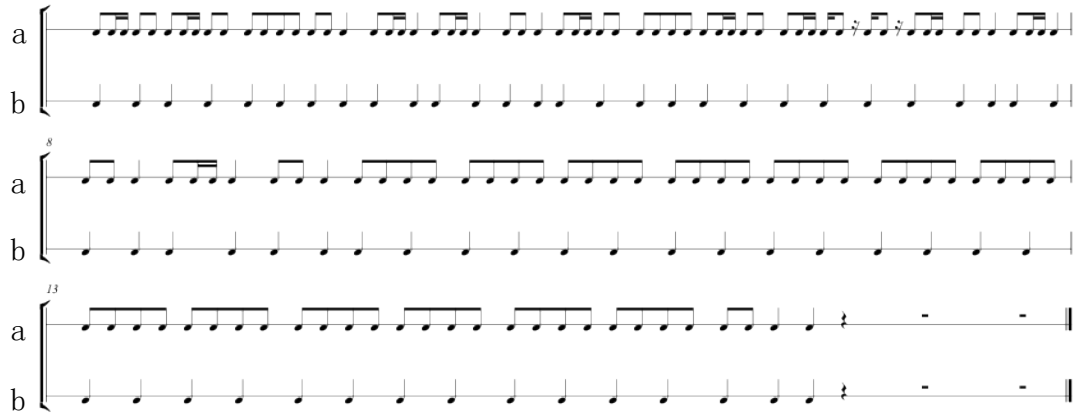


According to my conjecture，the sound *dinggedong* above mentioned should be 

⑵ ***Xique Shuokou***

"The sound (*Jigu*) made by a magpie when it comes out of its nest"(Cui Guangming, interview by the government promotional film, May 2008).

According to the video material, there are 63 syllables in this section, as follows:
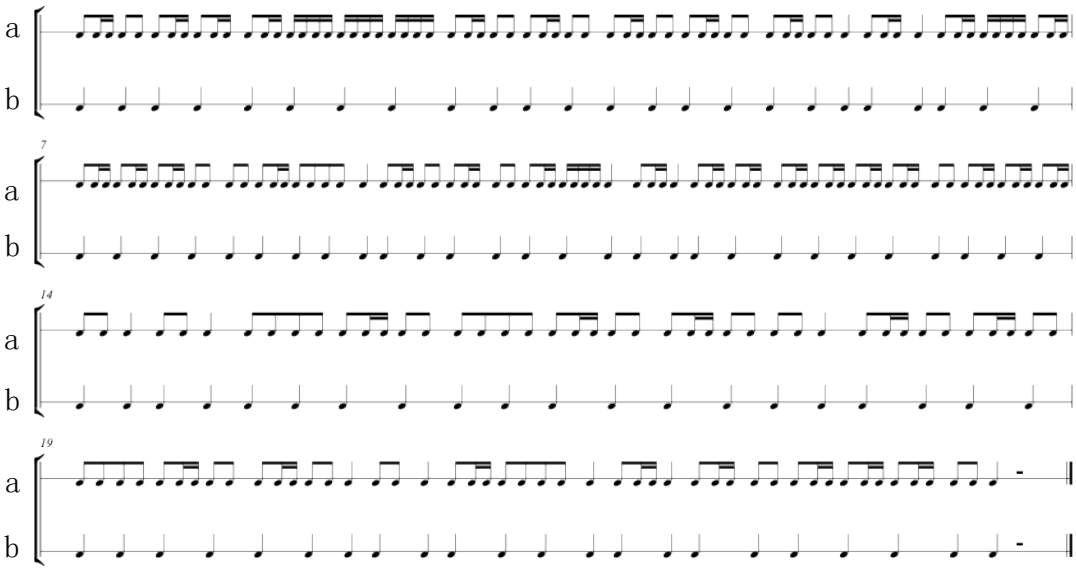


The sound *Jigu* above mentioned should be 

⑶ ***Mofang lüzigu***

"The gasping sound made by the donkey in the gap while pulling the stone mill" (Cui Guangming, interview by the government promotional film, May 2008).
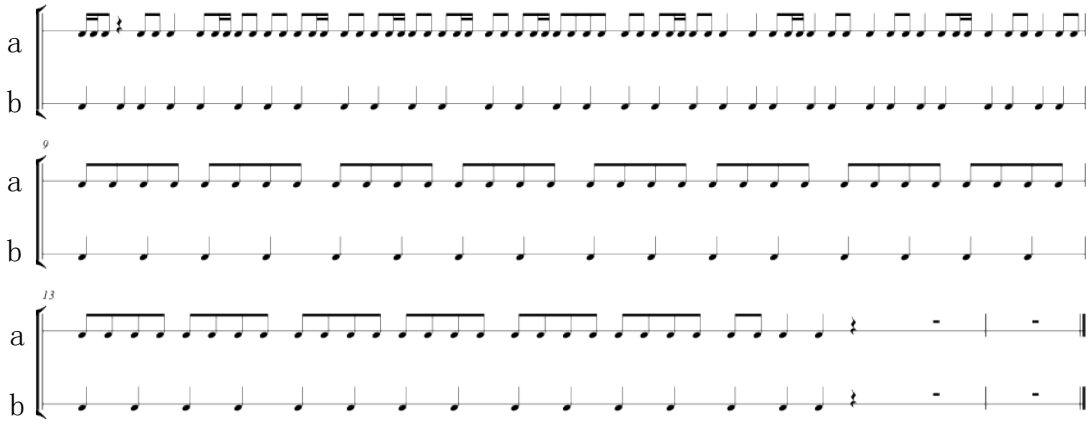
According to the video material, there are 94 syllables in this section, as follows:



⑷ ***Laoshu jiao guogai***

"The sound is like the squeaking sound of a mouse chewing the lid of a pot" (Cui Guangming, interview by the government promotional film, May 2008).

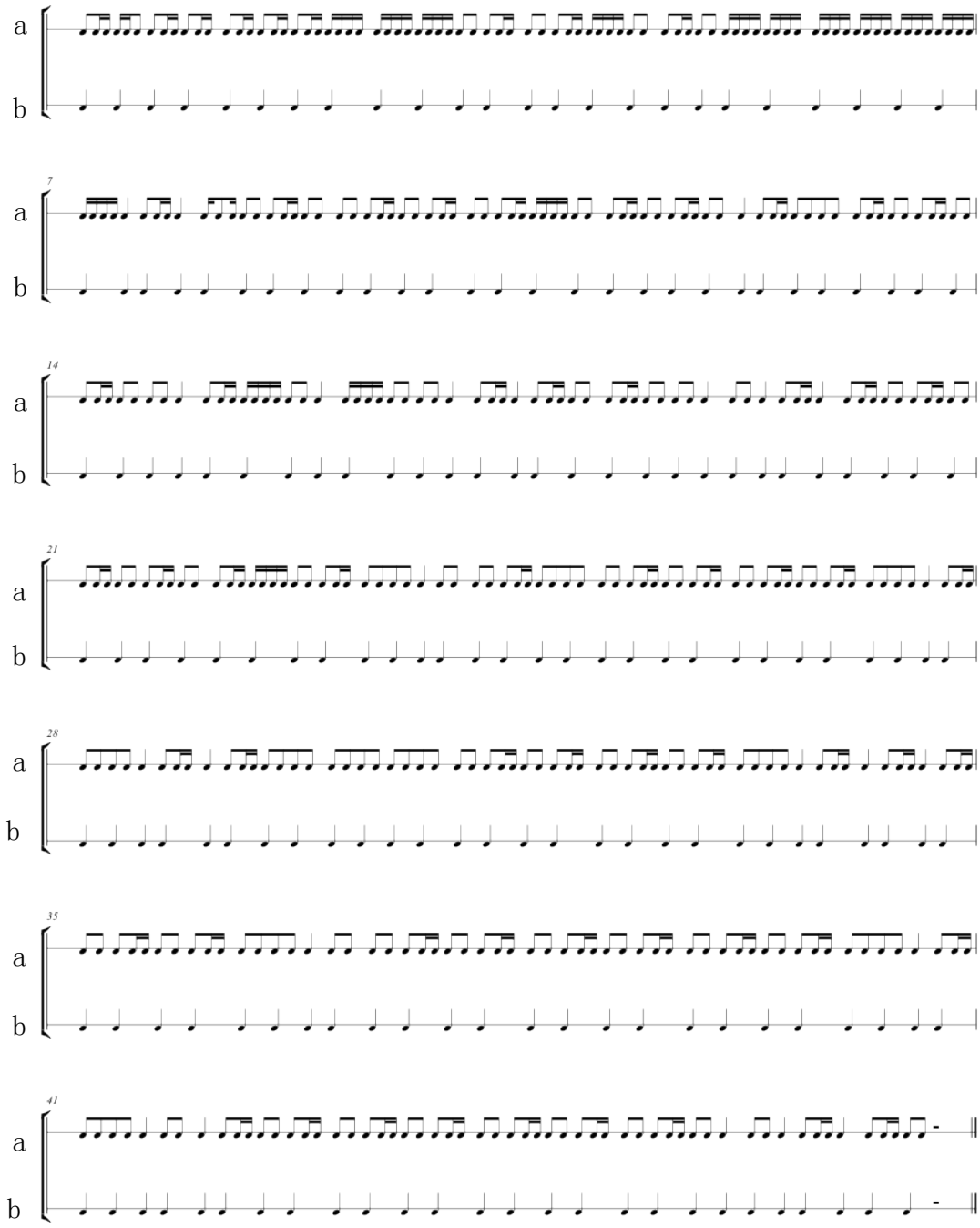
According to the video material, there are 62 syllables in this section, as follows:



(5) ***Maque zaoyuan***

"The sound is like the chirp of sparrows chasing after each other in the garden" (Cui Guangming, interview by the government promotional film, May 2008).

As seen in the video, there are 186 syllables in this section, as follows:



The following four rhythm patterns  are staggered in this paragraph, and the carpenters' beating speed is obviously accelerated.

The above analysis shows that the recorded rhythms from the video do not present a clear, structured paragraph structure or can they be notated as a typical rhythmic pattern. It is because the division of the rhythmic passages in the video is

reminded by the subtitles (specific words), and the transition from one passage to another does not stop specifically at the end of the passage or the end of the rhythm.

3.1.6 Repurposing the Rhythm of Paifu: Stage Dance Re-enactment

Except Master Cui, the other current inheritor of the Jianggang *paifu* is Lu Jiayou, who has already appeared in Chapter 2 as the inheritor of Jianggang fishermen's *haozi*. As an amateur musician and local cultural practitioner, the most appealing component of *paifu* to him undoubtedly is the rhythm, which offers numerous creative and expressive possibilities for him. His inheritance and development of this project are mainly reflected in the stage processing of *paifu* rhythm elements. Here is his story with the *paifu*.

Although he had never been a carpenter, Lu's experience as a fisherman and his immersion in his native made him familiar with the *paifu*, and he was especially attracted to the rhythm of it. In the 1980s, Lu created a dance program (see Figure 3.4) of the same name based on the content of *paifu*, which was a big hit in the area. In the dance, the image of the carpenter and the skill of *paifu* are mainly shown through the performers' costumes, the props of axes and chisels, and the imitation and emphasis of the striking movements. The show usually consists of fourteen performers, half of whom are male and half female. Most of these performers come from the local community and are members of local art groups. They do not know the *paifu* as well as the fishermen's *haozi*, so whenever a new member joins the group, before teaching the dance movements, Lu Jiayou needs to introduce the characteristics and meaning of the *paifu* and its related folk culture so that the participants can have a more comprehensive understanding and knowledge of it which in turn ensures that they can better portray the image of the craftsman in the dance. The rhythm of the *paifu* is shown in the dance, on the one hand, through the dance-like movements of the axe and chisel striking repeatedly; on the other hand, through the strong rhythmic profile of the accompanying music with its unique and specific formation changes.



Figure 3.4 Lu Jiayou's adaptation of "*paifu*", intercepted from a video of the 2018 Dongtai New Year Mass Literary and Art Performance, photograph provided by Lu Jiayou.

Compared with master Cui, Lu's inherited way pays more attention to the artistic interpretation of *paifu*, which is more closely aligned to its external performance and creative atmosphere rather than its spiritual connotation. His thoughts and attitude towards the heritage of the *paifu* are that:

> I know what *paifu* is. However, I am more familiar with the *paifu*'s rhythm. I am not a carpenter, so I cannot display it as well as Master Cui. I believe that *paifu*'s inheritance should be built more on its rhythmic shape and that more artworks should be created to reflect it (Lu Jiayou, personal interview, 17 December 2020).

Like the specificity of Master Cui's choice of static display, this inheritance conservation approach of Lu Jiayou has, in my opinion, its own rationality and practical base:

a. There is, undoubtedly, a solid rhythmic component to the *paifu* process.

It produces an organized and beautiful sound with the tacit cooperation of each carpenter, which leaves plenty of room for artistic expression and creation.

b. Lu possesses musical abilities and is also familiar with *paifu*. He is skilled at identifying and utilizing the rhythmic element of *paifu* to transform it into something new and more appealing.

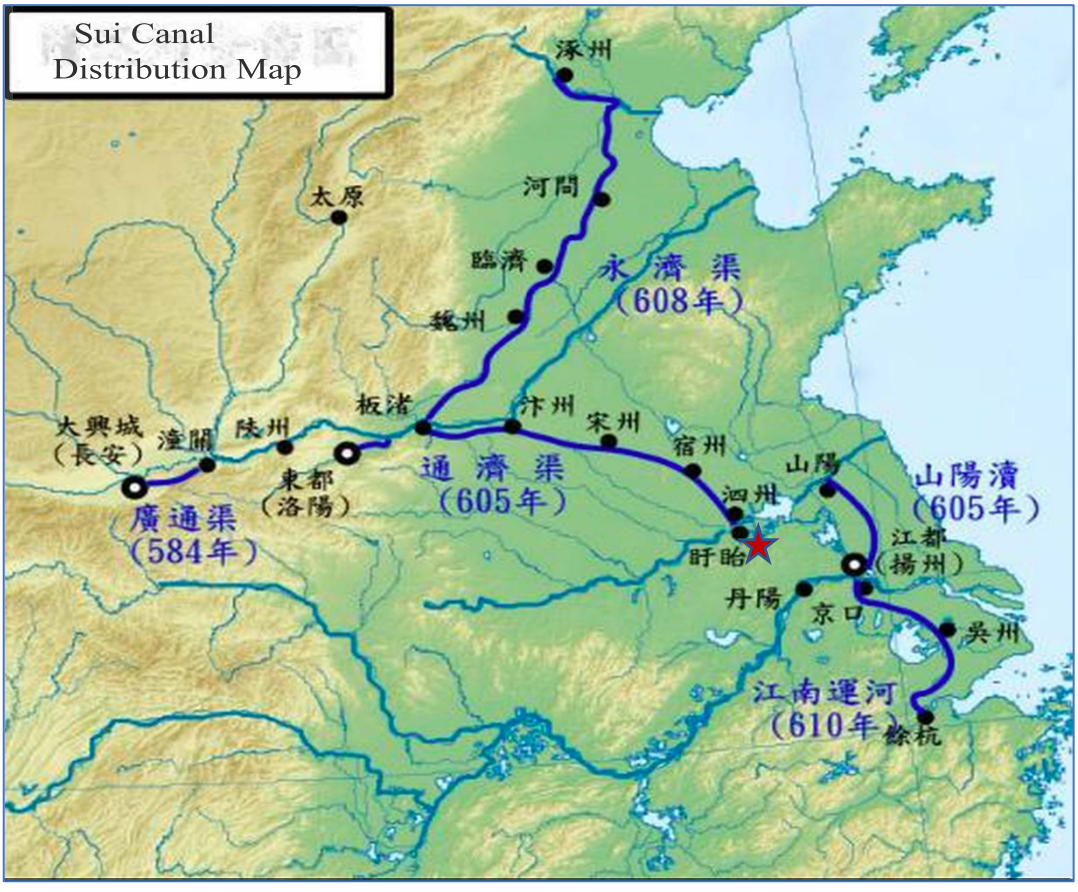
c. Lu is the founder of a mature folk art group. With his charisma and multi-party backing, the troupe has maintained a relatively steady membership and gathered many dedicated local audiences, which makes it possible to quickly translate Lu's ideas and creations into stage works and further promote them to the audience.

3.2 Minqiao *Paifu*

As I described in the previous introduction, traces of *paifu* have also been found in Jinhu, a representative water town along the canal. Unlike Jianggang, the *paifu* here as a folk custom appears as the local declaration of Intangible Cultural Heritage. In this case, the two inheritors are a pair of carpenters with a mentor-apprentice relationship. For the inheritance of the *paifu*, the mentor master Dai was traditional and conservative, and unfortunately, he has passed away; his apprentice master Zhang is more open-minded and wants to do something new. With the backing and assistance of the local art troupe, Zhang has devised and performed the live show *Yujia xitian xinmuchuan* (Fisherman's Joy to Add a New Wooden Boat) to promote *paifu*. Recently, he even got an opportunity to collaborate with composers from the local Huai opera company to perform the instrumental ensemble *Yujiale* (The Joy of Fisherman), which regarded the axe and chisel as solo instruments for the first time, breaking new ground as far categorical boundaries are concerned, and highlighting its distinct rhythmic charm.

3.2.1 The Prosperity of paifu: Emperor Yang of the Sui Dynasty and the Canal

Unlike Jianggang, located on the coast, Jinhu Minqiao, encircled by an inner lake, has been an important town along the Beijing-Hangzhou Canal's waterway since ancient times. Zhang Yingliang, the inheritor of the project *paifu*, learned from his ancestors that Minqiao *paifu* dates back to the time when Sui Dynasty *Emperor Yang* began digging the Grand Canal (see Map 1). When the Grand Canal was finished, there was a steep increase in the number of vessels. Naturally, carpenters who could *paifu* flocked along the canals in large numbers and have since taken root. Historically, *Emperor Yang* of Sui did open a section of the canal called *Tongji* Canal from Luoyang Xiyuan to Huaishui, and Minqiao is within the Huaishui area. Thus compared to the Myth of Lu Ban in Jianggang, Minqiao *paifu*'s origins are more realistic basis.



Map 3.1: Map of Sui Canal Distribution. The red star marks the approximate location of Jinhu.

Because it is fishing village that exists near an inland lake, the whole ritual process of *paifu* is more delicate and elaborate compared with that of coastal fishing villages. In what follows, I will explore in an in-depth way the Minqiao *paifu*.

3.2.2 Paifu in Minqiao[50]

The start date for building a ship is known locally as *puzi*, and the dimensions of the boat are usually determined on this day on which the carpenters choose an open area on the beach at the dock, put up the coloured gates, and start ship-building. The ship owner's prayer is indispensable in the process. When the boat is made, nearby fishing groups and surrounding fishers will celebrate in advance. At this time, the older people in the owner's home need to select the auspicious day of *paifu* through the *huangli* (Yellow calendar).[51]

On this chosen day, carpenters turn the wooden boat upside down at the specified time and hang the red quilt given by the guests on the boat's bow. In front of the wooden ship, the owner places particular food and utensils. The average family prepares *xiaosansheng*, namely pig head, carp, and roosters. However, affluent families prepare *dasansheng*, namely whole pigs, whole sheep, and hens, to show their prestige and wealth. The utensils are unique mirrors made by carpenters (the red paper is pasted on the bamboo sieve, which is a round mirror is placed in the middle, surrounded by blessing words such as "everything goes well" and decorated with coloured paper. Its primary function is to deter the water demon, bless the ship with a smooth voyage). Generally, two columns of coarse incense are lit between the mirror and the dishes. All these offerings express the infinite respect for the goddess *Nü Wa*, the God of water. After the offerings to honour the gods have been placed, carpenters

[50] The following description is mainly based on two sources, one being the specific chapter on *paifu* in the *Huai'an feiwuzhiwenhuayichan tonglan* (Huai'an Intangible Cultural Heritage Overview),2012. The second one is Dai Zhiyao's *Hupan Sanji* (Diary of the Lake), 2018.

[51] The traditional Chinese calendar, includes not only astronomical weather and seasons but also some taboos to be observed by the people in their daily lives.

immediately set off firecrackers to offer wine and then sprinkle this wine on the ship while reciting auspicious words. Then they began to do the last step of *paifu*.

There are generally two types of *paifu* observed here. One kind is the wooden ship itself is built by the master in charge of *paifu*; he will naturally organize his disciples to work together. The other is that other masters build the wooden boat, and the owner will ask a special master to do the last step of *paifu*. According to the recollection of the inheritor, Master Zhang, "there were more than thirty times build ships in the village in a year. When Minqiao fishing boats peaked in the 1970s, the *paifu* craftsmen were busy throughout the year" (Zhang Yingliang, personal interview, 20 May 2019).

The larger wooden boats in the Minqiao area are about 25-30 meters long and 6-7 meters wide. It takes three to four months for a water chiseller to lead three to four disciples to finish making a boat of this size. After the construction of the new ship, 30-50 carpenters are needed to work on doing *paifu* simultaneously. The *paifu* must be completed within the same day, generally starting at around 8 a.m. and finishing no later than 4 p.m. Every participant must complete *paifu* at least *yilang* (i.e. about one foot) and can rest for tea after finishing *sanlang*. This locale attaches great importance to the tea and meals on that day, and there is even a saying, "seven tea and five meals",[52] in the process of *paifu*. In the whole process, the *paifu* master usually also sings *haozi*, adding a few blessing words, praying for everything to go well and praying also for the prosperity of entire family. The third volume of the overview of Huai'an Intangible Cultural Heritage has detailed records of this process, and gives examples of this blessing ritual:

> The owner's ship has the wealthy appearance; I built the ship's side for your family, earned a gold ingot a day, the ship could be smooth sailing across the river.
> The owner's ship has the aura; I built the ship's bow for your family, sharp bow could. break waves, water monster trembles from a distance.

[52] The above are compiled from an interview with Zhang Yingliang on 20 May 2019.

> The owner' ship has good looking; I built the ship's stern for your family, the stern. steering to steady, you could go anywhere freely.
> The own's ship is hung with red silk; I built the ship's castle for your family, your wife in the front cabin gives birth to your son, and the two elders in the rear cabin live a long life (Huai'an Bureau of Culture, Radio, Film and Television News 2012: 111-112).

After everything is done, the lead master sets off firecrackers, distributes money be blessed, bringing the whole *paifu* ceremony to a close.

Dai Zhiyao, a famous cultural scholar in Jinhu County, had the honour to witness the whole ritualistic process of *paifu* for the wooden boats in his childhood. He depicted the enthusiastic atmosphere and the strong and resolute image of the carpenters on *paifu* day with delicate and vivid strokes. The following are his specific descriptions:

> Twenty-four water chisel builders, wearing red silk at their waists and bare-chested, lined the sides of the boat. They built ships on the beach, exposed to the wind and the sun for a long time, and looked heroic. The sun shone on them, and their strong muscles sparkled with bronze. With a burst of firecrackers, the master boarded the bottom of the boat in the crowd cheers. The lead master is a silver-bearded older man, his head wrapped in yellow damask, wearing colourful ribbons, while chanting auspicious words, while to the ship spilt wine; Then he sat down in the middle of the boat, stately and solemn. He scanned all those present with a chisel in his left hand and an axe in his right. All the carpenters were full of energy. All of a sudden, the master gave a loud cry, and then 'du-du-du-du'-knocked the nail. The carpenters, under his command, swung their axes at the same time. The whole ship, like a drum, resonated and broke out into a rhythmic roar that could be heard miles away (Dai 2018: 75).

The above-mentioned vivid scenes of *paifu*, which were the daily life of fishermen, gradually remained only in their memory and words, the decline of water

transportation and the reality that wooden boats were eliminated. The inheritor, Master Zhang, discussed below, is one of the few surviving *paifu* masters in the Jinhu region, who has been influenced from an early age by both his family and his master. In the face of the loss of the material carrier, he has taken a new and challenging path to preserve *paifu*, using his family's manuscripts as a roadmap for his efforts and relying also on the guidance of local cultural workers.

3.2.3 Apprenticeship and Family Influence

The *paifu* has a history of more than 1300 years in Minqiao Town. Its techniques and methods are mainly passed down from master to apprentice, and also some blood relatives.

Minqiao *paifu* was selected as the third batch of representative Intangible Cultural Heritage projects in Huai'an City in 2010. Dai Fubi and Zhang Yingliang, the inheritance candidates of the project, were selected as the first batch of representative inheritors of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Huai'an City. The genealogy of their inheritance is as follows:[53]

> Yang Chuntian (born in 1951, Jinnan Town, Jinhu County); Yang Qingzhang (born in 1927, Nanjing construction ship repair factory); Dai Fubi (born in 1934, Minqiao Town, Jinhu County); Yu Dianqing (born in 1938, Minqiao Town, Jinhu County)
>
> Zhang Hongjin (born in 1986, Minqiao Town, Jinhu County); Zhang Yuewen (born in 1921, Minqiao Town, Jinhu County); Zhang Yingliang (born in 1951, Minqiao Town, Jinhu County); Xie Zhihua (born in 1969, Minqiao Town, Jinhu County); Yao Qibing (Jinnan Town, Jinhu County, 1987)

[53] Sources from the Report of declaration of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Huai'an, *Da Paifu*, 2010..

From the above trace, we can find that the inheritance of Dai Fubi is characterized by masters and disciples, while Zhang Yingliang has dual pathways of transmission. During my fieldwork, I learned that he became the inheritor of the *paifu* project mainly through Dai Fubi's strong recommendation. Unfortunately, Master Dai died before my first visit to Jinhu in May 2019. Therefore, the following description mainly focuses on Zhang Yingliang's personal experience and inheritance activities.

Zhang Yingliang was born in June 1951 and is from Minqiao Town, Jinhu County, Huai'an City, Jiangsu Province. I visited him twice and was given the opportunity to interview him on both occasions. The interviews were all arranged in the conference room of the local government's cultural department. Like general craftspeople, he was also born into a family of craftspeople; three generations of carpenters who lived along the lake. But he studied to be a carpenter much later than the others:

> My father and grandfather were water carpenters, mainly building and fixing fishing boats on weekdays. In my junior school days, I followed my father to do some easy carpentry during the winter and summer holidays. The learning process has long penetrated everyday bits. Until I was 25, I decided to be a carpenter and systematically study carpentry (Zhang Yingliang, personal interview, 21 January 2021).

Even in today's society, twenty-five is the age at which many university students entered the workforce for two or three years, not to mention the 1960s and 70s when it was common for people to start working in their teens. Is there any particular reason behind this? Zhang explained it:

> I have loved literature and art since I was a child, especially instruments. Until now, I still can play a little Erhu and bamboo flute. In the 1970s, after graduating from junior high school, I had the opportunity to study professional acting with the Jiangsu Cultural Troupe. However, for some complicated reasons, I eventually gave up. My father did not want to see me depressed all the time, he advised me to be a carpenter. For the first

five years after I started working, I mainly used to be a water carpenter. Later, I changed into the common carpenter due to the difficult conditions and frequent wind and sun. I helped others build houses, repaired pavilions and made musical instruments during these years. I also participated in repairing wood carvings in the Forbidden City (Zhang Yingliang, personal interview, 21 January 2021).

3.2.4 The Secret Rhythm of Zhang's Paifu -"Dong","Za" and "Ci"

Just as the animals used to name the rhythm form of Jianggang *paifu*, the Minqiao area has named the rhythmic names in the same way, such as *Jinji zhuoshi* (golden rooster pecking), *Liyu chuanlang* (carp crossing the waves), *Liyu tiao longmen* (carp jumping over the dragon's gate), *Sanqi sanluo* (three rises and three falls), *Wulong baiwei* (oolong wagging its tail), *Fenghuang diantou* (phoenix nodding), etc. In this case, what is particularly valuable is that the name of the above rhythm comes from Master Zhang's family manuscript (see Figure 3.5), which was passed down from his father. It also documented the distinctive rhythmic forms of the *paifu* rhythm in the way of Chinese characters.

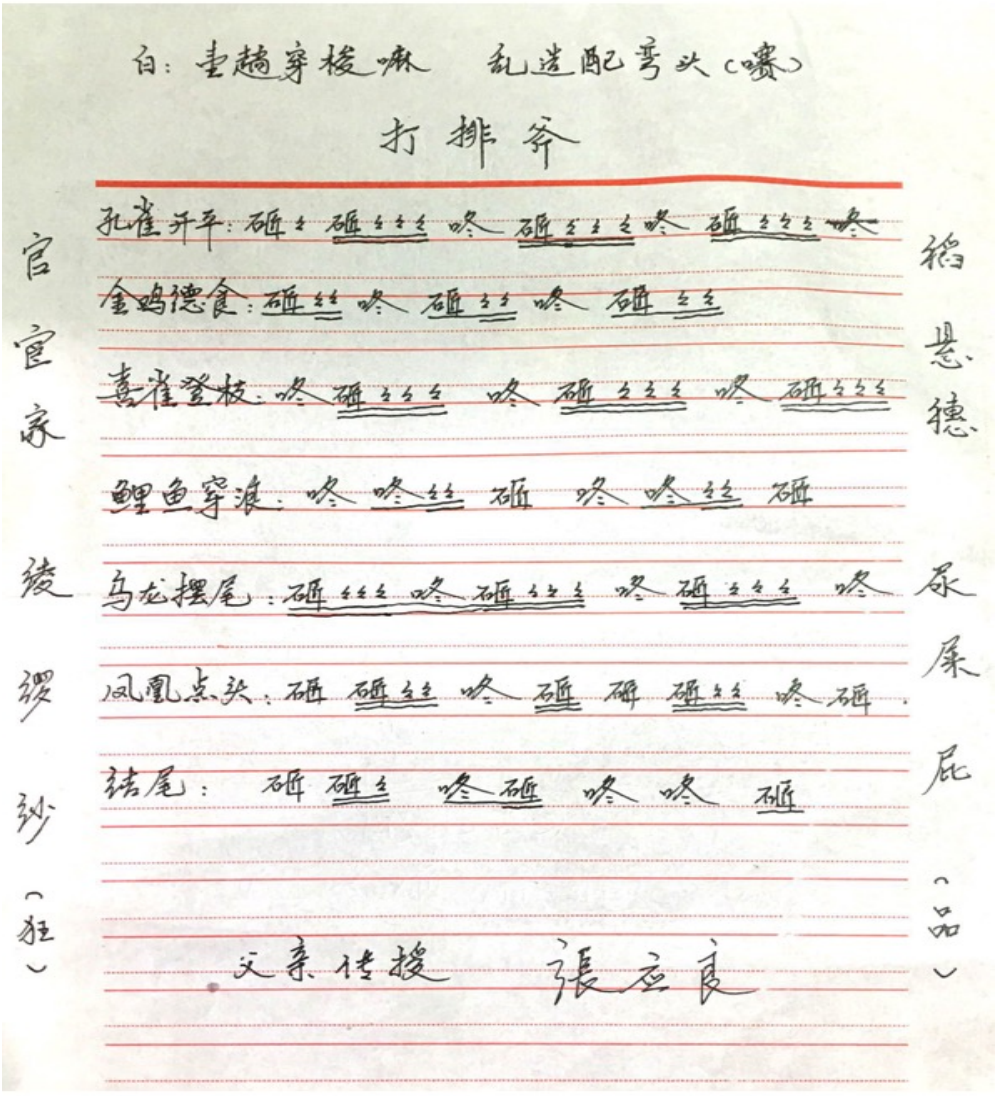


Figure 3.5: Zhang's manuscript on the rhythm of *paifu*, 20 May, 2019, provided by Zhang Yingliang.

Unlike in the music notation, the rhythm forms of Zhang's manuscript[54] are composed of the two main Chinese characters, *dong* (咚)[55] and *za* (砸)[56] and the simplified score lines. These two characters are onomatopoeic and refer to the sound of axes and chisels colliding. Zhang's manuscript records six sets of primary forms composed of the words *dong* and *za*, which are *Kongque kaipin* (peacock flaunting its

[54] According to Zhang, this manuscript was organized in 2008 with the help of a local elementary school music teacher.
[55] The *dong* means that all the people beat together, usually with an upbeat beat.
[56] *Za* is usually placed after *dong,* and indicates some rhythmic supplementation after the upbeat. These decorations are improvised mainly by the leader master.

tail), *Jinji de shi* (golden rooster pecking), *Xique dengzhi* (magpie climbing branches), *Liyu chuanlang* (carp crossing the waves), *Wulong baiwei* (oolong wags its tail) and *Fenghuang diantou* (phoenix nods). According to Zhang's recollection:

> In fact, there are eight sets of rhythm uploaded from my ancestors. The other two are *Xianren zhilu* (immortal pointing the way) and *Xianhe xizao* (crane bathing). I remember that these two sets need to add other tools. Take the 'crane bathing' for example, in order to imitate the sound of cranes, we will add the sound made by a saw when rubbing bamboo and we use Chinese character *ci* (吡) to describe it (Zhang Yingliang, personal telephone interview, 16 April 2021).

The specific rhythm is as follows (*za* is the black notes, *dong* is the red notes, *ci* is the yellow notes):

(1) ***Kongque kaipin***



(2) ***Jinji deshi***



(3) ***Xique dengzhi***



(4) ***Liyu chuanlang***



(5) ***Wulong baiwei***



(6) ***Fenghuang diantou***



(7) ***Xianhe xizao***



According to Zhang, the exact rules of *paifu* are as follow:

> When we did *paifu*, each carpenter was required to complete *yilang* (about one foot) *paifu*. We can freely combine the rhythms in *yilang*, but it must include all eight above (Zhang Yingliang, personal interview 20 May, 2019).

3.2.5 Excavation and Reborn of Paifu Art: Yu Xiangping and His Art Troupe

After officially receiving the title of inheritor in 2010, Zhang's main involvement in Intangible Cultural Heritage practices is the related demonstrations and interactive activities organized by the local government and the county cultural centre, which only focuses on introducing the basic knowledge of *paifu* to the public, and doesn't incorporate any particular creativity or performance related to it. This situation changed in 2018. This year, Zhang was invited to join a local folk art group- Jinhu *Hehuadang* Art Troupe. The art group was built in 2016 and registered as local business; almost all the members are inheritors from local Intangible Cultural Heritage projects. Its proprietor is Yu Xiangping, the long-serving head of the Minqiao cultural station and an influential local cultural celebrity in his own right.

From the few interactions I had with Yu Xiangping, he appeared very enthusiastic and sincere to me. At the same time, he seemed to care about the member (inheritor) from his group; he always accompanied Zhang Yingliang, whether it was for an interview, a performance or a simple meeting with me. During these activities and encounters, Yu would habitually light a cigarette, hold a pen, and sit with his head tilted, listening and writing intently. Now and then, he would also look for the right moment to interject, add details, and give guidance. He is a person hard to slow

down, in our conversations, sometimes, I would mention some of the previous materials inadvertently, at which point he would stop, immediately rummaging through his bag or call the phone, help me find them. If I suggested an idea, he would immediately confirm its feasibility and outline a plan.

Since 2007, Yu was chosen to be responsible in charge of investigating and taking stock of local folklore and cultural matters. In a few years, he visited eleven towns and surrounding areas across the county and completed over a thousand survey manuscripts. These manuscripts provide detailed records of the time of the survey, the subject (name, age, gender, address), information about the presenter, the recorder and the oral content of the relevant items. The oral content mainly includes the background, pedigree, technical characteristics and tracing leads of the relevant person engaged in a particular skill or performance. Therefore, when the local started to prepare the declaration of Intangible Cultural Heritage a few years ago, Yu became a core member of it naturally and logically. He mainly assisted locals in preparing the declaration of three projects- Jinhu *Yangge*, *lianxiang* dance[57] and Jinhu *paifu* to the Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Eventually, with the help of his accumulated solid investigation records, the three projects were successfully selected for national, provincial and municipal Intangible Cultural Heritage protection lists.

In order to show me what the *paifu* looks like in the initial investigation, and also to give me a complete understanding of *paifu*. Yu proposed that I go to his house to see the related manuscript of the investigation he had compiled back then. So, at the end of the day's interview, I went with Yu to his home in the centre of town. His home is located on a commercial street, a dual-use commercial home. As soon as he arrived home, he began to rummage through boxes, and in a short time, carton after carton, was brought out full of handwritten survey materials. The manuscripts (see Figure 3.6) were categorized according to different items with varying shades of ink stains on the yellowed paper, and the rust marks left by the clips in the footer of the pages were soaked with the signs of age. I turned page after page and could not help but immense veneration in my heart.

[57] Jinhu *Yangge*, *lianxiang* dance are both local dances.

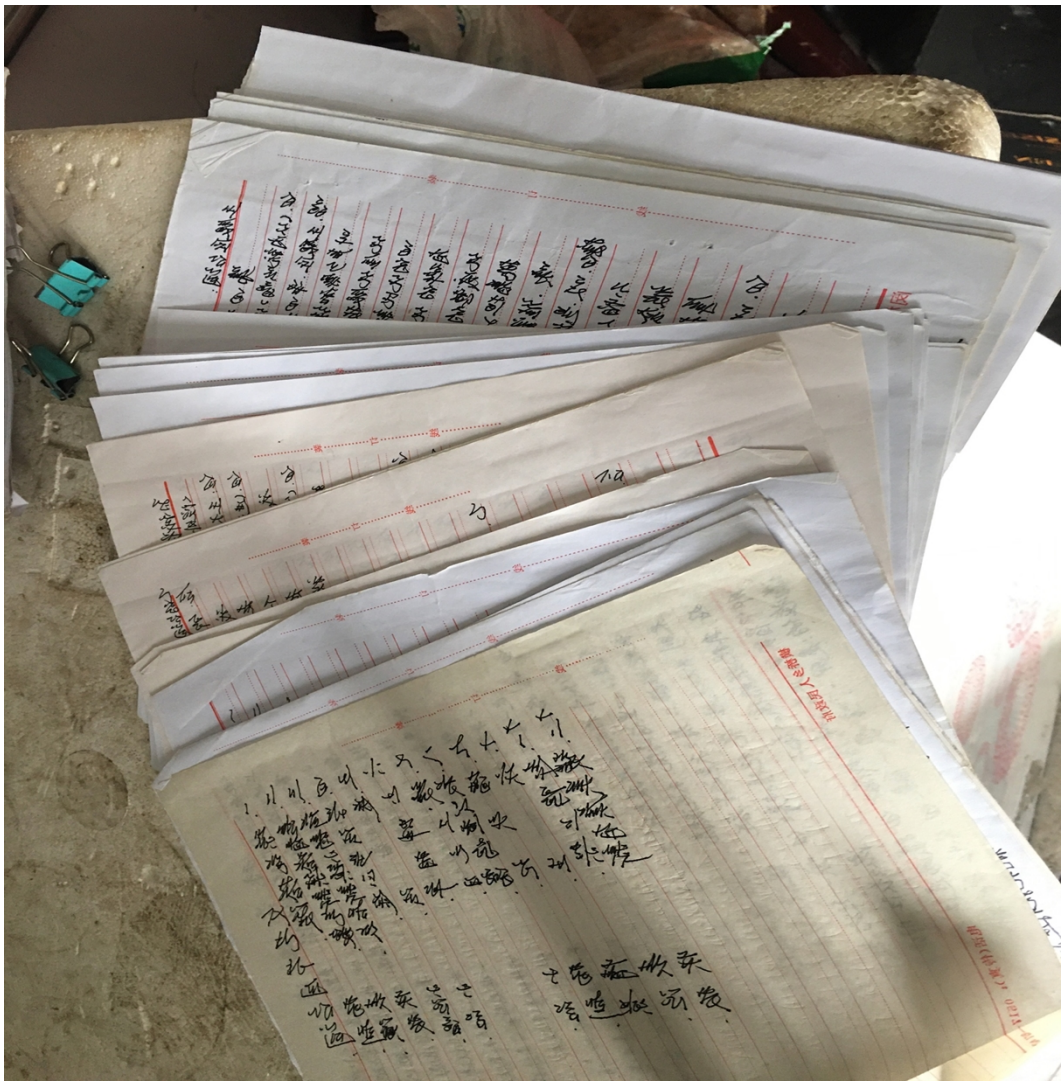


Figure 3.6: Yu Xiangping Cultural Census Manuscripts, Interview transcripts, 22 January 2021, photographed by Li Weiyang.

Pointing to one of the piles of information about the art group, Yu said to me:

> My troupe is not only operational in nature, but I have also registered the trademark of *Hehuadang*. It was a pity to waste the results and resources of the census over the years, so I incorporated them all into the art group. Over time, my art group has developed into a group with local culture as the main creative element, promoting and popularising local non-traditional projects as the primary responsibility. We have created nearly twenty representative programs, and most of the main actors are inheritors of each project. Until now, the stable number of members is more than 20,

> ranging in age from 40 to 70. The rehearsal time is fixed, one or two days a week. We would rehearse continuously for a few days if we had a performance task. We have an exclusive rehearsal hall, lighting, sound and other equipment, and 200-300 sets of clothes and hundreds of related props purchased by the troupe at its own expense. Under normal circumstances, my troupe will perform more than 20 times a year and be interviewed dozens of times. In terms of members' remuneration, it depends on different occasions. If the performance is only half a day, each performer could get 80 yuan. If the performance lasts one day, the standard will be up to 120 yuan. If relevant members need to be interviewed and consulted by the media or researchers, lunch and dinner should be provided for them if the interview or consultation time is longer than 11:00 am and 5:00 pm (Yu Xiangping, personal interview, 22 January 2021).

Unlike most folk art groups in my fieldwork, which are half public service and half entertainment, Yu's art group has a distinct positioning, a standardized management, and a more straightforward developmental goal. I still remember a detail that Yu reminded Master Zhang during the interview:

> At the end of the interview, Yu walked up and patted master Zhang, reminding him to take a picture with me for the archival purpose. Then he requested Zhang to make a brief record of today's event when he returned home, especially for the time, participants and nature. What he did surprised me, usually asking for a photo with the interviewee and compiling field notes is my routine (Li Weiyang, ethnography notes, 22 January 2021).

While Yu was rummaging for information, I mentioned this detail to him, and he smiled and said:

> Many local cultures are valuable, but those that can be named as officially protected intangible cultural heritage items are, after all, a minority. I

think one of the important reasons why they are not evaluated is that they are not well documented and recorded, and they cannot get the supporting materials at the critical moment of selection. Similarly, the key to the declaration of ICH projects from municipal to provincial to national level lies in the richness and meticulousness of the materials. This is also what I have learned from my years of experience in census work. So I will often remind my members to pay attention to the detailed records of each performance and interview, which will be beneficial to the development of their own projects (Yu Xiangping, personal interview, 22 January 2021).

Following on the topic from above, Yu continued to share with me more things and details about the excavation process of projects:

The first one is about *paifu*.

The preliminary materials for *paifu* were relatively comprehensive. Therefore, I soon organized relevant selection and application work after my verification. During the publicity stage of the list, the relevant department received an objection letter about the doubt about our choosing standards of inheritors. It is a sensitive issue, as the title of heir represents honour and is related to a certain amount of financial aid, so many people follow it closely. The cultural department at the higher level immediately started the investigation and asked me to provide complete references. When I handed in this thick stack of manuscripts and notes, I felt confident because I believed my manuscript was objective and recorded every relevant person and project clearly and in detail. Finally, after double verification, the cultural department quickly approved my declaration about *paifu.* It reminds me once again that the correct way to protect local culture and effectively explore Intangible Cultural Heritage projects is to conduct practical field investigation carefully, deeply explore local culture and record what I see and hear in detail and objectively (Yu Xiangping, personal interview, 22 January 2021).

The other one is about *lianxiang* dance,

When I first investigated the *lianxiang* dance, I found only eight movements in *lianxiang* dance, which looked dull. I believe there must be more things that could be explored, so I searched for clues to expand the geographical scope of the survey and the interview crowd. Finally, based on ensuring the tradition and originality of the dance, I integrated all the actions and moves in the collected data and dictation into 32 sets and gave each set a vivid name (see Figure 3.7). I strongly believe that the excavation and future development of Intangible Cultural Heritage projects are closely related to the field investigation, interview depth and breadth of relevant personnel, and the adequacy or otherwise of data preservation. Many municipal projects do have room to continue to declare upward. The key is the attitude and efforts of all participants (Yu Xiangping, personal interview, 22 January 2021).

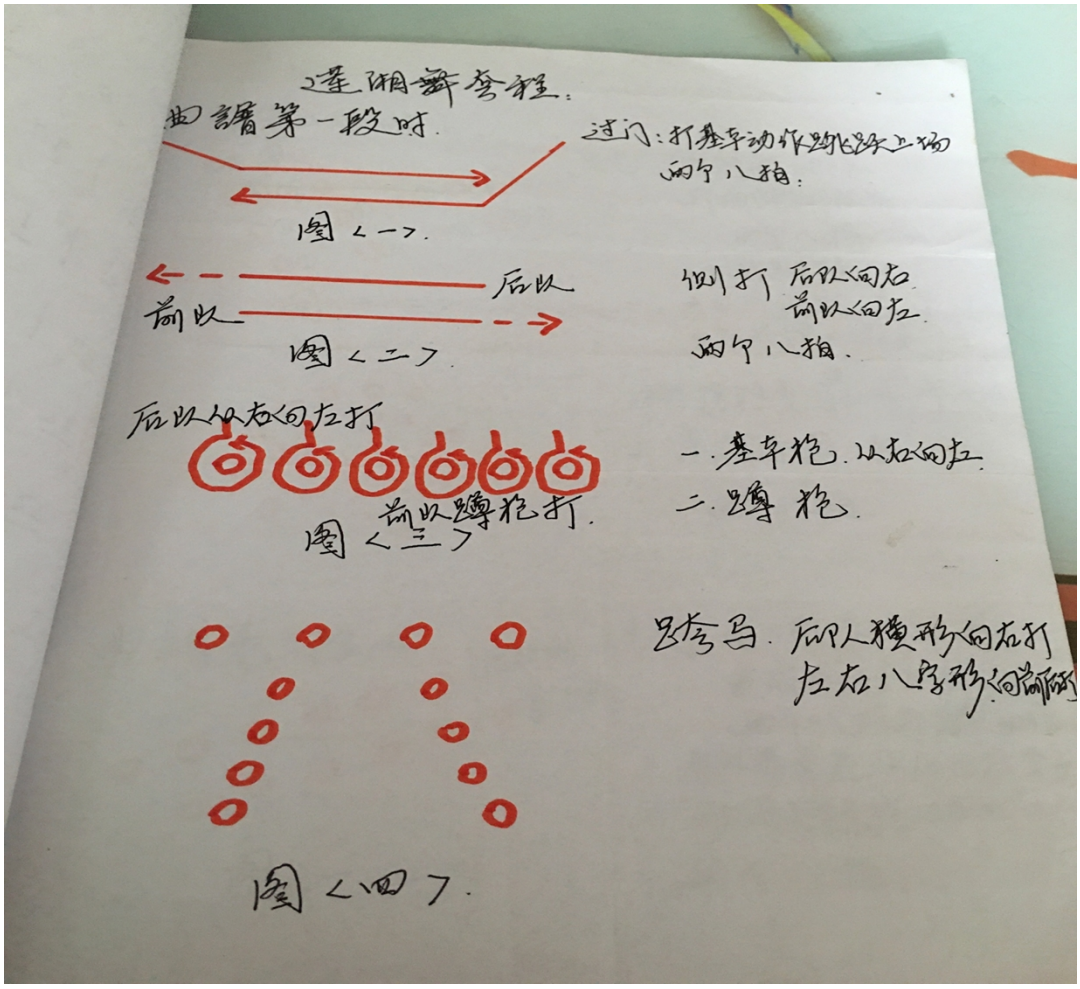


Figure 3.7: Yu Xiangping Cultural Census Manuscripts, Dance Diagram of the *Lianxiang* Dance, 22 January 2021, photographed by Li Weiyang.

3.2.6 Holistic Protection: Cultural Description in Live Show

Minqiao *paifu*'s official Intangible Cultural Heritage is designated as folk custom. This category places a greater emphasis on the restoration and interpretation of critical rituals and activity scenes and encourages people to practice living and overall protection. So, Yu Xiangping proposes creating a new live show for the *paifu*. To this end, he and Master Zhang visited and researched for more than a year, and eventually wrote the script of the show based on the details provided by many carpenters and fishermen. Yu also gave an attractive name for it - *Yujia xitian xinmuchuan* (Fisherman's Joy to Add a New Wooden Boat). The show's characters are the boat owner and his wife, the *paifu* master and a group of carpenters. It offers the

perspective of the boat owner and his wife, and through their dialogue, cleverly connects a lot of information related to the *paifu*, including its historical origin, development background, ritual preparation and even changes after it becomes an Intangible Cultural Heritage. Finally it leads to the lively scene of beating ship-board by the *paifu* master and other carpenters. For this program, Mr Yu customized costumes, props and even a wooden boat of the same size to reality to truly reproduce the vivid process of fishermen's *paifu*.

The following is the full script of the live show, made by Xu Lantai and Yu Xiangping,

Script: Fisherman's Joy to Add a New Wooden Boat

Cast of Characters

Lingzuo master

Unlimited number of actors being carpenter

The ship owner Li Daode (60 years old)

The ship owner's wife Zhou Yuqin (62 years old）

The Start of the Play

At the opening of the curtain, Li Daode, dressed in Tang costumes and holding a long cigarette bag, came on the stage happily.

Li: My name is Li Daode. I'm sixty this year. I am pretty strong and healthy. My son advised me to abandon the ship and go ashore to enjoy peace and happiness. I can't bear it! The boat is not only my means of transportation but also my way to make money. How can I abandon it? I discussed it with my wife and took out my savings to build a new wooden boat. She supported me very much. Today is an auspicious day. I invited a group of carpenters to do *paifu*, which is as vital as building roof beams on land! (turning his head and shouting) wife, wife!

Zhou: Hey, I am coming (holding a folding fan and going on stage). What's up?

Li: How's it going?

Zhou: Everything is ready!

Li: OK (turns around) Masters, please lift it! (*Gong* and drums play and firecrackers set off).

Carpenters: *ai,yo,ai...* sing the *haozi* (they carry the wooden boat, take the national flag and mirror on the stage. Li sets up two large stools and a square stool, and places the tribute on a tray. Li then holds three sticks of incense, bows, sets off firecrackers, and the music stops.

Carpenters: Congratulations to the owner of the ship for its smooth sailing!

Lingzuo Master: Please take your place. Lu Ban's *Diyifu*: *Kong que zhanchi* (beating the boat with an axe).

Carpenters: Lu Ban's *Dierfu*: *Longfeng chengxiang* (beating the boat with axes).

Carpenters: Wish your profits pouring in from all sides and reach thousands of miles.

Lingzuo Master: Lu Ban's *Disanfu*: *Sitong bada* (beating the boat with an axe).

Carpenters: Wish you make more money!

Li, Zhou: Thank you for your congratulations.

Li: (turns to his wife) Hand out red envelopes.

Zhou: Sure!

Li:（Passes cigarettes to carpenters）*Chiyan, Chiyan.*

Carpenters: Thank you.

Lingzuo Master: Carpenters! Pay attention to lifting!

Carpenters: *Ao!* (*Heiyoheiyo…*) Lift the wooden boat, turn it over and expose the bottom of the boat.

Lingzuo Master: Start to the *paifu*!

Carpenters: Okay. (They take their places and begin to strike the boat with axes and chisels. The rhythm of their strikes is based on the scores).

Li: Carpenters, take a rest and have some tea.

Zhou: Today is the big happy event in my family, please have some sweets.

Carpenters: It's very kind of you. (they eat sweets, drink tea and wipe the sweat off their brows).

Zhou: (facing the audience) Husband, young people may not have seen the *paifu* before?

Li: I think so. *Paifu* began in the Tang and Song Dynasties and has a history of thousands of years. It is a production and labour ceremony for carpenters when building wooden ships. It spreads in rivers, lakes and water networks, especially popular in Jiangsu and Anhui areas.

Zhou: With the cooperation of axe sound and gong sound, the rhythm is clear and the sound is shocking. Its rhythm has many sets, which are very pleasant to listen to, such as *Kongqu zhanchi*, *Fenghuangdiantou* , *Liyu chuanlang*, *Wulong baiwei*. It has a magnificent momentum and festive colour and is welcomed by the general public.

Li: Carpenters, I'd like to tell you good news. *Paifu* has been included in the Intangible Cultural Heritage project of Huai'an City!

Carpenters: Great, great! (clap hands) we need to inherit and protect it!

Lingzuo Master: Carpenters, continue to the *paifu*!

(The music began with *gongs* and drums. The carpenters do the *paifu* again and finishe the remaining rhythm sets based on the music score.)
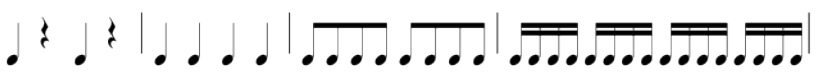
Lingzuo Master: Lifts the boat, enters the water!

Carpenters: Enter the water.(the carpenters put the bow down and the stern up, push the boat together to the water.)

The End of the Play

The following are the full rhythmic forms (see Figure 3.8) used in the live show, made by Yu Xiangping. The *za* is the black notes, *dong* is the red notes:

⑴ ***Yaogang*** (starting part, from slow to fast)





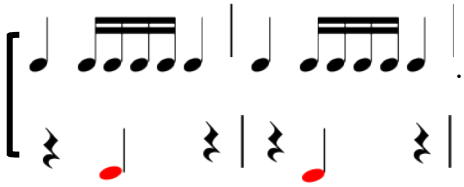
⑵ ***Mansanfu*** (Lu Ban's *disanfu*):


… (twelve)

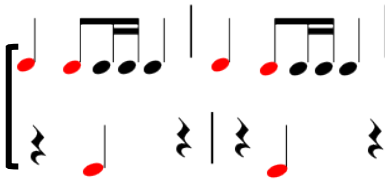
(3) ***Jinji deshi***


… (five) plus free play

(4) ***Wulong baiwei***


… (four)

(5) ***Liyu chuanlang***


… (four) plus free play

(6) ***Fenghuang diantou***



(7) ***Xianhe zhanchi***



(8) ***Shoufu*** (ending part)



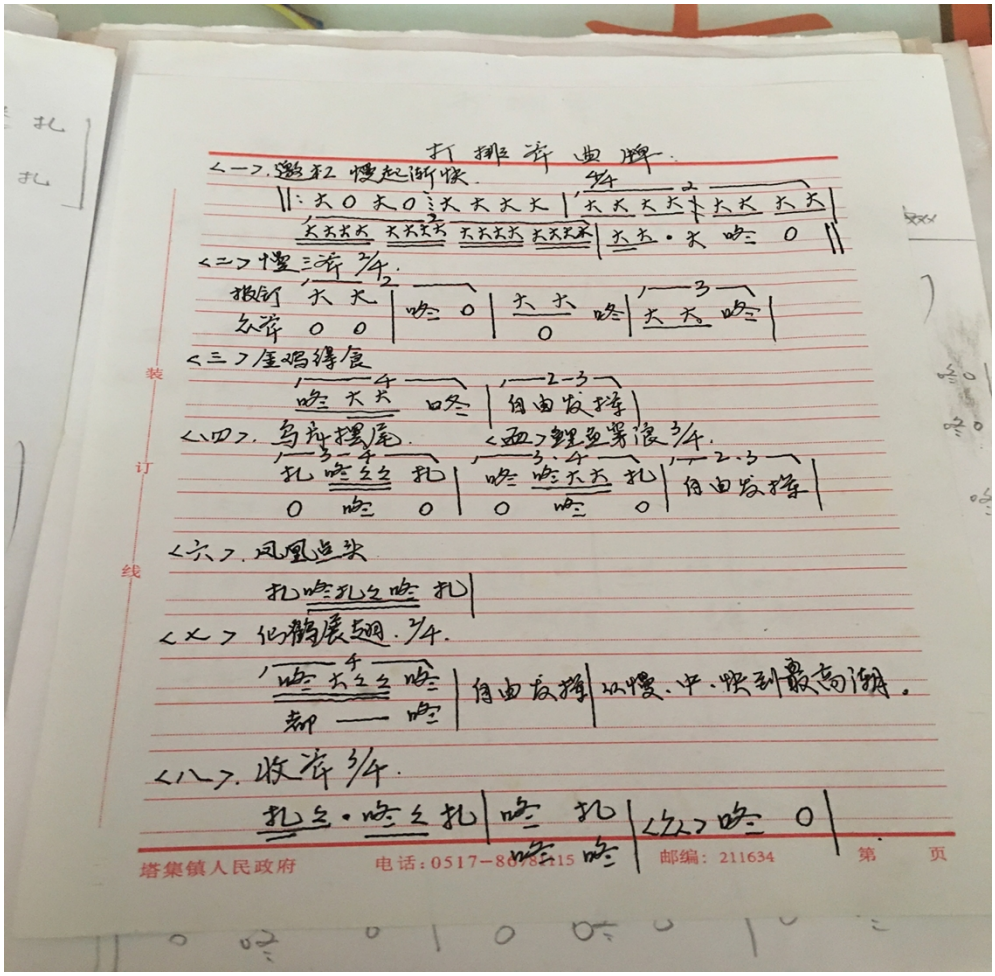


Figure 3.8: Live programme manuscript of “Fisherman’s Joy to Add a New Wooden Boat”, scores of *paifu*, 22 January 2021, made by Yu Xiangping, photographed by Li Weiyang.



Figure 3.9: Live Show “Fisherman’s Joy to Add a New Wooden Boat”, 4 June (National Intangible Cultural Heritage Day), 2019, made by Yu Xiangping, photographed by Li Weiyang.

I watched the show at the site on the 2019 Intangible Cultural Heritage Day (see Figure 3.9), as an artistic recreation of *paifu*, in my opinion, which has the following characteristics:

In terms of the actor composition, only Zhang Yinliang is a real *paifu* master in the live show; the rest actors are all from Yu’s art troupe, who are regular folks.

In terms of the musicality (rhythmic expression) of the program, it basically follows the rhythm name, rhythm type and basic structure from Zhang’s manuscript. It also adds something new, such as *Yaogang, Xianhe zhanchi* and *Shoufu*, which makes the show more complete and richer. It primarily uses the *dong* element (upbeat beats), which is easy for the rest of the actors to understand, learn and follow. In some parts, Yu also gives Zhang space for improvisation. Based on his family’s rules, Zhang could combine more rhythms here, making the show more attractive and fun.

3.2.7 The Ultimate Musical Expression of Paifu: Solo Instrument

After joining Yu's art troupe, Zhang's opportunities to present *paifu* to the public increased to five or six times a year from the previous one. At his peak, he participated in eleven performances in a year. Zhang told me that Yu has started to a new program for *paifu*. This time, Yu wants to make a brand new music program-*paifu* and instrumental ensemble piece, with regard this, he has found a senior composer at the local Huai Opera Troupe, teacher Fang. Mr Fang has finished the central part in November 2020. The music piece was titled *Yujiale*[58] (*Paifu* and Band). The instruments involved in the ensemble were flute, *sheng*, *jinghu*, *gaohu*, *erhu*, *zhonghu*, dulcimer, *pipa*, *zhongruan*, cello and some Chinese percussion instruments. The *paifu* will be presented in a special section as a solo percussion instrument. The instrumental ensemble plans to perform next year at *Jinhehua*, the most significant annual tourism and economic and trade festival in Jinhu.

Conclusion

In this project, *paifu* was officially recognized as representing different categories in Intangible Cultural Heritage - shipbuilding technique and folklore - resulting in separate guidance and practices. In the two cases in this chapter, their initial choices of *paifu*'s inheritance all followed the "definition" from the categories (official proposals for the conservation of technique-based and folklore-based ICH projects): static display and integrity protection. However, as time passed, they all show a new trend: they use their rhythm elements indirectly or directly to create new programs. I have corroborated all these through first-hand sources collected in the field, such as local written records, interviews, videos, and manuscripts.

As I see it, this new trend (sound-related performance) of *paifu* mainly results from the disappearance of its physical carrier (wooden boat) and the situation of fishermen's community dispersion. As a technique, *paifu* no longer creates any

[58] *Yujiale* means the joy of fishermen.

substantial production value in reality; therefore, it cannot apply to mass production in factories or family workshops. Consequently, it gives possibilities for the inheritors from other than the carpenter. As a kind of folk custom, *paifu* based on traditional fishing rituals has long lost its atmosphere and audience forcing it to transform into something new that might attract and appeal to diverse audiences. This transformation is rooted in hidden rhythmic sound patters which are attached to its functional and ritual properties. This rhythmic signature can be used not only as a musical element in new works, but as the basis for expressive new artistic creativities that can also be appreciated and enjoyed as a mere acoustic performance.

Postscript

Before I started fieldwork, my research on Intangible Cultural Heritage sites was conducted mainly at the desk, where I browsed various ICH platforms, checking official sources, and investigating possible projects. However, in the first round of screening, I did not choose *paifu*, as I wasn't particularly fascinated by it. In retrospect, it is likely that I overlooked it because it was categorised as shipbuilding technology and only left a few sentences about its history. In my fieldwork in the fishing village, no one mentioned it either. This all changed the day before my fieldwork ended, when I was finishing an interview with Lu Jun, the son of Lu Jiayou, also the head of Dongtai's Integrated Media Centre. When I was heading to the elevator, he suddenly called me and said, "I have something here that was recorded by chance a few years ago. I think you may be interested in it. Do you want to take a look?" (Lu Jun, April 25 2019). With curiosity, I went into the editing room with him. The recording was video inadvertently filmed in 2009 (mentioned in this chapter) It is the last and only video of them because two carpenters in the video passed away in a few years, one after another. It was the video brought my attention to the strong rhythmic beauty on the site of *paifu* and its musical impact, and followed the clue, I found Minqiao *paifu*. In Minqiao's case, although there was no video evidence of the natural production state of *paifu*, the manuscript provided by the inheritor, Master Zhang, still gave me enough surprises, he kept a rare paper material, family-based, written score directly recorded and described with the rhythm of *paifu*. It also serves as a solid foundation for my in-depth exploration of its musical performance. This

special experience teaches me a lesson: When choosing a research project, don't just take note of the superficial, immediate elements that are merely related to music, but take a deeper, more comprehensive look and explore the possibilities so that you don’t miss out on a project that deserves to be explored.

CHAPTER 4

Hongze Lake *Yugu*: From Ritual Ceremony to Mass Art

Introduction

A frequent phrase among lake fishermen is "fishermen have nowhere to spend money, either to do *paifu* or *shao zhiqian* (burning joss paper 烧纸钱)." If the fishermen's *haozi* in the previous chapter represents one type of fishermen's labour (which is fundamental to their survival and a primary source of income for them), and the boat-building (*paifu*) referred to their highest material pursuit, then the "burning paper money" i.e., the fishermen's rituals, is their most genuine spiritual world. This spiritual world is both highly condensed and fundamental to the deep roots of fishermen's culture. Only by fully inhabiting it and delving deeper to understand it can we fully grasp the core content of fishermen's group. After a great deal of preliminary research, I found within the geographic scope of Northern Jiangsu Province, only the Hongze Lake *yugu*, which has been passed down in the Hongze Lake area, is in line with the ritual culture of the fishermen and at the same time belong to the Intangible Cultural Heritage program. Therefore, this chapter focus on the Hongze Lake *yugu*. Before discussing its specifics, I would like to introduce the lake-fishermen's beliefs and their particular rituals as a way to further contextualise my findings.

Because their daily lives are inextricably intertwined with nature, every harvest session of the fishermen is a mixture of crisis and opportunity. Standing face to face with nature, human beings always appear small and fragile. Perhaps because of this, lake-fishermen always seem to be extraordinarily persistent and devout in their approach to their rituals, and even though, due to the constraints of the external

conditions, their rituals are not as refined and elaborate as those of the terrestrial people. As such, they always do their utmost to organize and execute every ritual to the best of their abilities. These fishermen have a wide range of beliefs, and the number of deities they believe in is vast. In his article “Jiushi Jiangsu yumin de xisu he zongjiao xinyang” (The Customs and Religious Beliefs of the Fishermen of Jiangsu in Old Times), Gao Liang describes this and the reasons for its formation in some detail:

> The fishermen’s religion is very diverse, with a blend of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, and a mixture of upper, middle and lower world deities. There are also some Catholic fishermen and those belonging to the Muslim community who subscribe to Islam. The diversity of fishermen's beliefs is inseparable from their individual cultural background. But whatever their faith, the urgent and immediate desire for abundance and their own security makes their faith belong only to the here and now, without belief in reincarnation or the practice of the afterlife (Gao 1991: 76).

In addition to the worship of the gods, another central theme of the Lake District fishermen’s rituals is the worship of their ancestors. Although the lake fishermen’s life makes it difficult for them to have a fixed ancestral shrine for regular rituals as land dwellers do, this does not mean that the fishermen themselves have a weak or lost sense of ancestral worship. Thus, during the rituals in which the clan members come together in precious, they also remember their ancestors, welcome new members and discuss matters of importance to the clan to establish and a chain of command, and to put into place new rules and regulations.

Hongze Lake *yugu* quickly received the attention of Intangible Cultural Heritage for its representativeness and scarcity as the ritual culture of fishermen and was successfully declared as a National Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2014. *Yugu* has two meanings in this context: firstly, it is a general term for the rituals of the fishermen of Hongze Lake; secondly, it is the name of the musical instrument used in the rituals. Depending on the content, scale and requirements, the *yugu* can vary from one day and one night to four days and four nights. The whole ritual involves

different artistic disciplines such as music, dance, painting, paper-cutting and drama, and the content of the ritual is closely related to the religion, history, folklore and prior education of the fishermen community. It can be said that although the expression of *yugu* is the ritual, beneath it lies a vivid representation of fishermen's cultural history.

In this chapter, the two studies are located in Bancheng and Laozishan Town; which belonged to the same administrative region many years ago. The natural location of Pan Hongze Lake means that the two places have same geographical characteristics and historical background, the fishermen living in the two places also have the same cultural habits, as a ritual culture of the *yugu* is not an exception, so the *yugu* project in the declaration of the national level of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the form of joint cooperation between the two places. Although there is a high degree of consistency between the two places regarding the historical lineage and the actual outcome of the *yugu's* conservation, transmission and development, the key figures at the heart of the process retain different views and conservation philosophies on the culture. In what follows, I will first outline some background information on the above two places where the *yugu* is widely circulated before focusing on the common parts of the *yugu* in both places, including its origins, myths, rituals, steps and significance. Sharing stories of the bearers and core promoters in both places, and engaging a new with the challenges and choices made by the *yugu* and their participants at different times, I aim to show how people have sought and balanced the relationship between tradition and innovation for *yugu*. In doing so, I will elaborate on the ways the Intangible Cultural Heritage has been transformed from a niche ritual cultural belonging to a specific group, to a mass culture accepted by the general public.

4.1 Zoning History of Mudun Island and Laozishan Town

As mentioned in the introduction, for the declaration of the *yugu* project as an ICH, Bancheng (where the Mudun Island is located) and Laozishan, have adopted a collaborative and joint declaration approach. How did the two achieve cultural sharing and cooperate in the declaration, especially since they're not located in the

same city and county? The answer to this question stems from a particular period of zoning history shared by the two places:

> In 1952, the external development environment had improved considerably, and considering that overly complicated regional divisions were not conducive to economic development, the northern and southern administrative departments of Jiangsu Province were abolished and reunited to form Jiangsu Province. Jiangsu Province was then divided into a series of special zones, including the Huaiyin Special Zone. In 1955, Xuyi and Sihong counties in Anhui province were transferred to the administration of Huaiyin Special Districts prefecture out of the need to manage Hongze Lake. In 1956, based on some townships in several counties, the Huaiyin prefecture formed Hongze County. In the late 60s, Huaiyin Special Zone was renamed Huaiyin District. It was not until 1996, with a new round of changes in the regional planning of Jiangsu Province, that Sihong County[59] was transferred to Suqian City, which was newly elevated to a prefecture-level city. In 2001, the renaming of Huaiyin City to Huai'an prefecture-level city, and in 2016 Hongze County within the jurisdiction of Huai'an City was abolished, and Hongze District was formed.[60]

Therefore, belonging to the same lake district and having been under the same administrative jurisdiction for a more extended period makes sense that the two places share the culture of the *yugu* and collaborate in their declaration.

Next, I will explore the origins of the Hongze Lake *yugu*. As mentioned above, the Hongze Lake *yugu* originated in Bancheng Town. In the following section, I ask:

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[59] The Bancheng Town where Mudun Island is located is now part of Sihong County.
[60] Laozishan Town is now part of Hongze District. The above information is quoted from Sohu News "Jiangsusheng de quhua biandong, 13ge dijishi zhiyi, Huai'an weihe you 7 ge quxian" (Why does Huai'an City, one of the 13 prefecture-level cities, have seven districts and counties as a result of zoning changes in Jiangsu Province?), 15 April 2022, at https://www.sohu.com/a/538210735_120048357. confirmed on 23 May 2023.

was it originally associated with fishermen's rituals, and where did it originate in its original form- *yugu*? What was its purpose?

4.2 Origin of Hongze Lake *Yugu*

After many inquiries, I eventually found a possible answer to the above question in the only official physical source on public display in the area, and one that is currently cited more often by academics, namely, the *Zhonghua wudaozhi · jiangsujuan* (Chinese Dance Journal-Jiangsu Volume), its photocopies of which are on display at both the Bancheng and Hongze *yugu* exhibition halls. Although it addresses the tracing and explanation of the development of *yugu* dance (the dance used in *yugu* rituals), considering the close relationship between *yugu dance and yugu*, it still has some reference value. Its specific description is:

> The yugu dance originated from a Manchu custom- *tiaoshen* (dance with gods). After *tiaoshen* spread from the north to the south Shandong region (Lunan area), a folk performance profession was formed called *Zhouguzi*. It was later spread to the coast of Hongze Lake with the people who fled and took refuge from Shandong, became a form of song and dance for the fishermen of the lake to pray to the gods for peace and a good harvest, and was performed mainly by the *tongzi* (underage males) who came from Bancheng, Sihong County *(Zhonghua wudaozhi* Editorial Committee 2007: 434-437).

To my surprise, there has been no subsequent deduction or verification of the above definition, either locally or in the academic literature, as if it were the standard answer. This explanation is unsatisfactory to me, and I would like to verify it with specific fieldwork in order to explore more details and meanings behind it. First of all, I'd like to start by breaking down the definition into three salient points, namely:

a. The Hongze Lake *yugu* originated from/ related to Manchu customs in the north.
b. The Lunan region was an important hub for the spread of Hongze Lake

yugu.

c. The Hongze Lake *yugu* was first performed by *tongzi* from Bancheng town and served to pray for the blessings of the fishermen.

I obtained the following results by consulting the literature, and also by visiting and questioning local cultural workers and *yugu* artists to verify and validate them line by line.

My argument about point (a):

During my fieldwork, I was fortunate to acquire a hand-drawn drawing of a fishing drum by the former director of the Hongze Lake Museum. (See Figure 4.1)

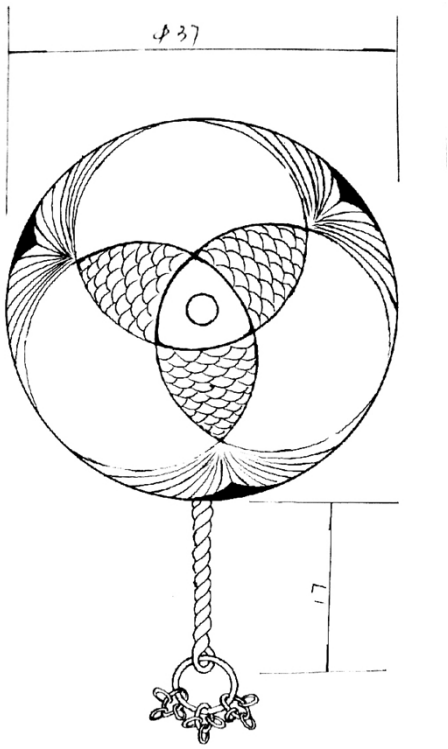


Figure 4.1: Hand-drawn of the fishing drum, drawn by Pei An'nian, Hongze Lake Museum, received on 27 June 2019 on WeChat.

In the hand drawing, three fish can be drawn on the drum's surface, which meets two by two with the centre of the drum as a circle, dividing the drum surface into several three-equal blocks of varying sizes. On the large ring at the end of the drum

handle hang three small pendants consisting of three small rings. A small fishing drum contains so many elements of "three" that I cannot help but wonder what the significance of "three" here is and whether it could be related to Manchu culture.

After searching, I found a possible basis for this in a series of papers and writings on Manchu culture, including Yang Xichun's *Manzu fengsu kao* (The Examination of Manchu Customs) and Zhao Gecha's *Lun manzu shenhua zhong shuzi 'san' de hanyi* (On the Significance of the Number 'Three' in Manchu Mythology) and so on; they all mention the importance of 'three' to Manchu culture and cite a large number of examples of the widespread use of 'three' in Manchu cultural life. In addition, in an interview with Wang Chunzhu, a *yugu* artist from Bancheng, he also mentioned that "in addition to performing for fishermen in the Hongze Lake area, they also accepted invitations to perform all over the country and that the furthest they had been to the north-east of China was to perform for a Manchu family" (Wang Chunzhu, personal interview, 21 February 2022).

The above analysis does not directly prove the inevitable link between the Hongze Lake *yugu* and the Manchu, but it is still relevant as an indirect argument.

My argument about point (b):

In the Lunan area, a folkloric activity is very similar to the *yugu* in terms of content, form, steps, function, instruments used in the ritual and the participants' performance style, called *duangu*. On this point, in addition to mention in relevant materials,[61] the *yugu* artists I interviewed in the fieldwork also confirmed it, such as Wang Yugao, a *yugu* artist from Bancheng, who said that "when it was the busiest time of the year for *yugu* performances, we (our troupe) and the artists over in Shandong could help and support each other, and we performed basically the same contents" (Wang Yugao, personal interview, 20 February 2022). Liu Changming, a

[61] These papers mention *yugu* is also known *duangu*, and further discuss the close connections between the two, including Cheng Qifang's "Hongzehu yugu de fazhan jiqi gongneng yanjiu" (Study on the development and functions of Hongze Lake *Yugu*), 2022 and Chen Xuetao's "Feiwuzhi wenhuayichan hongzehu yugu baohu yanjiu" (Study on the preservation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 'Hongze Lake *Yugu*'), 2019.

yugu artist from Laozishan, said that "most of our performers' hometowns are in the Lunan region. I have seen their (performers from Shandong) performances, which are similar to ours" (Liu Changming, personal interview, 4 August 2022). In addition, in "Hongzehu *yugu* de fazhan jiqi gongneng yanjiu" (Study on the Development and Functions of Hongze Lake *yugu*) written by Cheng Qifang, the details of the interaction between Hongze Lake *yugu* artists and Shandong artists are also mentioned, namely:

> In order to ensure the successful completion of the *yugu* repertoire, in addition to contacting the performing artists in the lake area, *yugu* artists from Shandong are also contacted to perform together. The arrangement of the repertoire is based on the needs of the fishermen on the island; the exchange of ideas between the artists from both sides determines the order of appearance. The Shandong artists bear more responsibility for the singing and dancing parts than the Hongze Lake *yugu* performers, while the Hongze Lake performers are mainly responsible for beating the fishing drums to match the performance (Chen 2022: 122).

My argument about point (c):

The first material is a legend about the Hongze Lake *yugu* and its origin on Mudun Island, collected and provided by Zhang Rengao, the former head of the cultural station in Bancheng.

> It is said that Li Shimin (the Emperor of the Tang Dynasty) fought a battle with the Liao state before he ascended the throne. In order to win, Li made a wish to the gods before marching. He would worship the gods (Gods of Heaven, Earth and Death) if he won. The final result is that he won and became the Emperor as he wished, but he forgot his promise. Three years later, the god in charge of returning the vow found that Li had broken his word, so he sent him to hell. Due to he has been the Emperor (the son of the real dragon), the king of hell could do nothing, so he punished his favourite empress, Xigong. Li then was awoken to the truth and immediately decided

to set up a god shed, an incense table, and lay offerings on a high earth pier in Hongze Lake, inviting the *shenhan* to hold a worship ceremony for four days and four nights. This high earth pier will be the Mudun island in the future, and these shenhan became the *yugu* performers who later lived in Hongze Lake. This sacrificial behaviour has also spread on Hongze Lake to the present day.[62] (Zhang n.d.n.p.)

Apart from these mythical origins, in reality, all the *yugu* performers found on Hongze Lake so far have come from Bancheng and Laozishan. These two places are also the locations of the only two original *yugu* performance groups left in Hongze Lake. So, based on my examination above, I would argue for the definition recorded by the *Zhonghua wudaozhi · jiangsujuan* (Chinese Dance Journal-Jiangsu Volume). I believe they are a good foundation for deeper study later, making it possible for us to trace and find more clues. In the next section, I will trace the surviving *yugu* rituals in the lake area, including the myths they portray, plus the main steps, contents, and meanings of the rituals. I do this to present a complete picture of the *yugu* as a ritual.

4.3 *Yugu* as Rituals: *Jin Daiwang* (Worship of Daiwang) and *Xu Jiapu* (Renewing the Family Tree)

In several afternoon-long, in-depth conversations with Zhang Rengao, (a local *yugu* expert and former head of the cultural station in Bancheng) and especially after reviewing some of his unpublished manuscripts and reports on his years of research on *yugu,* I grasped the basic knowledge of *yugu* rituals. *Yugu* could be broadly divided into two categories according to its purpose. One is closely related to the productive work of the fishermen, and used to pray to the gods for a good harvest and safety, usually held by a collective community such as a fishing village or a boat gang; such rituals include the *Tangwanghui*, *Jindaiwang*, and the *Shengchanhui*. The

[62] The legend was acquired by Zhang Rengao during his folklore collection of Hongze Lake *Yugu* and recorded in his unpublished article "*Yugu* qingyuan" (The Love of the *Yugu*), provide by Zhanggao.

other is related to ancestor worship and is usually organised by a certain family clan to pay homage to the ancestors and complete the replacement of old and new members. The ritual is called *xujiapu* (renewal of the family tree). To this day, the *yugu* rituals that still remain in the Hongze Lake area are the *jindaiwang* and *xujiapu.*

The first is the *jindaiwang* ceremony. In this ceremony, *daiwang* refers to the protector of Hongze Lake. There are several mythological versions of the *daiwang* archetype circulating in the lake area; these versions were collected and documented[63] by Zhang Rengao in his many years of fieldwork, as follows:

Myth One: The *Si Daiwang* (Fourth inline) of Golden Dragon

> The main character in this myth is called Xie Xu. He was a relative of the imperial family of the Southern Song Dynasty; he enjoyed reading since childhood, was generous and did not admire glory and wealth, and lived in seclusion on the Golden Dragon Mountain for many years. In 1275, The Yuan Army, led by Boyan, subdued Queen Xie and Emperor Gong of Song. When Xie Xu learned that news, he was overwhelmed with sorrow. He associated with righteous men like Liu, Zhang, Yang, and Chen from his hometown to raise troops to resist the Yuan Dynasty. He was finally defeated and chose to drown himself to show his unyielding. After his death, he was buried on Jinlong Mountain by his disciples. He also became a spiritual anchor for the locals to continue their resistance against the Yuan army. In the Ming Dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang (founding emperor of the Ming Dynasty) fought fiercely against the army of the Yuan Dynasty led by Prime Minister Manzi Haiya in Dangtu. At first, the war was unfavourable to Zhu. Suddenly, the weather changed, and it rained heavily to help Zhu's army finally win the war. Zhu Yuanzhang believed that there was a divine general to help, which was Xie Xu. Because Xie Xu was the fourth in line in the family and was buried on Jinglong

[63] These myths are included in the unpublished article "Banchengzhen: hongzehu jingdaiwang yishi" (Bancheng: The Ceremony of *jindaiwang* at Hongze Lake), provided of Zhang Rengao.

Mountain, when Zhu returned to the palace, he named Xie Xu the *Si Daiwang* of the Golden Dragon (Zhang n.d.n.p.).

Myth Two: the Crown Prince of Dragon King in the Eastern Sea

It is said that a long time ago, one of the sons of the Dragon King was naughty and often made waves in the East Sea, which terrified the people who lived by the sea all day; they did not dare to go out fishing; naturally, there was no harvest over time. The land god locally had no choice but to report truthfully to the Jade Emperor. The Jade Emperor was so angry that he ordered the East Sea Dragon King to demote his son to the small river beside Sizhou for cultivation and reflection. Over the past few years, with a sense of repentance, the Crown Prince of Dragon King used his skills to manage the wind and rain to avoid suffering from floods in Sizhou City. He also became attached to the "jellyfish", who are also cultivated; they were engaged for life in private. Unexpectedly, this move angered the Dragon King. In a rage, he submerged Sizhou City into a vast Lake (the current Hongze Lake). At the same time, he pressed the jellyfish in a dry well by the lake with an iron chain. The Crown Prince of Dragon King looked at the vast lake and thought that the prosperous Sizhou was no longer there in the past and his beloved had disappeared. In pain, he chose to end his life. His soul has been floating on the lake since his death, guarding his lover and people by the lake day and night. Many years later, when the Jade Emperor learned about this, he was moved by the deep affections of the Crown Prince of Dragon King, so he ordered the canonisation of him as the patron saint of Hongze Lake (Zhang n.d.n.p.).

Myth three : Xu Scholar

According to legend, a scholar surnamed Xu in the Tang Dynasty rushed to the capital to sit. for the imperial examinations on the eighth day of April. On his way, he took a boat passing through Mudun Island. When he was about to go ashore, suddenly, there was a strong wind, the boat

> capsized, and all the people in the boat fell into the water. After he struggled to save the drowning men, the scholar could not have enough strength to get ashore and finally sink into the vast lake. To remember the scholar's great virtue of saving lives, the fishermen on the rescued island built a temple on the shore. They moulded a golden body to the scholar for future generations to worship forever. The scholar's behaviour of giving up his life to save others also moved the Jade Emperor. He commanded that the Xu scholar be canonized as the Daiwang of Hongze Lake to protect one side's peace (Zhang n.d.n.p.).

Of these three myths, the *Si Daiwang* of the Golden Dragon in the first myth is more likely to be the prototype of *daiwang*, judging from the available literature.[64] Whether it is the real-life Xie Xu in history, the mythical Prince of the Dragon Palace who is in charge of one side of the land and water, or the Xu scholar with a sense of justice passed down from mouth to mouth. It seems to me that the process by which they became protector gods, was not identical: some fought tenaciously for the country, some benefited a side of the people, and some saved people from fire in times of crisis. In any case they all chose the same way of self-sacrifice to complete the elevation of their self-identity through the appointment by the Emperor or Jade Emperor as the absolute authority and to achieve the transformation and identification from human beings (ordinary figures) to gods.

For the forms of the ritual of *jindawang,* it has two: the family and collective (boat gang/ fishing village). The family one is mainly held on the first day of the Lunar New Year every year, and like the typical family ritual, it is performed on the bow of the boat. The collective is quite grand; generally, a whole boat gang or fishing village participates in the ceremony on the eighth day of the fourth month of the lunar calendar (the eve of the annual boat fishing) held in the Temple of *Daiwang*. The

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[64] There are several research papers on the *Si Daiwagn* of the Golden Dragon, among which the more representative ones are Hu Mengfei. 2015. "Mingqing shiqi suqian diqu de jinlong sidaiwang xinyang" (The Beliefs of the *Si Daiwagn* of the Golden Dragon in the Suqian Region during the Ming and Qing Dynasties); 2013. "Mingqinh shiqi subei yunhe quyu de jinlong sidaiwang chongbai" (Worship of the *Si Daiwang* of the Golden Dragon in the Canal Region of Northern Jiangsu during the Ming and Qing Dynasties) and Shen Hao. 2008. "Jinshi jinlong sidaiwang kao- guanmin hudongzhong de minjianxinyang xianxiang" (An Examination of the *Si Daiwang* of the Golden Dragon in Modern Times - A Folk Belief Phenomenon in the Interaction between the Government and the People).

ritual usually lasts for four days and four nights of performances, centring on praying to the *daiwang* for peace, seeking the blessing of good winds and rain, and a full house of fish and shrimps. Collective *jindaiwang* ritual is also the current remaining form of the *jindaiwang* ceremony at Hongze Lake, which is held at the *Daiwang* Temple on Mudun Island on the eighth day of April of the lunar calendar every year.[65]

Secondly, the ritual of *xujiapu*. *Jiapu* (family tree), also known as genealogy, mainly focuses on recording paternal family lineage and characters and has a long history in the Han nationality. Through genealogy, we can not only trace the origin and migration information of the family but also understand the institutional rules closely related to the family's construction, especially the information of marriage and reproduction. The ceremony of genealogy renewal usually occurs when there is not enough seniority in the family. *Beifen* (Seniority in the family) is usually shown in the genealogy as *zibei* (generation name). In Chinese traditional culture, *zibei* is as crucial as a given name, usually placed after the surname and handed down from ancestors. All family members must be named according to the order of *zibei*. There are generally two ways to determine *zibei*: One is drawn up by highly respected family members. The other is to collect opinions in the family and draw them up after collective discussion. No matter what method is adopted, the drafting of *zibei* is extraordinarily and ceremonious. It should not only consider the meaning of the selected words but also the pronunciation and font suitable for people's names, and last but not least, it should consider the diversity of the collocation of the selected words. Therefore, generation names are often taken from words describing good morality or catchy and allegorical poems.

According to Zhang Rengao and other *yugu* performers' memories, among fishermen groups, a clan would hold a genealogy renewal ceremony only once every ten years. The genealogical renewal is a memorial to the deceased and an acceptance

[65] It needs to be added that in order to further protect the ceremony itself, in recent years, the ritual of *jindaiwang* has been added to the list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Sihong County, so that in addition to the fishermen and the *yugu* performers as the main participants, other participants include the media, the heads of relevant government departments (religion, civil affairs, tourism), local cultural workers and business owners, *yugu* researchers from different places, etc.

of new clan members. In recent years, it added the recording part, the revisions discussed at the genealogical renewal would be written and distributed to each family at the end of the ceremony. Depending on the economic power and influence of the clan in the local area, there are four scales of genealogical renewal ceremonies: one day and one night, two to three days, three full days and four days and four nights. The enormous scale, four days and four nights, requires the entire *yugu* team, about ten people, to be present and responsible for all the ceremony steps. The time for genealogy renewal is not fixed but generally does not exceed the waxing moon of the year, with the two seasons of spring and autumn being the most common. In the Hongze Lake area, the genealogy usually would be carried out on a boat; generally, two or more large boats are joined together and covered with wooden planks and straw mats to construct the place of worship. *Xujiapu* is also the main ritual performed by *yugu* artists for the fishermen of the lake.

From the above explorations, it can be seen that *jindaiwang* and *xujiapu* have their own focus on their functionality, which should have existed and developed independently. However, during my interview with Wang Chunzhu, the most experienced *yugu* performer in the Lake area, his inadvertent remark reminded me of their possible close connections, prompting me to compare and explore them more deeply. He said that "when we do the ritual of *xujiapu*, we also worship the gods. The *xujiapu* and *jindaiwang* are similar in their ritual steps, and we sing the same thing" (Wang Chunzhu, personal interview, February 21 2022). I soon found supporting evidence in my fieldwork, in the form of an unpublished research report authored by Zhang Rengao called "Gulao de hongzehu jingdaiwang yishi tanyuan" (Exploring the origins of the ancient ceremony of *jindaiwang* of Hongze Lake), which contained two relevant descriptions mentioned the connections between *jindaiwang* and *xujiapu*:

> Many events in the production life of fishermen in the lake area, such as New Year's Eve, red and white celebrations, shipbuilding, fishing out of the lake and the *xujiapu*, etc., are preceded by a grand *jindaiwang* ceremony.

> The gods worshipped by the fishermen include their ancestors, the *daiwang* of Hongze Lake, the God of Boats, Guanyin Bodhisattva, Zhong Kui and so on (Zhang n.d. n.p).

As there is limited material relating to the Hongze Lake *yugu* on this subject, I have also consulted material on *duangu* from the Lunan area, similar to the *yugu* mentioned above. Here's what I found.

A local series of books *Guyunyouyou duangu qiang* (Ancient Charm of *Duangu* Tone), organised and written by the Weishan County Culture Museum to provide a comprehensive introduction to the culture of *duangu*, mentioned something related:

> The initial manifestation of the *duangu* cavity in the Weishan Lake area was the *Huazu* and *Tangwanghui*, which were held to ward off evil spirits and epidemics, eliminate disasters, and pray for good fortune. After that, it gradually developed into the *Shengchanhui* where fishermen worship the river gods during the production process. In recent years, as fishermen live on land, it has gradually become a genealogical activity to record the development of family migrations and the lineage and biography of family members (Weishan County Culture Museum 2014: 13).

In the article "Cong jinshen dao jizu: weishanhu huqu yumin zongzu wenhua de jiangou" (From Worshipping the Gods to Worshipping the Ancestors: the construction of the clan culture of the Fishermen in the Weishan Lake Area), co-authored by Diao Tongju and She Kangle, mentioned that "different paintings of the main deity are placed at different rituals in *duangu* and that in addition to the main deity, other deities' paintings, including the ancestors, will also be worshipped together in the ritual" (Diao, She 2014: 136).

These materials above show that the rituals of *jindaiwang* and *xujiapu* are linked, in addition:

a. The worship of deities is still the primary need of fishermen.
b. In the belief system of fishermen, ancestors are also among the deities

worshipped.

c. *Xujiapu* has been influenced by the migration of fishermen to land in recent years, gradually strengthening and highlighting its substantive content of tracing and identity recognition with clan ties at its core.

Due to the connections between the two, in the following detailed description of the ritual steps, I will focus on their commonalities, with the differences being added separately. It needs to be noted that my fieldwork for this project took place mainly in the years 2021-2022, at the peak of the normalization of the pandemic in China. The government at national and local levels strictly enforced a zero-tolerance policy towards the pandemic, issuing several bans during this period, including a ban on large-scale gathering-type events. Both the rituals of *jindaiwang* and *xujiapu* were also cancelled or postponed indefinitely; there is no chance for me to attend these rituals in person. Therefore, in the following, I will try to restore the highlights and main steps of the ritual, mainly by combining video recordings of the *yugu* rituals from earlier years provided by the local cultural authorities, interviews with participants, and officially published graphic material.

4.3.1 The God Altar and its Space

As mentioned above, the most solemn *jindaiwang* ceremony (see Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3) needs to take place in the *Daiwang* Temple, while the family *jindaiwang* ceremony and the *xujiapu* both take place on the boat. But whether in the temple or on the boat, the altar and the setting of its space are an important part of the preparation for the ceremony. They are used not only for inviting the gods but also as a stage for the *yugu* artists to perform.

I found two related materials regarding the description of the altar and its sacred space for the *jindaiwang* ceremony held in the *Daiwang* Temple. One is a paper called “Hongzehu yuguwu de lishi liubian ji chuancheng baohu yanjiu” (A Study on the Historical Flow and Preservation of the Hongze Lake *yugu* dance), based on the 2016 *jindaiwang* ceremony held in the *Daiwang* Temple on Mudun Island, personally

attended and written by Chen Chuang. The other is called “Hongzehu yugu de fazhan jiqi gongneng yanjiu” (Study on the Development and Functions of Hongze Lake *yugu*), which was written by Cheng Qifang, the relevant parts are quoted blew:

> A Performance Space for Rituals: an altar is set in the *Daiwang* Temple, various offerings are laid out. The performance area in front of the altar is covered with two reed mats, which is the stage on which old artists will perform traditional Hongze Lake *yugu* repertoire (Chen 2018: 5).

> In the middle of the temple is the statue house of the *Si Daiwang* of the Golden Dragon; the house of the gods on the left and the hall of the god of wealth on the right. The altar is set up in the area where the statue house is connected to the hall of the God of Wealth, facing the direction of the temple gate. The performance is directly in front of the altar, decorated with hanging gods’ portraits and carved paper, which *yugu* artists make. The carved paper is narrow and rectangular in shape, the same length as the god’s portrait, with flowers, plants and fish carved on it, arranged in multiple sheets and hung in multiple layers overlapping. A long, low table is set up beneath it with watermelons, pineapples, oranges and other fruits, melons, dough figurines, and various cakes. An incense-burning altar is provided, and incense is constantly burning. On each side of the long, low table, there are buckets of money into which triangular banners and paper money are inserted. The length of the carved paper is slightly shorter than that of the carved paper on either side of the statue, and the whole forms a lintel; In front of it is the performance area for the *yugu* performers; thus, the altar was completed (Cheng 2022: 122).



Figure 4.2: *Jindaiwang* ritual in *Daiwang* Temple, *yugu* performers were preparing offerings, intercepted from the documentary sample *Song of the fishermen- Hongze Lake Yugu*, material shot in May 2020, provided by Zhang Rengao.

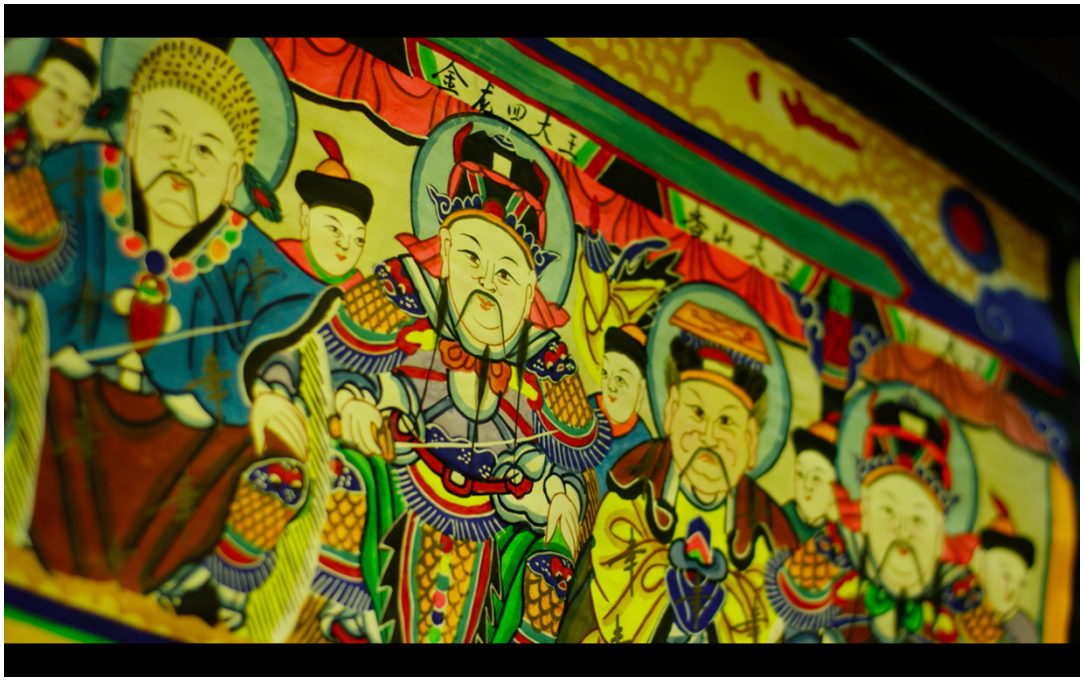


Figure 4.3: The portrait of the *Si Daiwang* of the Golden Dragon at the *jindaiwang* ceremony, intercepted from the documentary sample *Song of the Fishermen- Hongze Lake Yugu*, material shot in May 2020, provided by Zhang Rengao.

For the *xujiapu* ceremony, I mainly reference two materials; one is an article, "Jiapuhui, yincang zai hongzehu li de nuoji" (*Xujiapu*, the Nuo Ritual Hidden in Hongze Lake), based on the 2015 *xujiapu* ceremony of the Liu clan in Laozishan, written by Gui Baojun, who personally attended; the other is a video of the same ceremony (57 minutes) filmed by filmed by the one of the participants. The relevant parts of the altar and its spaces in the article are depicted as follows:

> The location chosen for the ritual and performance was in a remote reed field on the edge of Hongze Lake outside the easternmost flood control point of Laozishan. Three main boats are held together tightly with bamboo poles, and a reed mat is placed on the bow of each boat to make a simple stage on the water. The bamboo shed is constructed with canvas to protect it from the sun and rain, while the remaining three sides are covered with reed mats. The portraits of the gods, the paper strips (*paiwei*) representing the gods and the superbly crafted paper-cutting works are hung on several ropes pulled horizontally (Gui 2017: 48).

With the help of the local cultural officer Xi Dahai, I was able to obtain this video. As a local practitioner with a degree in arts and culture, Xi has interested and studied the *yugu* ceremony for many years; he was present at the ceremony in the video, so to clarify and confirm some details, I made a point of asking him a few questions. In the following section, I will combine the video's contents with my interview with Xi Dahai, in a way that brings to life some more details about the altar and the process of preparing for the *xujiapu* ceremony.

In the video, the main mast of the fishing boat is decorated with dragon flags and fish flags, and the exact flags will refer to the performance content of the day; usually, the dragon flags are used on the first day. Two flags are also placed on either side of the cabin, the *yingshen* (welcome gods) flag and the *fuhui* (attendance) flag, indicating that the main family's cabin is where the gods are welcomed and it is here that the fishermen gather.

The altar decorations (see Figure 4.4) in the cabin are mainly divided into hanging and placed decorations. There are three layers of hanging decorations. The innermost layer depicts the gods, and the *yugu* performers use the same sized yellow

papers and write the gods' names on the gods' tablets. The top row contains the gods of heaven and earth, the second row depicts the other various gods, and the third row depicts the ancestors of the main family. After setting well, the second layer of decorations are then hung. The second layer contains the portraits of gods, figures from the plays, and auspicious patterns carved by *yugu* performers using paper-cutting and paper-carving techniques, and these will serve as the background of the altar, similar to the background of the stage. The decoration of the third layer is hung only on the sides of the altar, mainly are the family trees and family vouchers. The family vouchers (see Figure 4.5) are written on yellow paper, each with the names of all the members of the family and half of the clan seal on the edge of the paper. At the end of the ceremony, each family head collects the paper, and take it back to his boat. The placed decorations consist mainly of incense burners, tributes and fire pits. The head of each family usually brings the incense burner. The tributes are steamed buns and fruits, with paper flags placed on top and bowls, chopsticks and wine glasses. It is worth mentioning that the fire pit is both a ritual item and a necessary prop for the *yugu* performance. During the rituals, its main function is to burn paper money. While in the performance, the fishing drums are made of cowhide and are susceptible to dampness due to the dampness of the lake area. When the fishing drums are damp, they sound dull. At this time, the performers bake them for a few seconds until they sound clear. Therefore, the performers responsible for the accompaniment are mostly seated around the fire pits during the performance.



Figure 4.4: The altar and offerings in 2015 *Xujiapu* ceremony of the Liu clan in Laozishan, intercepted form a video taken by one of the participants, 57 minutes long, taken on November 24 2015, provided by Xi Dahai.



Figure 4.5: The family voucher in 2015 *Xujiapu* ceremony of the Liu clan in Laozishan. intercepted form a video taken by one of the participants, 57 minutes long, taken on 24 November , 2015, provided by Xi Dahai.

4.3.2 The Main Body of the Ceremony

The whole process of the *yugu* ceremony can be divided into three main parts around the altar: *kaitan* (the opening of the altar), *wutan* and *liaotan* (the closing of the altar).[66]

[66] In the part of the ritual steps, I mainly refer to Cheng Qifang. 2022. "Hongzehu yugu de fazhan jiqi gongneng yanjiu" (Study on the Development and Functions of Hongze Lake *Yugu*); Chen Chuang. 2017. "Hongzehu yugu jisi wudao tianye diaocha——jiangsusheng sihongxian banchengzhen mudundao 'jingdaiwang' yishi" (Field

In the *jindaiwang* or the other gods' worshipping ceremony, the opening of the altar is also known as the invocation of the gods. This is carried out throughout the ceremony, and the artists sing different songs depending on which gods are invited. Although the repertoire varies, the contents are somewhat formulaic, and are mostly concerned with the life story of the invited deity and his or her magical journey to immortality. Depending on the performance scale, the *yugu* performers are free to choose which song they want to perform and also the length of the songs they sing. However, the piece that must be sung at the opening is "Wei Zheng Chopping the Little Dragon". Wei Zheng was a loyal minister of the Tang Dynasty, and in the *yugu* ceremony, Wei Zheng acted as the messenger to invite the gods, so before inviting the gods, Wei Zheng must be invited. Each invitation to the gods is accompanied by solemn worship. The opening of the altar is also accompanied by the opening drums, a section of drumming that mainly greets the God of the Gate and the God of *Zao*, asking them to open the door and welcome the gods. In the *xujiapu* ceremony, the *yugu* artists take on the role of clan ancestors during the opening of the altar and introduce to each member of the clan their ancestors' notable achievements and exploits by performing (singing), after which the patriarch kneels and introduce the ancestors to what has happened in the clan in recent years and explain the reasons for this genealogical revision. Afterwards, a specific piece of music, "*Yaojiaqin"*, is sung by *yugu* performers who play the role of an ancestor, educating the clan members about the truth and rules of being a human being.

In the *wutan*, there will be a series of more elaborate and solemn rituals. At the same time, these rituals are interspersed with a large number of traditional *yugu* performances; its form is quite similar to the local drama, such as "Zhang Xiangrong Goes Down to Huai City", "Xiu Dingxiang" and "Tang Wang Travels to the Immortal Palace", which either reflect the life of the people or have a mythological dimension. In addition to the above, the *jindaiwang* ceremony also includes a special sacrifice ceremony called the blood ritual. According to Zhang Rengao, who has attended the

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Investigation on the Ritual Dance of Yugu in Hongze *Lake* – '*Jindawang*' in Mudun Island, Bancheng Town, Sihong County, Jiangsu Province); and *Guyunyouyou dugu qiang* (Ancient Charm of Duangu Tone), 2014. organized and written by the Weishan County Culture Museum. Some of the specific ritual information has been verified with Wang Chunzhu, a local *yugu* artist, and Zhang Rengao, a local cultural worker who has studied *yugu* for many years.

whole ceremony many times and has a close relationship with the *yugu* performers, the blood ritual is usually performed by the most senior and respected one among the performers. When he has recited the incantation, the performer slash at his arm, half-naked, with a short knife, and blood immediately spurts out. At this point, without changing his face, he picks up a piece of talisman paper to wipe away the blood, and lo and behold: the wound "magically" stops bleeding. The whole process seemed to be as divinely assisted, with strong overtones of authentic belief and mysticism, and since it is not done very often anymore; if it is, it could only be seen by the clan.

The closing of the altar is also called the sending-off of the gods. As with the opening of the altar, the *yugu* performers would sing a specific tune to send each of the gods away, after which the main part of the ceremony was basically over. If the ceremony is performed on a boat, all the people will help dismantle the bamboo sheds and reed mats erected; then, they will all eat a sumptuous feast together.

In the above description, I have only outlined the general process of the ceremony as far as I have learned, leaving out many details. It is partly because I did not have the opportunity to be there, to participate and get first-hand information, and partly because *yugu* culture is inherently male dominated, closed, private and mysterious, with many sections of it not being publicized or accessible to women researchers such as myself. In addition, due to the impact of the Cultural Revolution, most of the *yugu* performers I met were highly guarded and cautious, as is more evident in the descriptions of my interviews with the relevant inheritors later in this chapter. Therefore, as a woman, an outsider, and a scholar, it would have been difficult for me to see the whole ritual and be privy to all the details, even if the pandemic had not been the cause.

4.3.3 Musical Elements: Fishing drum, Rhythm and Repertoire Performance

As a comprehensive folklore event involving several artistic disciplines, the music-related elements of the *yugu* ritual include the fishing drum as the only instrument used, the rhythm that runs throughout the ritual and the performance of traditional *yugu* repertoires.

Firstly the instrument, the drum is the only instrument used throughout the entire ceremony; it is called the fishing drum (see Figure 4.6 and Figure 4.7) locally. It can be used either as a solo instrument to the opening of the altar or as an accompaniment to the *yugu* performers performing the traditional repertoire. A detailed description of the form of the prop fishing drum appears in the entry about Hongze *Yugu* in the *Zhonghua wudaozhi · jiangsujuan* (Chinese Dance Journal-Jiangsu Volume), namely：

> Diameter of one foot two inches (40cm) of iron ring covered with sheepskin or dog skin, four and a half inches (16.5cm) long drum handle end set on a diameter of three inches (7.62cm) of the iron ring, iron ring set on three diameters a half inch (1.27cm) of the iron ring, the three iron ring in each set of three diameters nine minutes (2.97cm) of an iron ring. The drumsticks are made of bamboo pieces about one foot four inches (48cm) long and three minutes (0.99cm) wide, with a tassel tied to the end (*Zhonghua wudaozhi* Editorial Committee 2007: 436).

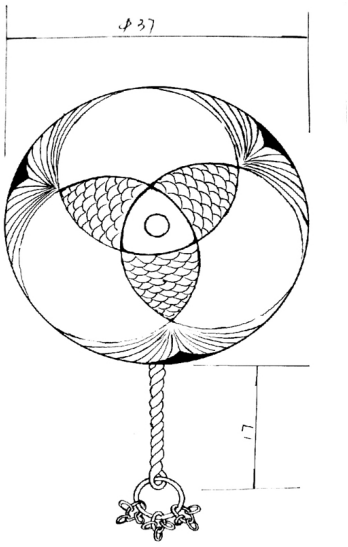


Figure 4.6.

Former Hongze Lake Museum painted by curator Pei Annian based on the written records Collected on June 27 2019 by Li Weiyang.



Figure 4.7.

Old-time fishing drum, collected at Hongze Lake *Yugu* Heritage Base, Hongze District, August 3 2022, photographed by Li Weiyang.

Figure 4.6 was hand-drawn of the fishing drum by the former director of the Hongze Lake Museum, Pei An'nian, which we've already seen before (see Figure 4.1, page 6). Figure 4.7 is an old fishing drum now on display at the Hongze Lake *yugu* Intangible Cultural Heritage Base in Hongze District. The two fishing drums basically fit the description above, the only difference being that the hand-drawn drawing by Curator Pei has an additional image of fish on the drum surface. I once asked him if there was any connection between the fish image and the fishing drum. Pei did not answer me positively but only told me that his hand-drawn was based on certain references. So, with this question, I asked Wang Chunzhu, the most senior *yugu* artist in the lake area, and he answered that:

> The fishing drum should have been the fish drum,[67] which is because the drum skin was first made of fish skin and the drum body was also shaped

[67] Fishing drum in Chinese is 渔鼓, Fish drum is 鱼鼓. They are different characters, but the same pronunciation.
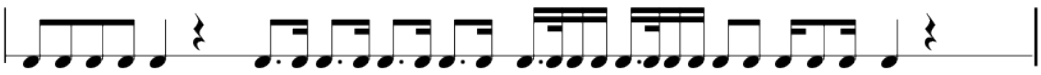
like a fish. Later using fishing drums because more and more fishermen loved the drum as the ritual was performed, and gradually it became a musical instrument for the fishermen to accompany themselves when they entertained themselves in daily life, as the fishermen's drum (Wang Chunzhu, personal interview, February 18 2022).

Like the *paifu*, the rhythm of fishing drums as solo instruments also uses anthropomorphic animal images, such as *Bai'e zhanchi* (white geese spreading their wings), *Liyu cuantan* (carp scurrying to the beach), *Yazi taoshi* (ducks begging for food), etc. Unfortunately, many of the rhythmic sets have been lost. The three rhythmic types in circulation in the Lake District rituals are the *kaitan* drum, *qiziyun* (seven-character rhythm) and *shiziyun* (ten-character rhythm).

Below I will present their specific rhythms based on videos either recorded or collected by myself in the fieldwork.

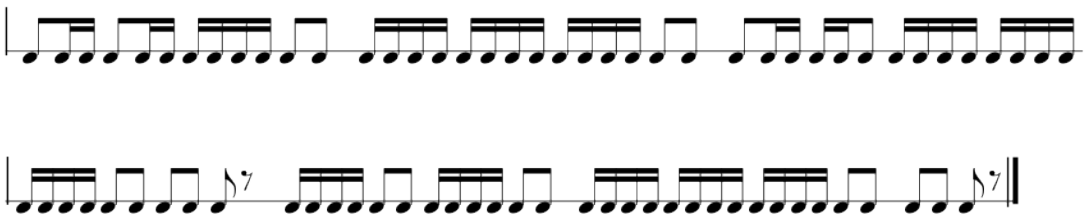
Kaitan drum, as the name implies, is the drum used to open the altar.

Kaitan drum in Sihong



Musical Example 4.1: Performed by Wang Chunzhu recorded in December 21 2014, in rehearsal room, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

Kaitan drum in Hongze



Musical Example 4.2: Performed by Liu Changming, recorded in August 4 2022, in Liu Changming's home, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

The other two rhythmic types that are often used as accompaniment called *qiziyun* (seven characters) and *shiziyun* (ten characters) , which are derived from the same name tones in the opera cadences of the *yugu- qiziyun* and *shiziyun.*
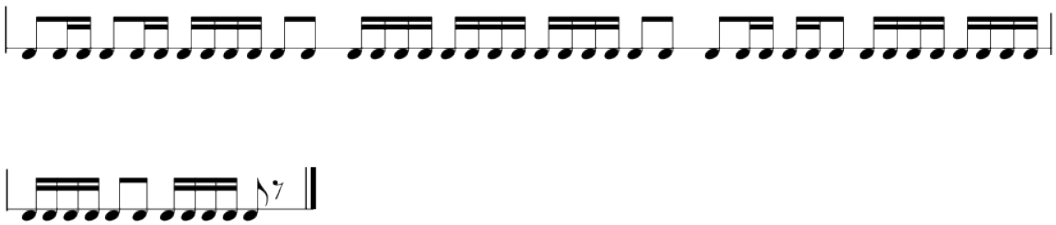
Qiziyun (seven-character rhythm)

Qiziyun in Sihong



Musical Example 4.3: Performed by Yang Quanyou, recorded in December 21 2014, in rehearsal room, transcribed by Li Weiyang.
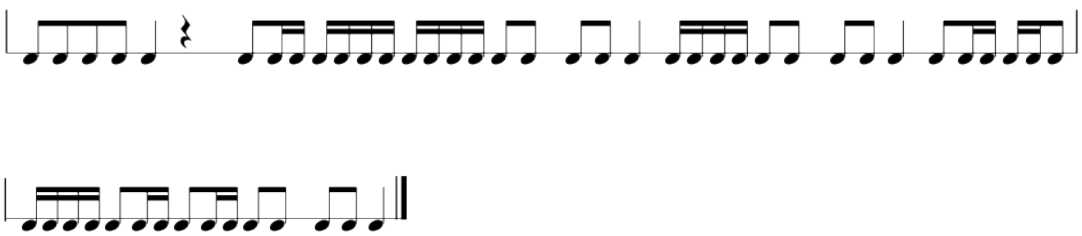
Qiziyun in Hongze



Musical Example 4.4: Performed by Liu Changming, recorded in August 4 2022, in Liu Changming's home, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

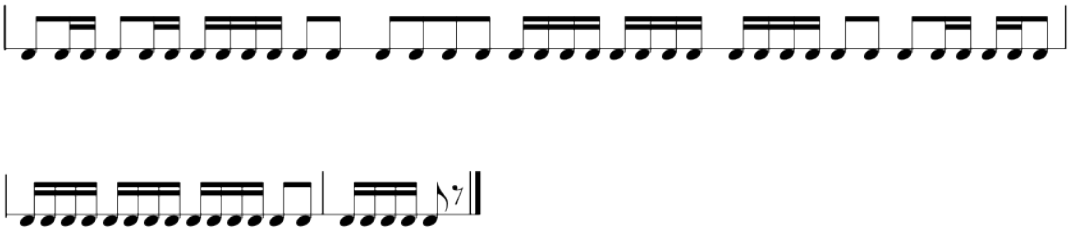
Shiziyun (ten-character rhythm)

Shiziyun in Sihong



Musical Example 4.5: Performed by Yang Quanyou, recorded in December 21 2014, in rehearsal room, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

Shiziyun in Hongze



Musical Example 4.6: Performed by Liu Changming, recorded in August 4 2022, in Liu Changming's home, transcribed by Li Weiyang.

As the commonly used tunes in *yugu* performance, *qiziyun* and *shiziyun* have special structures and singing ways, which is why I would like to dwell on them further. The word *qi* (seven) from *qiziyun* and the *shi* (ten) from *shiziyun* refer to a line of singing consisting of seven or ten words, while the *yun* means the rhyme, that is, the rhyme of the word at the end of the line. The structure of these two tunes is up and down, and the two lines are called *yifan*. It is sung in the form of a leading and chorus. The specific singing is, in the *qiziyun*, the lead performer sings the first six words of the opening line, any liner may be added among it, and then the others sing the seventh word together. The next line proceeds in the same way. In the *shiziyun*, the singing rule is the same except for the change in the number of words in a line.

In the following, I will use one example, *Liu Wenlong gankao* (Liu Wenlong Rushing to the Civil Examination), to show how to sing *qiziyun*.

Repertoire Title*: Liu Wenlong gankao*[68] (*qiziyun*)

Lyrics: Line 1 Songchu Xiangfang dao Ermen, 送出香房到二门
Send my husband away to the second gate.
Line 2 Zhanzhu Fuqi Lianggeren, 站住夫妻两个人
Couple standing still.

[68] Lyrics and excerpts quoted from Gao Jianjun and Zhang Shishang's paper "Weishanhu yumin duanguqiang yishutanjie" (An Exploration of the Art of the Weishan Lake Fishermen's Duangu Tone), 2002.

Rhyme: "*en*"

Actual performance:

Lead performer sings "Song chu Xiang fang Dao Er" (first six characters)

The others sing the liner notes among the line, like *aiheiyo*.

Then, all performers sing the last word together: *men*.

In addition to the unique singing in rhyme above, in the traditional *yugu* repertoire, the *yugu* performers also have the characteristics of *fanchuan* (cross-casting) and *zibao jiamen* (giving a self-introduction to roles). Traditional *yugu* repertoire is similar to traditional opera in that the figures are divided into five types of roles, namely, *sheng* (male), *dan* (female), *jing* (painted-face), *mo* (middle-aged male), *chou* (clown), There are often multiple roles in a single repertoire, due to the limited number of y*ugu* performers and the rule that all male members, it is very common for actors to play multiple roles and does the cross-casting. Secondly, the *yugu* performers are often assigned roles just on the day of the performance, and once their make-up and costumes are set, they go straight on stage to perform. It would be quite normal for them to perform several plays in a row over a while, without any time for make-up and hairstyle changes as they jump into new roles during the performance. As a result, the same actor often plays different roles in the same genre in different productions. For example, a performer is assigned to the role of *dan* on the day, it is possible for him to play a young girl in his first play, and then in the next one, he will play the role of a young wife. In order to avoid the audience out of the role and at the same time better help the performers into the role, performers get accustomed to giving self-introduction of roles all the time; that is, they would sing the names of their roles first always before the official singing and explain the relationships between the roles repeatedly during the performance. It is also mentioned in Gao Jianjun and Zhang Shishang's "An Exploration of the Art of the Weishan Lake Fishermen's *Duangu* Tone", and use the section *dengcheng* in *Liu Wenlong gankao* as an example.

Repertoire Title*: Liu Wenlong gankao* (*qiziyun*)

Husband (Liu Wenlong) and wife (Xiao) see each other off.

Sheng and *dan* duet.

Sheng (singing): "Wenlong shuo, jiao Xiaoshi, wo shangjing, ni zaijia, ni yaoxue sheme hua".文龙说，叫肖氏，我上京，你要学，什么花。

(Wenlong is speaking, he talks to Xiao: I will go to Beijing. You stay at home. What flowers do you want to learn (to grow)?)

Dan (singing): "Xiaoshi shuo, Liu xianggong, Ni shangjing, wo zaijia, wo zixue jiucaihua".肖氏说，刘相公，你上京，我在家，我自学，韭菜花。

(Xiao is speaking, she said to Liu: Husband, you will go to Beijing, I will stay at home, I can teach myself to learn (to grew) the leek flower) (Gao, Zhang 2002: 8).

In the above example, we can see that the two performers sing their characters' names first, Wenlong and Xiao. The audience can also immediately learn their relationship (husband and wife) from Xiao's response.

4.4 From *Yugu* to *Yugu* dance: Staging and Mass Practice

For a long time, *yugu* rituals have been limited to in the fishermen's community in the lake area and have been developed in a self-sufficient and relatively closed manner. In the *yugu* repertoire performance, except for the above-mentioned fishing drum, its rhythm, and performing and singing, also has the dancing part. As an artistic practice, it plays a crucial role in bringing *yugu* art to the stage and even to the general public in the future. In order to further publicise and promote the wealthy fishermen's culture behind the *yugu* rituals, the local older generation cultural workers did not choose to bring rituals to the stage directly. Instead, based on respecting and preserving the rituals, they created a new form of folk dance which emerged from them extracting and developing certain elements among its performance - the fishing drums, the drumming rhythm and the dancing form. Compared to the dance in the rituals, the new dance incorporated more scenes and movements that reflected the production life of the fishermen, such as rowing boats, casting nets, fishing, etc, with

more artistic aesthetic and theatrical expression; this new dance was also give the name of *yugu* dance. Later, the *yugu* dance has been polished several times to become a representative work of local stage art. In the new era, as people's cultural needs continue to rise, more and more ordinary people actively seek and participate in cultural activities. A new group of local cultural workers began following this trend of the times and seized the opportunity to adapt and simplify the stage version of the *yugu* dance, producing a version of the square dance version that is widely accepted and loved by the masses at present, while at the same time retaining its local characteristics.

In the following sections, I will focus on the theme of the transition from *yugu* to *yugu* dance, through the interviews with two pairs of protagonists - father and son and master and disciple. Via presentation and sorting of their related materials, I will present the whole process of the stage adaptation and mass practice of the *yugu* dance, outlining the significance and impact of all these transformations under its becoming a national Intangible Cultural Heritage.

4.4.1 A Father and Son: Conservation and Staging Development of Native Yugu Rituals

As soon as I officially started the fieldwork in Sihong County for the *Yugu* project, one name constantly appeared in my ears. From the local officials, cultural practitioners, media reporters and fishermen, everyone was almost unified in saying that if I wanted to know more about Hongze Lake *yugu,* this gentleman must be my first choice. Such a firm and unified reaction to the same person, almost the first time, happened in my fieldwork, which made me curious about our meeting.

Named Zhang Rengao, he was the former director of the cultural station in Bancheng Town. Our first few meetings took place in his office in the town hall building. It was a modest room filled with materials, documents, electronic equipment, and unusual folk objects, such as paper molds, yellowed fishing drums,

and colourful paper cut-outs; if it appeared at first to be cluttered, there was certainly a method to the apparent mess. Appearance wise, Zhang Rengao was of average height, with a warm face. He had good memory and seemed to know everything about the Lake District. During the conversation, he was able to provide many details associated with a specific events, including where and when it happened, the people involved, the characteristics of the environment, and so on.

In China, the cultural officers at the township level often have to work in several capacities, and so does Zhang. During my interview with him, our conversations were interrupted from time to time by phone calls or other visitors, either looking for him to sign documents, discuss work plans, or, like me, admire his reputation and visit him, especially for a certain project. “Faced with such a busy life, he said jokingly that I should plan to retire early, so I would have time to organize all materials and write something for the local culture” (Zhang Rengao, personal interview, 18 February 2022).

My official interview with Zhang was scheduled for our second meeting. It was mainly around the development of *yugu* art in the context of different times locally. When we were seated, Zhang Rengao started with the little-known history between his father and the exploration of the art of stage performance in *yugu*.

> My father, Zhang Kun, a native of Sihong, loved literature and art since childhood and worked as a tax collector in the Huaibei Anti-Japanese Base Area before liberation. In 1943, he organized local literature and art lovers to set up the first folk art and literature organization in the Huabei anti-Japanese base called “*Hongbin* Theatre Company”. During this period, he found the *yugu* performed by the fishermen in the lake area to honour the *Daiwang* of Hongze Lake, so he used its dance movements and the fishing drums to choreograph a dance reflecting the content of the war of resistance and named it “*Yugu* Dance”. In 1951, my father became one of the first grassroots cultural workers in New China when he joined a cultural station in Laozishan, a town on the shore of Hongze Lake. In 1957, he began rehearsing the *yugu* dance program in Laozishan to

participate in the second mass cultural performance in Jiangsu Province. For a more realistic and better stage effect, my father organized literary workers deep into the lake area to excavate further and organize the Hongze Lake *yugu*. Then he came back to revise and create the original dance program. I remember the music accompanying the program at that time used the basic tune of the Hongze Lake fishing song instead of the song sung by *yugu* performers during the ceremony. My father even filled out three parts lyrics himself. The adapted *yugu* dance is a stage work with a bright rhythm, beautiful melody and full of characters. The characters are portrayed as ordinary fishermen and boatmen in the lake area, and the dance movements simulate their movements and gestures in fishing production, such as weaving nets, making hooks, pulling nets and rocking boats, etc., which artistically expresses the happy life of the people in the lake area. In 1960, my father participated in the second mass cultural performance of Jiangsu Province with his programme "*Yugu* Dance", as he had hoped, and the program was well received in this performance. At that time, the provincial song and dance troupe also sent people to learn about it (Zhang Rengao, personal interview, 20 February 2022).

The process and characteristics of the development of the *yugu* dance from a ritual background to a folk dance are traced in the *Zhonghua wudaozhi · jiangsujuan* (Chinese Dance Journal - Jiangsu Volume), a development process that basically coincides with Zhang Rengao's quoted recollections above:

> The dance was learned as a performance to be performed by members of the anti-Japanese propaganda team as early as during the anti-Japanese war; thus, this dance has been given new content and development. Eight or twelve people performed it, half of each sex. In addition to retaining some characteristic traditional dancing stances from the ritual, such as *Shangyangtui, Jianzibu*, *Danjiayun*, and so on, also add some simulations of fishermen's production work, such as spreading nets and covering fish. Formation changes are much richer, and the dance formations often

> danced are *Shuangpailiu* (men and women each in a diagonal line), *Beiyan nanfei* (herringbone), *Chengfeng polang* (wave-like in a single line). When dancing, at first, only the rhythm of the fishing drums is used to unify and coordinate. Later, folk ditties would be added to the appropriate passages to increase the performance effect. For the actors' costumes, the men's tops are light yellow with dark corrugated edges, similar to the lake's colour; the pants are brown with white edges; the waist is tied with a coloured belt to show that they are straight and dashing. Women's tops are red and white corrugated edges, white aprons with sequin edges, and yellow pants with white edges (*Zhonghua wudaozhi Editorial Committee* 2007: 437).

The following two materials (see Figure 4.8 and Figure 4.9), both related to the 1960s, were collected during my fieldwork. In Figure 4.8, the costumes of the actors in the photo are basically the same as the description in the dance journal, and their images fit the public's artistic imagination of the people in the water village at that time. The fishing drums held in their hands basically retain the form of the fishing drums in the ritual, However, its drum surface has added rippled decoration, resembling both the ripples in the water and the scales of a fish. Figure 4.9 is a piece of material I found during my fieldwork in Laozishan Town. It is a score of *yugu* dance composed in the 1960s, provided by Xiong Zhihua, the former president of the local sports association, who is more than seventy years old. There are a few parts in the score indicated the music is related to the Lake District. The first is the musical material, the composer clearly marked "*haozi*" and "*yuge"* (fishing song) at the beginning and middle of the score to remind that the material originates from local folk music in the water town. Next come the lyrics, which vividly depicted the harvesting scene of fishermen in Hongze Lake. In addition, at the end of the score, the composer records and recalls the names and orders of the stylized movements used in the *yugu* dance (thirty-two in total). In the lower and middle parts of the score, a separate section is dedicated to the rhythm of the fishing drums, not only providing the complete rhythm with the Chinese characters *dong* (冬), *yi* (衣), *da* (大), but also indicating the two ways of drumming, i.e. beating one's drum and beating each other's drums.



Figure 4.8: A group photo of the cast and crew of the Hongze Lake *yugu* dance organized and choreographed by Zhang Kun in the 1960s, provided by Zhang Rengao.

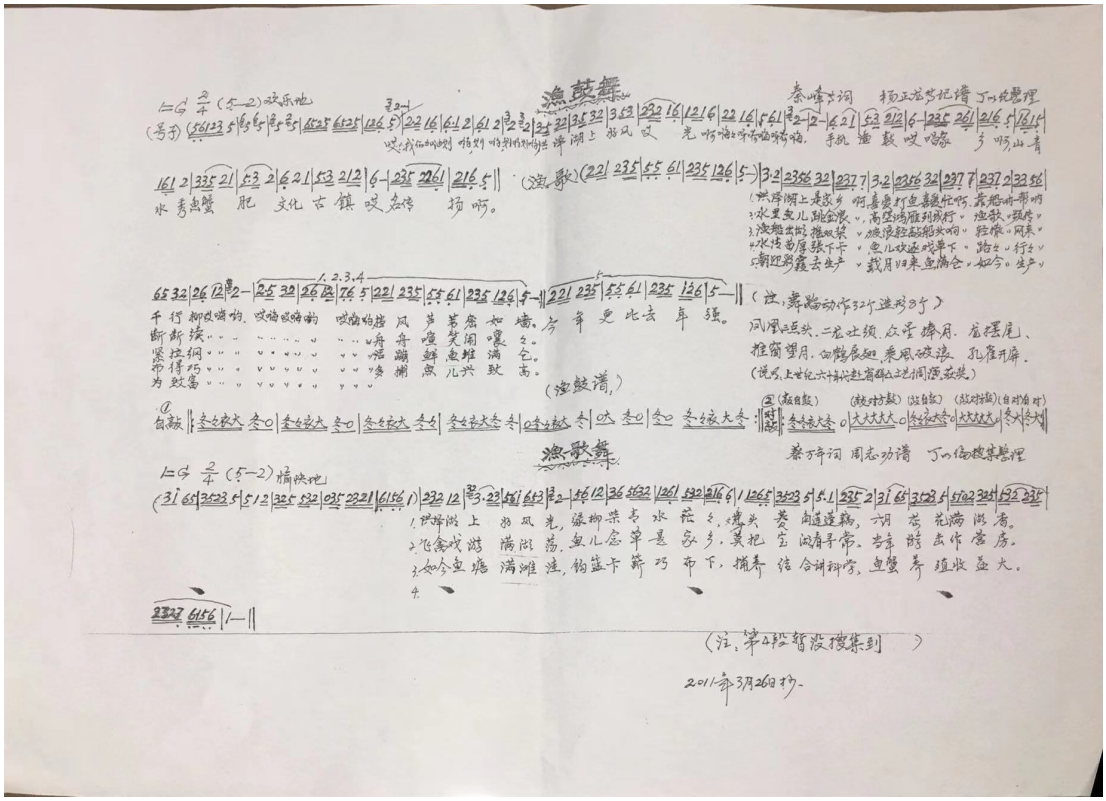


Figure 4.9: The score of *Yugu* Dance composed in the 1960s, provided by Xiong Zhihua from Laozishan.

Under the subtle influence of his father, Zhang Rengao also developed a strong interest in local culture, especially that of *yugu* art. Around the 1980s, after taking up his father's mantle and successfully becoming a grassroots cultural practitioner, Zhang Rengao wanted to continue his father's career, and he continued to new programs of *yugu* dance while digging deeper and understanding the culture of *yugu* rituals. However, his situation was much more complicated than his father's. During our conversation, he shared with me the details of his unintentionally discovering the old *yugu* artist surnamed Shi to illustrate how difficult his exploring situation of *yugu* was at that time:

> It was July 1984, and we planned to organize some distinctive cultural programs to participate in the August 1 performance that year. At that time, I thought of the *yugu* dance, so I went to the fishing village of Anhekou on the shore of Hongze Lake with a few other cultural backbones to do some visits and research. It took us much effort to find an old *yugu* artist surnamed Shi (Shi Fuxing), who was over 70 years old then. When the older man understood the purpose of our visit, he was terrified. After our repeated explanations, he took down a yellow-black fishing drum from the eaves and performed a few sections for us. When we visited again the next day, Shi's family said he had left to visit his relatives. Later, the village officials told me that Shi had been criticized as a key target during the Cultural Revolution, and he was so afraid of being "the centre" again, so he "ran away" (Zhang Rengao, personal interview, 20 February 2022).

I noticed his slightly forlorn and helpless look when mentioning this past time. The evasive, rejected attitude shown by the old *yugu* artists are not the traditional Chinese culture's way of hospitality. It is perverse, unexpected and closely related to

that particular bitter history. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution,[69] the "Four Olds" campaign was formulated to eliminate things that contain "old ideas", "old culture", "old customs", and "old habits". The "Four Olds" campaign soon caught the closed and mysterious *yugu* in the centre of a storm of cultural criticism. Not only were many plays, props, costumes and fishing drums burned, but many full-time fishing drum artists were also suppressed. So much so that years after the Cultural Revolution had passed, the *yugu* ceremony still did not appear; it was as if it had disappeared.

Although Zhang Rengao did not witness the harsh criticism against the *yugu* artists, he did see burned fishing drums stacked up at the cultural station his father worked. This experience was faithfully recorded in his unpublished memorial essay on his father called "Fuqin de yuguqing" (Father's Love of *Yugu*), the details of which are as follows:

> One morning in the spring of 1972, in front of the cultural station in Laozishan, a town on the south shore of Hongze Lake, my hometown, were piles of things called the "Four Olds". My father was standing helplessly on the side. In the midst of a cacophony, a man with a red armband lit the pile of "four olds" with a match, and instantly, the blaze engulfed them quickly, and in the fire, I saw my father's tears, and from his tears, I could see his deep love affair with these things. Later, my father told me that those things were his collection of nearly 20 years of hard work, and told me in particular that the thing with a handle covered with sheepskin, resembling a large rattle, was called the fishing drum, which was my first childhood memory of the fishing drums of Hongze Lake (Zhang n.d. n.p).

However, the turn of event happened in 2004. Zhang said that:

[69] The full name is the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which took place in mainland China from 1966-1976.

> It was a day in March 2004 when I was invited by Wang Chunzhu, an old *yugu* artist, to Mudun Island, where a *yugu* performance was organized. Several old *yugu* artists wore sacred hats and long skirts as they danced and danced, and at that moment, the ancient atmosphere overcame me, making me feel restless for a long time. After that, I often attended their performances, and over time, the *yugu* performers and I became close friends. During that time, I collected many materials about *yugu* culture, including pictures, costumes, props, and old fishing drums. I also compiled several *yugu* repertoires from their oral narratives. All these things are displayed at the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Conservation Base next door to me (Zhang Rengao, personal interview, 20 February 2022).

After saying that, he took me to the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Conservation Base (see Figure 4.10) next to his office. He introduced it to me quite proudly:

> This conservation base has a total construction area of 1,600 square meters; it mainly targets the protection of traditional *yugu* culture. It consists of the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Inheritance Base, Hongze Lake Folk Museum, Hongze Lake *Yugu* Theater, Folk Paper-Cutting Display Gallery and other unique cultural facilities, with a total local government investment of more than 6 million yuan. This scale is hard to see at the township level (Zhang Rengao, personal interview, 20 February 2022).

When I entered Hongze Lake *Yugu* Inheritance Base, I found it decorated in a simple and bright style. The wall directly opposite the stage is prominently decorated with photos and profiles of representative *yugu* artists of all ages. In glass display cases, several stacks of handwritten books of *yugu* repertoires (see Figure 4.11) are separately on one side of the area. In the middle of the exhibition area is a performance stage, with boat models, fishing drums, and drumsticks piled up messily in the corner of the stage. Next to the stage is a glass window nearly the height of an adult man, which displays the brightly coloured headgear, costumes and props used by *yugu* artists, which are particularly dazzling under the support of lights. Such a

solemn display and elaborate arrangement shocked and made me spring up unbidden with respect and admiration for grassroots cultural workers.



Figure 4.10: Hongze Lake *Yugu* Heritage Base, photographed by Li Weiyang, 20 February 2022.

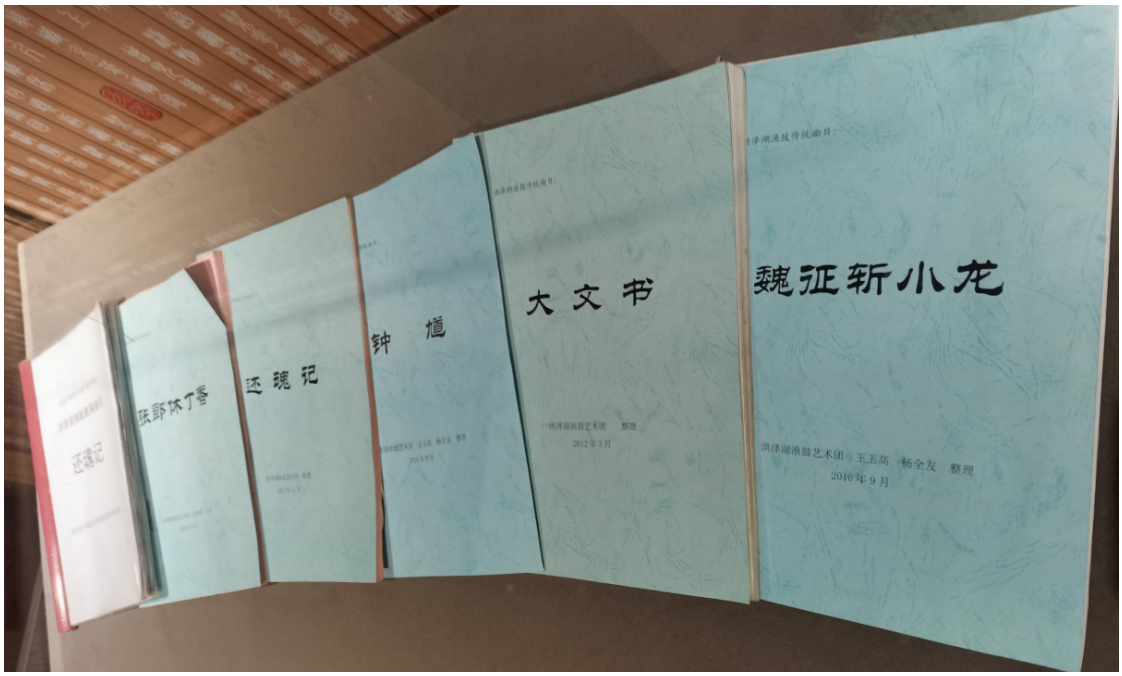


Figure 4.11: Plays collected and written by Zhang Rengao, exhibited in the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Heritage Base, photographed by Li Weiyang, 20 February 2022.

On the way back to the office, he picked up the phone and called Wang Chunzhu and Wang Yugao, the old *yugu* artists mentioned earlier, and arranged my interview schedule with them for the following two days. To my surprise, Wang Yugao showed up at the office in twenty minutes on his scooter. He was stout, with a stern gaze, wearing a thick grey pyjama, a mask and a hat. His dusty appearance looked like he had come from home immediately after receiving a call from Zhang Rengao. I was a bit overwhelmed by his sudden arrival. I silently observed the pleasantries between him and Zhang Rengao. The two patted each other's shoulders and asked the current status in the dialect, as close as family.

Zhang then introduced me to Wang Yugao; I tried to get into the atmosphere and ask him some basic questions, such as his age when he started learning *yugu,* his precise learning methods, and the opportunities he might have had (if any) to perform on *yugu.* I also asked him about the number of people in his family, and whether he was a local fisherman. Unlike the smooth, easy conversation he had with Zhang, Wang looked very nervous and shy when answering these questions and tried very hard to respond in Mandarin retaining a strong accent. However, no matter how much I guided him, his answers either monosyllabic, or he talked a lot but kept missing the point. Zhang Rengao may have also noticed the problem with our communication. After I took some sporadic notes, he offered to let Wang Yugo perform a live performance of a piece song from the *yugu* ceremony. I wonder whether it was because Wang was back in his familiar territory. I could feel a moment of ease and relaxation in his voice, although being in his pyjamas with a hat in an office setting made his performance look somewhat out of place. After Wang Yugao left, Zhang said to me,

> They (old *yugu* artists) were deeply influenced by the Cultural Revolution and are all very guarded. They have been dealing with ceremonies for years, so their aura looked powerful. They do not care if you are a scholar or have a high position. You would not even get a chance to meet them without my contacts (Zhang Rengao, personal interview, 20 February 2022).

The intimacy between him and the old *yugu* performers described in Zhang Rengao's words above represents, to some extent, a good way for grassroots cultural practitioners to get along with folk artists. It reflects the particularly close-to-life and worldly wisdom sides of grassroots cultural preservation work. Like Wang Yugo, more than half of the people in the fishermen's music program I researched came from traditional fishermen's families who had fished for generations, had no education, and had low social status. In my project, without these grassroots cultural workers like Zhang Rengao, who love local culture from the bottom of their hearts and have rich working experience, I could not communicate well with the fishermen, let alone find effective information from them. These individuals who guard local culture deserve more attention and respect from us.

I continued my interview with Zhang Rengao. We went back to that event where the *yugu* artist Wang Chunzhu invited Zhang to see a live *yugu* performance. I asked Zhang to give me more details of Wang Chunzhu's presence and background.

> It should be thanks to the promotion of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Intangible Cultural Heritage was the hot issue in those years, and most ordinary people had heard of it. The *yugu* project was also declared an Intangible Cultural Heritage project smoothly during that time and received unprecedented attention and respect. Wang Chunzhu found out about it (*yugu* became the Intangible Cultural Heritage project) from his son and soon came to my office to introduce himself to me. Their previous experience of being forced into hiding for many years due to the suppression of the Cultural Revolution had made them desperately in need of a chance to make a name for themselves, and they were eager to establish their own folk art troupe to be able to perform *yugu* in front of the public. At that time, the *yugu* project was preparing to apply for national Intangible Cultural Heritage. It was in the predicament of lacking key evidence of traditional rituals, which he and other old *yugu* performers emerged to solve perfectly. Without them, the *yugu* project

would not be as successful as it is today (Zhang Rengao, personal interview, 20 February 2022).

The morning after I finished the interview with Zhang Rengao, I met Wang Chunzhu in the paper-cutting showroom on the first floor of the town hall building, as I had hoped. Wang looked physically tough, wearing a matching ensemble of black mink coat hat. Perhaps because it was our first meeting, he appeared serious and nervous, and his seated posture was quite stiff. In order to break the awkward atmosphere I poured him a glass of hot tea and allowed him to smoke as much as he wanted during our conversation.[70]

The smoke-filled environment relaxed him a lot but did not reduce communication gap between us. One of the important reasons for this awkwardness was that Wang wasn't very fluent in Mandarin. Moreover, when I asked him for detailed descriptions of the rituals, I was not sure whether it was because it touched on the core of the rituals, because of a lack of my trust caused by unfamiliarity, or because of misunderstanding caused by poor communication. In any case, his answers were either monosyllabic or tangential and unconnected to the topic at hand, quite similar to the interview with Wang Yugao the day before. However, he answered three questions clearly and beyond my exception in the whole interview, which impressed me greatly.

The first question was about why he learned *yugu*, and his answer was simple and touching; his original words were that :

Not a few people want to learn the *yugu*, It was too hard, and you only memorize everything just by your observation. Once you mess up even one little step, you will be severely punished by the master. Our performance usually needed several days and nights, but we only made a little money. However, this is a skill inherited by my family; if I do not

[70] Before the interview, Zhang Rengao had specifically told me that Wang Chunzhu was used to drinking strong tea and that he was a heavy smoker.

> study, it will get lost. In addition, fishermen need it; if no one learns, how about these fishermen? (Wang Chunzhu, personal interview, 21 February 2022).

The second question was about *yugu* performance, and the nature, content, frequency and geographic scope of these performances. He answered that:

> Depending on the economic and social status of the fishermen, there are four scales of *yugu* performances to choose from, namely one day and one night, two to three days, three full days and four days and four nights. The grandest performance for four days and four nights requires about ten people, basically the entire team. We must eat, live, sleep and perform on the boat or the ceremony places during the entire ceremony. The most common ceremony we perform is *xujiapu*, which is generally held once every ten years in a certain clan in a fishing community, and usually needs four days and four nights. We could have more than ten of them a year like this. In addition to local fishermen, we would also be invited to go to the Shangdong Province and even the northeast area of China (Wang Chunzhu, personal interview, 21 February 2022).

The third question was as to do with the reason for his showing up voluntarily; he did not explain much but asked me rhetorically: “paper cutters, painters and jugglers, are all called folk artists. Why are not our *yugu* performers? ”(Wang Chunzhu, personal interview, 21 February 2022). At that moment, a hint of sadness passed through his steely eyes.

After finishing the interview with Wang Chunzhu, some of his words kept lingering in my mind. He seemed to carry an almost fatalistic sense of responsibility for *yugu* and a strong will to persevere even after being suppressed in those special times, giving the art of fishing drums an extra touch of unspeakable sadness and grandeur. His line of questioning at the end made me ponder repeatedly. After such a tremendously traumatic experience, he must experience much struggle and hesitation when he decides to reappear in the public eye. However, none could outweigh the

firmness and urgency he and his team needed to find their own identity and make a name for themselves. The folk art group that Wang Chunzhu aspired to perform in public was eventually established in 2016 with the great help of Zhang Rengao with the full name of Hongze Lake *Yugu* Art Group, which currently has ten members, and is the only surviving local art group in Sihong that adheres to the *yugu* ritual performances.

Wang Chunzhu and Wang Yugao also became the project's municipal and provincial ICH inheritors in succession, after the *yugu* project became a national Intangible Cultural Heritage. As an Intangible Cultural Heritage project, the government supports and helps them and this art group mainly by organizing 1-2 training sessions for them every year and providing special funds to help them to organize and restore some traditional plays, such as *Zhang Lang Xiuqi* (Zhang Lang Repudiates His Wife) and *Liu Wenlong Gankao* (Liu Wenlong Rushing to the Civil Examination) . Under the leadership of Wang Chunzhu, the Art Troupe has produced several new fishing drums, costumes and props for the performance. In terms of inheritance, the troupe has now formed two inheritance ties: family inheritance and teacher-apprentice inheritance. Additionally, it has successively trained five young performers, which has in turn, enriched the intergenerational relationship of the inheritance team and alleviated the current dilemma of a shortage of young people. Although the Intangible Cultural Heritage context has led to a certain degree of government funding and intervention, the operation and management of its team ritual performance activities, especially the performance of the *xujiapu* ceremony, is still based on the subjective needs of the fishermen and the willingness of the artistic group to perform.

If the establishment of the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Art Troupe and the maintenance of the original ritual environment of Hongze Lake *yugu* are a part of Zhang Rengao’s inheritance of his father’s excavation, research and preservation of traditional *yugu* culture, then the creation of new dance works, establishment of the grassroots art troupe and the training of student performers are the continuation of his father's concept of stage performance of *yugu*. In what follows, I will likewise draw on first person perspectives from the field, based on my interviews, visits and observations,

before focusing on the fruitful results of the stage performance of *yugu* through two representative platforms: the Grassroots Art Troupe and Xue Feng Elementary School.

In addition to the conservation as mentioned above, the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Art Troupe for the traditional *yugu* culture. In terms of new dance works creation, Zhang Rengao and other cultural cadres continue to refer to the *yugu* rituals, preserving and drawing on the basic forms and themes of *yugu* stage dance established by the older generation of cultural workers, represented by Zhang Kun, in the 1960s, combining them with the background of the new era, such as successively created *yugu qingge* and *yugu piaoxiang*, which reflect the lifestyle of new fishermen. These works were not only performed in several provincial and municipal reporting performances as local representative programs and were recognized by experts but also became representative programs of the most influential local mass art group, Grassroots Art Troupe.

Bancheng Grassroots Art Group was founded in 2006. It is the largest amateur folk art group locally, with 85 resident members currently, 46 men and 39 women. The members' ages span three generations from the 50s, 60s and 70s. This art group is divided into five sub-groups by categories: drama performance, square dance, folk dance, gongs and drums, and folk instrumental music. Its members are involved in gongs and drums, dance, drama, hosting, opera, skits, photography and other art disciplines. Since its establishment, the art group has always adhered to the characteristics of amateurism, mass flexibility and public interest. The art group not only actively carries out weekend square performances but also takes the responsibility of performing local opera in the countryside. Now it has become the indispensable spiritual companion in the cultural life of the masses in Hongze Lake.

The person in charge of the Grassroots Art Group is a middle-aged woman named Wang Meijuan. When I first met her, she was busy cleaning and organizing Zhang's office. Unlike the well-dressed, slim, slightly cold people who are engaged in dance I had seen and remembered, Wang Meijuan was plainly dressed, stocky and warm. During my fieldwork, we met almost every day; it was not until Zhang

Rengao's introduction that I just recognized that this busy, unpretentious lady in front of me was the head of the Grassroots Art Troupe, also involved in the creation of the new *yugu* dance (see Figure 4.12). When I offered to interview her, she shook her hand and said, "you should ask Mr Zhang (Zhang Rengao); I am an amateur" (Wang Meijuan, personal interview, 22 February 2022).

After I repeatedly pleaded, she agreed to my request for an interview. She first showed me the dance room where they rehearsed, located on the first floor of the town building. The dance room looked immaculate and well-organized. The wooden floor and a wall of mirrors made the room look like a professional dance studio. Wang Meijuan looked at the room with affection and said to me:

> Although I head the art group, I mainly manage the dance team. Our dance team now has more than 50 people, basically all housewives, not too educated. They have a wide age span, ranging from about 30-70 years old. We are grateful for the conditions we now have: this exclusive rehearsal room with speakers and air conditioning, costumes and props for performances, free rehearsal time and some opportunities for performances and competitions. When the art group was first established, we did not have anything. If we wanted to rehearse a program, we had to go to the open space next to the square. It was close to the lake; in summer, there were mosquitoes everywhere, and in winter, there was wind on all sides; I cannot tell you how difficult it was! (Wang Meijuan, personal interview, 22 February 2022).

When we talked about the art group's public service performances, Wang Meijuan said proudly:

> I told you I am an amateur, and most people in our troupe are the same as me. Initially, there was no concept of performance when we got together, we just liked it, and it was purely for our amusement. Later, more and more people joined the group, and we began choreographing some of our dances and tried to participate in the competition. With little by little

accumulation, our group got little fame among the locals and started getting invitations to perform. However, our principle is no charge, at most, to ask for some carriage fee. I remember a private wedding party wanted to invite us to perform, and the fee was 5,000 yuan. We refused after the discussion. We got together to dance because of interest and passion. If it is linked to money, it is not pure (Wang Meijuan, personal interview, 22 February 2022).



Figure 4.12: The Grassroots Art Troupe performs the *yugu* dance program *yugu piaoxiang* at the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Festival, taken on June 17 2016, provided by Zhang Rengao.

In the dissemination and promotion of most cultures, the acceptance and recognition by the younger generation has always been a indispensable factor for measuring this culture's sustainable development. If the Grassroots Art Troupe drives the general public to participate in the stage performance of *yugu* actively, the Xuefeng School ensures the culture of *yugu* permeates into the students' daily curriculum with the nature of dance performances.

Xuefeng School is the only nine-year (include Primary and Middle) school in Bancheng town, and its name comes from General Peng Xuefeng.[71] Xue Feng School's connection with Hongze *Yugu* dates back to 2012. At that time, the *yugu* project had been successfully listed as a provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage project for over three years. Although it had been promoted and displayed on various platforms as the representative of local culture, the student group had little opportunity to get to know and appreciate it up close. At the end of 2012, the principal of Xuefeng School took the initiative to propose to the local cultural department the idea of introducing *yugu* to the school, which soon received the response and support of the relevant departments.

Near the end of my fieldwork, I visited the Xuefeng School and interviewed Principal Liu, the main person in charge of the *yugu* introduction project. I also interviewed teacher Shi, who is responsible for adapting and teaching *yugu* dance. My interview was arranged in the principal's office, a small, simple room located on the top floor. Principal Liu and Teacher Shi are waiting there early. Teacher Shi is the school's music teacher responsible for the after-school interest class. She is short, cute-looking, and I guess she probably just graduated from a teacher training college not many years ago. Perhaps because of me as a doctoral student, she seemed a bit restrained and nervous about my particular visit. I asked her about the studying situation of *yugu* dance, including details of the form of participation, the number of participants, and the content of the study. As the exchange progressed, the whole interview gradually became more relaxed, and Teacher Shi shared with me some more insights, much more fluently than before:

> Students learn *yugu* dance mainly through participating in *Yugu* Dance Club (see Figure 4.13), one of the school's most popular clubs since its inception, with over a hundred students volunteering each year. The dance

[71] As early as during the Anti-Japanese War, the outstanding general Peng Xuefeng led his troops into Bancheng and opened up the anti-Japanese base in Huabei, and for the needs of the war, under his active advocacy, the Huaibei District Party Committee founded the Huaibei Middle School in Bancheng. After liberation, the people's government of Hongze County founded Xuefeng School in order to carry forward the spirit of Huaibei Middle School inherit the excellent virtues of Peng Xuefeng and develop the cultural and educational undertakings of the people in the old area.

> classroom sometimes could not accommodate so many students, and we just went to the playground to practice. The *Yugu* Dance Club is mainly for students in grades four through six in the Primary Division. The younger grades (One to Three) are not considered, not because they are not interested or do not dance well, but because of the props- the fishing drum. In order to get closer to the actual performance and original sound effects of *yugu*, we chose the iron drum; many of the younger grades could not hold them, let alone do the dancing movements with them. Regarding the music for the students' *yugu* dance, I did not choose fishing songs but more rhythm-heavy acoustic music that catered to the student's tastes. The rehearsal is every Monday and Tuesday after school, from 4:20 to 5:00 pm. Since implementing the double reduction policy, the school has placed more emphasis on developing students' leisure time interests. Every year, the school holds an art festival in May, and the students' rehearsals for the *yugu* dance are presented on stage yearly (Teacher Shi, personal interview, 23 February 2022).

On the students' initiative to sign up for the *Yugu* Dance Club, Principal Liu, who was standing by, could not hide his pride, and while showing me the pictures and videos on his computer, he added that:

> Because of the school's strong connection with General Peng Xuefeng and the good social impact of Hongze Lake *yugu* being listed as a national Intangible Cultural Heritage project. Many official media[72] would focus on us and provide students opportunities to show their *yugu* dance performance (see Figure 4.14). These precious showcase opportunities have also led to the full support and understanding of the student's parents in our club. In addition, the school receives annual visits from people from all walks of life, including many vital VIPs who ask to see the students' *yugu* dance performance by name. Therefore, our students have

[72] These official media are included the CCTV, People's Daily, China News Photo and Guangming.com.

seen the world and are always ready to perform (Principal Liu, personal interview, 23 February 2022).



Figure 4.13: *Yugu* Dance Club (dance room)in Xuefeng School, 23 February 2022, photographed by Li Weiyang.



Figure 4.14: Students from Xuefeng School were dancing the *yugu* dance, 23 February 2022, provided by Principal Liu

Unlike Teacher Shi's shyness, Principal Liu's responses were much more fluid. He then invited me to visit the Patriotic Education Hall (see Figure 4.15) in the southeast corner of the school, a bungalow with red walls on a blue background, with a row of portraits of great men and their introductions hanging outside the walls. Upon entering the door, in addition to the relevant red history display, there is also an exclusive space for the display of fishermen's culture with text and picture introductions and fishing drums, fishing gear, wooden boats, fishing nets and other physical objects closely related to fishermen. Principal Liu told me, "since implementing the fishermen's landing policy, the number of fishermen's children at the school has increased significantly. Now the school is planning to combine the *yugu* dance with the students' recess exercises to popularize it throughout the whole school" (Principal Liu, personal interview, 23 February 2022).

In Principal Liu's opinion, promoting *yugu* dance and building the space for fishermen's physical display is the way to preserve the collective memory of fishermen and retain their cultural roots, which is of great significance to students or

descendants of fishermen who grew up in the lake area. Principal Liu then picked up the brochure by the booth and introduced it to me:

> In addition to the *Yugu* Dance Club, our school has also developed a school-based curriculum called *Qiannian feiyi—— Yugu wu* (Thousand Year Intangible Cultural Heritage - Yugu Dance) (see Figure 4.16), now a compulsory subject for students. You can get to know it through the brochure (Principal Liu, personal interview, 23 February 2022).

This booklet details the *yugu* dance and is divided into two parts. The first part specifies the movements and symbolism of the *yugu* dance for students in pictures and text and summarizes the three themes of the dance: leaving, harvesting, and returning.

> These three themes show the following:
>
> a. fishermen waving goodbye to their families before leaving the lake;
> b. casting and reeling in the nets while fishing;
> c. fishermen cheering each other on;
> d. fishermen praying for a good harvest;
> e. the magnificent view of fishing boats connected on the return journey and fishermen cheering for a good harvest.

From this part, I can see that this newly choreographed student *yugu* dance is closely integrated with the culture of fishermen and the culture of the Great Lake. Its movements express the life and production of fishermen and reflect the excellent spirit of fishermen, which is also considered to be a continuation of the basic features and contents of the creation of the local *yugu* dance. The second part introduces the formation and costume requirements of three types of *yugu* dance suitable for performance in the square: the 100-person *yugu* dance, the 30-person *yugu* dance, and the teacher's *yugu* dance.



Figure 4.15: Patriotic Education Hall in Xuefeng School, 23 February 2022, photographed by Li Weiyang.



Figure 4.16. The booklet of *Thousand Year Intangible Cultural Heritage - Yugu Dance* from Xuefeng School, 23 February 2022, photographed by Li Weiyang.

As a consequence (and deeply influenced and guided by Zhang's father and son) a complete local performing conservation system was formed in Sihong, with the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Troupe, Grassroots Art Troupe and Xuefeng School as the main body. In June 2016, under the active fight of Zhang Rengao, Sihong successfully held the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Culture and Arts Festival, where the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Art Troupe, Grassroots Art Troupe and Xuefeng School presented performances, comprehensively demonstrating the rich achievements and development of local *yugu* conservation.

4.4.2 A Mentor and His Apprentice: Popularization the Yugu Dance as the Daily Routine for the Public

In this case, the mentor's name is Jiang Hansong, who is now the provincial-level inheritor of the Hongze Lake *yugu* Project. He was a well-known local cultural backbone when he was young, especially good at composing and choreographing dances. After returning from the army, he was selected to work in the local cultural department and was in charge of mass art instruction until his retirement, at which point he was appointed as the artistic director of the local university for the elderly, responsible for the dance and vocal music courses. Due to his advanced age and job changes, he moved to downtown Huai'an a few years ago. Therefore, my interview with him was scheduled for the last few days of the fieldwork targeting the Hongze District.

His apprentice was Sheng Chengmei, a cultural practitioner at the Hongze District Cultural Centre, who now is the municipal-level inheritor of this project. The first meeting with Sheng Chengmei was in the meeting room of the Cultural Centre. On that day, she was dressed in a light blue suit; probably because of her years of dance practice, she appeared to be in great shape. She wore light makeup and pearl

earrings, and her hair was pinned back, making her look elegant. Our conversation began with her opportunity to get to know the *yugu* dance. She told me that she had been a music teacher before her job at the Cultural Centre:

> I came to work at the Cultural Centre in 2006. I came to work here because I saw a program called the Hongze Lake *yugu* dance rehearsed by Jiang for the city's gala by accident in 2003. I was born and raised in Hongze, and I'm surprised I've never heard of this dance. After watching the program, I was shocked that there could be such a beautiful dance in my hometown. When I got home, I couldn't calm down for a long time, so I took the initiative to contact Mr Jiang and proposed the idea of learning the *yugu* dance with him. It was such an opportunity that I was transferred to the Cultural Centre shortly afterwards to work with him in creating and promoting the *yugu* dance (Sheng Chengmei, personal interview, 3 August 2022).

Sheng then found this precious video on her computer and played it to me. In it, the stage's background consisted of a curtain wall with blue sky and white clouds, props of willow trees and waterwheels placed on one side of the stage, and ten young female dancers lined up and strolled. They were dressed in red and white dance costumes, with net-like ornaments around their waists, and held fishing drums shaped like red carp and drumsticks with red spike flowers. The lyrics of "LET'S ROW THE BOAT" can be faintly heard in the accompanying music, followed by a burst of *haozi* in the water village. The middle section of the music is a solid and rapid rhythmic sound, matching the dancers' percussive movements and formation changes.

This dance piece later became one of the representative works of the stage performance of the *yugu* dance in the Hongze District. Based on this dance, Sheng Chengmei and Jiang Hansong also collaborated to create several other versions of the stage dance. Although dancers of different ages and genders perform these works, the works common features are that the music accompanying the works is all newly composed; the music style fully highlights the characteristics of the music of the *Lixia* River area, which is soft and smooth with beautiful tunes; in terms of choreography,

in addition to enhancing the appreciative of the works, the interactive content with the props of the fishing drums is also added. The substantial drumming action is abstracted so that the fishing drums and the dance become one. Because of this, they also made specific improvements to the fishing drums used in the dance, replacing iron fishing drums with wooden ones and animal skin with paper skins, highlighting more of the image of red carp drawn on the drum surface. As of 2014, Jiang Hansong and Sheng Chengmei trained three amateur dance teams to take charge of local fishing drum performances and competitions. However, faced with the fact that an increasing number of applicants who wanted to participate in the *yugu* dance performance and that the performance stage was relatively limited, Sheng Chengmei had a bold idea to create a square dance[73] version of the *yugu* dance (see Figure 4.17).

> Both Mr Jiang and I thought the idea was feasible. First of all, considering the square dance itself, it has a large number of participants and among them has also cultivated a group of loyal followers, for whom the square dance is more like a part of their daily life, promoting the square dance version of the *yugu* dance to them would allow more people to participate in it consistently. Secondly, considering the audience of square dance, most of them are middle-aged and elderly women; among them are mainly housewives and recently retired women who have more abundant free time for learning and practising this new dance. Finally, most people who love square dance have a certain dance foundation or art appreciation ability. Therefore, we believe that this project will achieve great results. Our creation was based on the previously staged works of the *yugu* dance, in which the difficulty of the dance movements was adjusted and simplified, ultimately retaining the most basic movements, such as straddling, drumming, and twisting, and the repetitive and focused design of the movements was made according to the characteristics of square

[73] Square dance is the most popular mass dance in China; it is performed in open spaces such as parks and squares, and there are no restrictions on the type of dance. Its movements are simple and repetitive and easy to learn; it usually uses familiar popular music and has a strong and precise rhythm. It is quite popular among the general public because of its low cost, ease of participation and specific exercise effects. Ms. Sheng recalls that in Hongze District alone, more than 1,000 people participate in square dancing.

dance. Mr Jiang also composed new music for this project. The new music not only meets the characteristics of simple, easy to remember and cheerful square dance music but also retains the music material of the *haozi* of the water village. The formal teaching of the square dance version began in 2018, and we have planned and organized four training sessions successively, each with 20-30 members, who are the captains or key members of the square dance teams in the district, who learn and then pass on to other members of the team. Since the square dance itself is involved in the purpose of national fitness and national entertainment, and at the same time, our version combined with the local culture, therefore, this project was approved and supported by the Bureau of Culture and Broadcasting. In just one year, the number of people who can dance this dance has reached hundreds (Sheng Chengmei, personal interview, 3 August 2022).



Figure 4.17: Ms Sheng was teaching a square dance version of the *yugu* dance, 28 September , 2018, photograph provided by Sheng.

Because of the excellent effect of the square dance version of the *yugu* dance, from 2019 to 2020, Sheng started another new project, the aerobics version of the *yugu* dance for students (see Figure 4.18):

> I used the same teaching model and selected two dozen young music teachers from different schools in the district to teach them the aerobics version of the *yugu* dance; then they went on to teach it to the students. We also selected Hongze Lake Primary School and No.2 Middle School as the critical pilot units. I taught their students in person while popularizing the *yugu* culture. It is easy for students to be attracted by the beatings of the fishing drum and dancing movements, so the interaction was very effective. I think It is significant to promote the *yugu* culture to the students. It is the culture of their hometown, and they should know where their roots are (Sheng Chengmei, personal interview, 3 August 2022).

Ms Sheng told me that in addition to promoting mass dance, the local government also invested 1.5 million in Hongze Lake Primary School to build a *yugu* heritage base. I had the opportunity to visit this base accompanied by Ms Sheng. The base is located in the main school building of Hongze Lake Primary School and is similar in size to a small auditorium. Unlike the traditional fishing drum culture elements placed and displayed everywhere in the Sihong *Yugu* Conservation Base, this heritage base in Hongze focuses more on displaying and promoting the works and elements of the *yugu* dance. For example, in the centre of the exhibition hall, hanging from the ceiling are fishing drums in the shape of red carp used in many of the *yugu* dance works. A row of display boards about the introduction of *yugu* dance creators is neatly placed in a prominent place in the exhibition hall. The TV screen on one side of the exhibition area cycled through different versions of the *yugu* dance works. Ms Sheng said proudly while pointing at the TV screen:

> Our publicity and promotion of the *yugu* dance have covered almost all age groups in the district. Although the process is arduous and each creation is challenging, watching more and more ordinary people dancing

yugu dance, I feel that my work is precious and meaningful. Of course, for more details about the creation of the *yugu* dance and the earlier history, you should ask Mr Jiang (Sheng Chengmei, personal interview, 3 August 2022).



Figure 4.18: Ms Sheng was teaching students of the *yugu* dance, 12 July , 2022, photograph provided by Sheng.

A few days later, I met Jiang Hansong, a hale and hearty older man with glasses, at Huai'an University for the Aged. Our conversation began with his first fieldwork experience of *yugu* in 1980:

I was working in the Culture Museum at that time. I heard about Hongze Lake *yugu* long ago, and thought it was a good project that could create something new, so I went to the Laozishan Town because I was told there was an "old" *yugu* performance. I felt a little disappointed after I stayed there for a few days. I only saw a dance program called *yugu* dance, like a folk dance, with simple dance movements with drums and combined the form of singing and talking. The tune they sang is similar to the fishing song by Hongze Lake. When I returned, I kept thinking about the dance

> program I saw and what I could do to make this dance look more sophisticated and appreciated. Soon, my first yugu dance program was born (Jiang Hansong, personal interview, 9 August 2022).

When Jiang Hansong described the fieldwork process, he mentioned a detail that he did not find any trace of *yugu* rituals during his research in the 1980s, which matches Zhang Rengao's description of the same period. The difference, however, is that Jiang did not put much focus and energy into tracing the origins of *yugu* rituals but used the materials he found to create something that would be effective and innovative in the present. This focus on current social trends and people's aesthetic preferences is also reflected in his attitude of supporting and creating music for the square dance version of *yugu* dance.

> Look at how many people are now dancing the square dance; how many people are using the songs of mainstream singers like Phoenix Legend[74] as the backing music for the square dance? As literary artists, we should always pay attention and try to analyse the preferences of the public and use such preferences to combine with the promotion of our local culture. As long as we create properly, the people will also dance the *yugu* dance and love listening to the water town's music. The successful promotion of the square dance version of the fishing dance is a typical example (Jiang Hansong, personal interview, 9 August 2022).

He then played the song he created for the square dance version of the *yugu* dance immediately after and said to me, "listen to it; how cheerful it is!" Jiang Hansong is more passionate about the process and art of music composition and creation, compared to Zhang Rengao. He turned his computer screen toward me and introduced me to all the works he had created over the years one by one. My

[74] Phoenix Legend is a popular Chinese duo music group. Many of their songs are used by the public in square dancing.

interview also gradually turned into Jiang's music appreciation session because of the playing of these works.

Jiang's preference for creative work, especially song and dance creation, can, to a certain extent, represent the preferences of many grassroots cultural workers. Grassroots cultural departments, especially local cultural centres and cultural stations, have the main task of ensuring the organization, display and development of mass art, and the heavy performance tasks make them habitually take song and dance programs, which can better display stage effects and are easier to promote, as their first choice, therefore, grassroots cultural workers value the ability to compose music more than cultural exploration and examination.

Unlike Zhang's father and son, who knew the history of *yugu* rituals, according to Jiang's response, his more impressive impressions of *yugu* started from its derived dancing works created in the 1960s, Therefore, for many years, the understanding of *yugu* by the local cultural department, even the application of the preliminary Intangible Cultural Heritage project, and the practice of the subsequent protection path have been deeply influenced by him. A paragraph shared by Xi Dahai, the current director of the Hongze District Intangible Cultural Heritage Office, fully proves this point:

> For a long time, we thought the *yugu* dance was just a normal folk dance that originated from people's self-entertainment, like *bangke* (Musselshell) Dance, let alone the relationship between it and *yugu* rituals. You can find this in the materials we submitted to declare the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the early stage. Later, with more communication with other places, especially cooperation with Sihong to apply national Intangible Cultural Heritage, we only gradually learn more about the history and culture of the *yugu* rituals. It is also through such a process of cognitive transformation, we were able to successfully discover an extant *yugu* ritual performance team in the town of Laozishan, very similar in nature to the one found in Sihong (Xi Dahai, personal interview, 3 August 2022).

After learning about the twists and turns behind the promotion of the *yugu* and *yugu* dance in Hongze District, I asked the local cultural department if I could make a trip to Laozishan to visit the local *yugu* ritual performance team and learn more about the details of that dance work that Mr Jiang saw back in 1980. Since Laozishan is a long way away (about a three-hour drive from Hongze District) and is located deep in the lake area, with the support and coordination of the local cultural department, my field trip was finally set for two days later. On that day, I went with the five grassroots cultural workers mentioned above, including Sheng Chengmei and Xi Dahai. On the way, Sheng Chengmei told me that to better understand the original ritual culture of *yugu*, they also would make three or four field trips to Laozishan each year to get updates on the needs and situation of the *yugu* performance team.

Near noon, our car stopped at a community where fishermen live together in Laozishan Town. Xi Dahai introduced to me that this community was newly built for fishermen ashore, with complete facilities, and we were here to visit Liu Changming, the leader of the local *yugu* ritual performance team. He is also the main person in charge of the performance of the 2015 *xujiapu* ceremony of the Liu clan. We walked for a short while, then saw a middle-aged man with dark skin waving warmly to us, at which time, Ms Sheng and Director Xi also rushed forward to greet him. As it happens, Liu also invited two other team members to join us that day, so a group of nearly ten people instantly flocked into a modest room on the first floor of a residential building. Although it was an interview, everyone sat around more like a family conversation. Like most of the surviving *yugu* artists in the lake area, Liu Changming's family background, his story of learning *yugu* and the process of establishing his *yugu* performance team are much similar to those of Sihong's *yugu* artists. Perhaps because of the arrival of old friends, Liu Changming and his members seemed excited; Liu not only showed us the old fishing drums inherited from his master with a history of nearly 100 years but also performed with his members the main rhythmic patterns of the fishing drums, including *kaitan* drum, *qiziyun* and s*hiziyun*. During the conversation, I noticed that as a performer of the *yugu* ceremony, Liu Changming did not become the inheritor of the *yugu* project. I asked Xi Dahai, and his explanation was that:

> Liu Changming and his performance team were not actually discovered directly by the Cultural Center, but by the Civil Affairs Department, who informed us when he applied to it. All this happened after the *yugu* project had become an Intangible Cultural Heritage project, when the quota of declared inheritors had run out, thus causing the current result. We are now actively seeking the possibility of Liu Changming becoming an inheritor. We are also transferring a large portion of the support funds from the development of the *yugu* dance to fund Liu's performance team to improve their hardware facilities and team building (Xi Dahai, personal interview, 5 August 2022).

After bidding farewell to Liu Changming, I had the pleasure of meeting Xiong Zhihua in the conference room of the Laozishan town hall building. He was the leading creator of the *yugu* dance piece that Mr Jiang saw during his Laozishan expedition in the 1980s. Ms Xu, one of the leading dancers in that work, also came with Xiong. In addition to reminiscing with us about the details of the creation of the *yugu* dance, Xiong also brought two precious materials: a copy of the music score of the *yugu* dance created in the 1960s (see Figure 4.8, page 33), and the other is a video material of the *yugu* dance work he created in the 1980s. He played it for us on the spot:

> Unlike the *yugu* rituals, which are all performed by male actors, this version of the dance is performed entirely by female dancers, and even some of the female actors play the roles of men in reverse. The stage simulates the scenery of the lake district, with props in the shape of lotus flowers and lotus leaves placed. The dancers stand in two rows in front and back; the front row dancers play the role of a woman from the water village, wearing a floral long-sleeved shirt with a red background on the top and green silk-faced pants on the bottom, with a hairstyle as well as a twisted braid at the waist dominated. The back row dancers play the role of the male boatman, wearing a yellow long-sleeved shirt with sequins on the shoulders, blue pants on the bottom, a red knee-length belt around the waist, short uniform hair and a light-coloured wide-brimmed hat. They all

carry modified versions of fishing drums decorated with fish images. The dance movements mainly imitated the basic actions of fishermen in fishing, such as casting the net, rowing the boat and reeling in the net, etc. There were specific formation changes during the dance accompanied by different drum rhythms.

In this video, from my view, both the setting of the all-female cast, the theme and content expressed about the fishermen's life, the matching of costumes, the improvement of the fishing drums, really lay a certain basic style and creative direction for the future creation of *yugu* dance in the region.

On the spot, local cultural workers, both old and new, represented by Xiong and Sheng, also discussed the boundaries of the creation of *yugu* dance, i.e., how to reflect better the connection between *yugu* dance and *yugu* ritual culture while still reflecting the characteristics of the lake area's water towns. What I observed as an outsider was that Xiong believed his work had well grasped the boundaries of innovation, retaining the basic elements of the *yugu* ritual while reflecting the characteristics of fishermen's lives at the time so that people could feel at a glance that this was a program about yugu and fishermen. At the same time, he also euphemistically expressed his discomfort and dissatisfaction with some newly created *yugu* dance programs. As a representative of the younger generation of creators, Ms Sheng first presented her respect and gratitude to Mr Xiong and humbly accepted his comments. However, Sheng also argued on grounds showing the rhythmic materials she had learned and collected from the old *yugu* artists. Sheng then talked about how she planned to apply these traditional elements to the combination of *yugu* dance and mass dance. This discussion did not reach a consensus between the two parties until the end. Afterwards, Sheng told me that in the process of creating her *yugu* dance, especially combining it with mass dances, there were many criticisms like Xiong's, and all she could do was to be firm on her path and find as much basis for her creation as possible through solid field research.

This dispute about the old and the new in the art of *yugu* has made me think for a long time. It also made me to ask under the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage,

what we exactly is being protected? As scholars, how do we look at tradition and innovation in the protection of ICH? Does tradition mean unchanging? And does innovation mean deviation from tradition? I think throughout my discourse on specific projects in chapters 2, 3, and 4, that answer is no. In my opinion, cultures that are protected by ICH should present a fluid, evolving, and sustained character, and to achieve these characteristics, they must, while retaining some of the basic characteristics of the culture, be responsive to the current context and mobilise a wider range of groups as much as possible to participate through new art forms in them. Therefore, I believe that both Mr Xiong and Ms Sheng's efforts for the development of the *yugu* culture are an innovation based on the background of their "current" era, and they are pursuing the same goal, that is, they hope that with the help of new art forms and works, more people will understand and love the traditional *yugu* culture, and participate in it with practical actions, so as to ultimately achieve the effect of cultural dissemination and inheritance.

To sum up, under the influence of this pair of mentors and his disciple, the performance and popularization of *yugu* dance have basically covered all age groups in Hongze District; for now, they are still seeking creative breakthroughs. They fully supported the performance of local *yugu* rituals and actively carried out inter-regional cooperation and exchanges. In 2018, Hongze District hosted the *Yugu Festival* between six places in three provinces presented a dance program that was a fusion of several versions of *yugu* dance created by them, which was also a concentrated presentation of the achievements of the creation of *yugu* dance in the district for many years.

Conclusion

As a comprehensive folk cultural activity with vital spiritual attributes, *yugu* has the vitality to continue to sustain itself as long as the fishermen's community still exists. Therefore, for the *yugu* ritual ceremony and its inheritance prospect, choosing the primary conservation attitude of no interference and no change, supplemented by appropriate material support, should be the most effective conservation means in

current practice. It is reflected in the *yugu* folk art groups established in both places. However, in the face of the potential crisis of traditional cultural loss under the new time trend, a self-sufficient and self-sustaining conservation approach is not enough and relies on new art forms to take root in the broader community.

The *yugu* dance reflects the ability of collective wisdom to adapt to the new time. Both places could find the historical trace and records of developing *yugu* from rituals to the stage art of *yugu* and are working toward a culture for all. However, through the above discussion, in their similar paths, different protagonists have made choices and preferences due to their circumstances, making the two places actually form two camps of development: traditional and innovative. This situation has lasted until the declaration of *yugu* as a national Intangible Cultural Heritage project; it has found an opportunity and built the platform for cooperation and exchange between the two places. The final decision of joint declaration between the two places is also a perfect collision between the traditional and innovative achievements of *yugu.*

CHAPTER 5

Intangible Cultural Heritage, Mass Culture and Government Management

I synthesised the findings from my fieldwork conducted for the previous chapters. I found that the three projects have some common characteristics in history, development process, identity composition, occupational distribution of specific inheritors, and the way of popularising the inheritance results to supporting figures in the inheritance process. These characteristics are:

a. In their historical context, all three projects are closely linked to red (revolutionary) history by their geographical location. Two of them have gone through a historical period of applying the original (old) art form to political propaganda. During this period, they further expanded their influence while receiving attention and more performance opportunities from the government. they further expanded their mass influence while receiving attention and more performance opportunities from higher levels.

b. In the process of becoming ICH projects, all three projects were screened out through the local folk culture census. They have undergone two transformations from daily production and lifestyle to stage performing arts and from stage performing arts to public mass culture. The first transformation was mostly through selection of cultural performances in the region, while the second transformation was through the platform of local mass cultural art groups.

c. Regarding the identity composition and occupational distribution of the inheritors, the seven sub-projects of the three major projects involve eleven inheritors. Among them was Lu Jiayou, who juggled two projects simultaneously. Five are fishermen or carpenters who grew up in fishing villages, while the remaining six are

local culture practitioners. Notably, five of these six have held important positions in cultural stations or the cultural system for many years.

d. The key supporting figures who emerged in the cases primarily work in the local cultural system, with a dual identity of insider and outsider.

Among the characteristics I have summarized above, the keywords included political propaganda, folk culture census, cultural performance, mass cultural art groups and cultural stations. All of them are closely related to the mass culture that originated in China's unique political and social context. So a series of questions arise quickly in my mind: what is mass culture? How did it come into being, and why is it so profoundly connected to Intangible Cultural Heritage? Is this connection only present in my project about fishermen's music projects in specific regions, or is it more widespread? Can this connection be used to good impact and influence the practical level as the ICH system matures and develops?

In this chapter, I will try to answer all these questions. In the first part, I will present and explain mass art's specific expressions and characteristics within three representative socio-historical development stages in China to answer the meaning of mass art, via exploration of its background and its possible connection with Intangible Cultural Heritage. In the second and third parts, I will focus on the development of grassroots cultural sector: cultural stations in the concrete practice of mass art. I will achieve this by combining my field interviews on the changes of its functions and personnel dynamics in the context of institutional reform in the new era. In the fourth part, I will focus on arts and cultural organisations formed by ordinary people on their own initiative, namely, mass art groups, which are both a centralised manifestation of the grassroots cultural sector's practice of mass art and an influential media platform for Intangible Cultural Heritage devised to connect with the public. I will take into account the mass art groups that have appeared in the case study, summarise and elaborate on their structural characteristics, composition, distribution of personnel, and nature of performance, and review and discuss the dama phenomenon, which refers to activities in which middle-aged and elderly women become the main participants. These have become impactful in the promotion and popularization of mass culture and Intangible Cultural Heritage in recent years.

5.1 Mass Culture in China

Before discussing mass culture in its unique Chinese context in this chapter, let us return to the term itself and deconstruct its meanings and cultural context briefly. The term "mass culture" has existed in the West for over a century; Fredric Jameson's article "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture" mentioned that "mass culture contrasted to the so-called high culture, and was also called mass audience culture, commercial culture, "popular" culture and the cultural industry" (Jameson 1979: 130). It is always associated with the market economy, cheap production, consumption, mass media and modern technology. The "mass" here, for my understanding, is to mean the consumers or people involved in the market culture. If I combine all elements mentioned above, I can get a simple definition of mass culture: it refers to popular culture, produced by the industrial techniques of mass production and marketed for profit to a mass public of consumers. Dominic Strinati believed the development of mass culture means there "is less room for any culture that does not make money and cannot be mass-produced for the mass market, such as art and folk culture" (Strinati 2004: 10). MacDonald saw mass culture as "a homogenized one, one that mingles everything together with a dynamic, revolutionary force that breaks down old barriers of class, tradition and taste and dissolves all cultural distinctions" (MacDonald 1953: 13). MacDonald also further compared mass culture and folk culture, arguing that "while folk art develops from below, originating from and shaped by the people themselves, popular culture is imposed from above, and is passive and produced by companies employing technicians" (Macdonald 1953: 15). As far as I am concerned, all these above descriptions of mass culture appear at first to be neutral but aren't totally devoid of some pejorative attitudes.

This kind of culture discussed above has sprouted and developed rapidly in China since the 1980s, along with the reform and opening up, and has occupied most of the cultural life space of the public in just a decade or so. The article "Dangdai dazhong wenyi: fanbo, chenlun, yu zhengjiu" (Contemporary Popular Literature: Reversal, Sinking and Rescue) written by Jin Guohua in 1992 has pointed out that

"mutual simulation, mass production, shrewd sales and mass consumption as the main characteristics of mass culture" (Jin 1992: 67). This article, written at a time when mass culture was flourishing, appears to convey the message that mass culture continues its essential characteristics in the East and does not change much with the different cultural soil, especially in the early years.

However, the mass culture examined in these scholarships are not the mass culture examined in this chapter. In Chinese-English translation, the word "mass" can be translated into Chinese as either *dazhong* (大众) or *qunzhong* (群众). As touched upon thus far, the mass culture in the Western context is more like the *dazhong* (popular) culture in China. *Qunzhong* means ordinary people, so the mass culture I want to discuss should be the culture around the ordinary people. The following are a few of the more influential definitions of mass culture in the Chinese academy I collected; they are from the relevant dictionaries or specialist books in the 1980s or 1990s.[75]

> Mass culture is a socio-historical phenomenon carried out by the people themselves to satisfy their own spiritual needs and with literature and art as its main content (Tang, Hu 1988).
> Mass culture is a variety of cultural activities with national characteristics, local features and comprehensive, popular and inherited nature that the people carry out to meet the needs of spiritual life, with their own activities as the main body and for self-entertainment and self-education (Wu 1988).
> Mass culture is a social culture in which people participate, entertain themselves and develop themselves outside their profession (Zhen 1993).

Combining the meanings that emerge from the three definitions we see how they all emphasize that the subject of mass culture is the ordinary people, that its expression is literature and art, and that the self-will of the masses determines the act

[75] These books include Tang Youquan, Hu Efei. 1989. *Jianming qunzhong wenhua cidian* (Concise Dictionary of Mass Culture); Wu Yiping. 1998. *Qunzhong wenhua xue gailun* (Introduction to Mass Culture); Zhen Yongfu. 1993. *Qunzhong wenhua xue* (Mass Culture Theory).

of their participation. The latter two definitions are more like additions to the first one in specific aspects, such as the characteristics of the mass cultural activities carried out and the time and state of the description of the masses when they participate. Unlike the popular culture mentioned above, mass culture has deeply linked to folk culture in China. However, although these definitions outline mass culture's principal elements and characteristics, they appear to me to be generalisations that amplify the masses' autonomy. In fact, as a socio-historical phenomenon, mass culture is inevitably shaped and influenced by the different stages of socio-historical development in China. Government decisions, policy orientations and even partial adjustments to the cultural establishment affect and reflect in varying degrees on the practical expression of mass culture. This complexity is not reflected in the definitions. In addition, as a social culture closely associated with government and has been institutionalized, as David Holm suggested, "it has a degree of voluntary compliance and operates under a degree of coercion" (Holm 1991: 3). Clearly, this potential impact on mass guidance under governmental dominance and leadership is ignored from earlier definitions.

In order to make up for these gaps, in the following paragraphs, I will first combine three historical stages of development that have had a significant impact on mass culture. Next, I will; elaborate on the different forms and characteristics of mass art in different social contexts, policy orientations and central national needs, in order to give a more comprehensive picture of this socio-cultural matter. In doing so – and because of the prominence of mass culture in my case about fishermen's music under ICH context - I will summarise potential links between mass culture in different stages and ICH.

Phase I: Revolutionary War Period (1924-1949)[76]

During the revolutionary war period, mass culture was an essential element of the Chinese Communist Party's political agenda which actively served the revolution

[76] The wars in this phase include the First Domestic Revolutionary War (1924.1-1927.7), the Agrarian Revolutionary War (1927.8-1937), the War of Resistance Against Japan (1931.9-1945.8), and the War of Liberation (1946.6-1949.9).

as an essential means of propagating and mobilizing the masses. In the *Report on April* of the CPC Jiangxi Provincial Committee in May 1932 mass culture was explicitly linked to political work, which was also the earliest appearance of this word (*qunzhong wenhua*) as a special term in a Chinese context (Feng, Bao 2013: 6). In 1942, Mao Zedong published his famous *Speech at the Yan'an Symposium on Literature and Art*; he specified the need to use literature and art as a powerful weapon to unite the people, educate them and combat the enemy. Leslie Nai-Kwai Lo elaborates on this in his article on arts education in a mass arts system, where he argues that:

> From Mao Zedong's efforts to politicize art and literature to the modification of indigenous art forms to serve the CCP's interests, the arts were turned into tools of propaganda through which the meaning of war, national development, and revolution was articulated and disseminated among the Chinese people (Lo 1989: 108).

At this time, art, especially in performance, mainly refers to folk songs and dances. In its promotion and dissemination as mass culture, they were detached from their traditional cultural and customary background, retaining only their original art form, as the new wine in old bottles. Liu Kang, in his article "Popular Culture and the Culture of the Masses in Contemporary China" commented on this situation that "primitive peasant and indigenous folk cultural forms were exalted to the pinnacle of revolutionary romanticism and revolutionary realism" (Liu 1997: 113). Therefore, based on the historical presentation, I agree that mass culture/ art at this time had a solid political orientation, prioritising policy services. Under the influence of the general government-led environment, there was limited room for the free play of its artistic characteristics. However, this large-scale, almost institutional requirement for a political propaganda mission did significantly enhance the status of traditional folk culture and arts that had been suppressed and even abandoned since the May Fourth Movement, actively promoting related collection and creation efforts. More importantly, it aimed to be close to the public, reach out to them while also allowing them to participate.

Phase II: Economic Construction Period (1949-2002)

This period is further divided into the time of the planned economic system and the construction of the socialist market economy system. During the former one, mass culture, as an essential part of socialist cultural construction, was basically established as a government management network consisting of art museums, cultural centres, and cultural stations. In this period, the theme of mass cultural activities was to sing the praises of the new China, and exalt the virtues of the new life. In addition to organizing basic mass cultural performances, activities that acquired greater importance included disseminating cultural knowledge, training the backbone of mass culture, conducting research on mass culture, and collecting and organizing cultural heritage. Consolidating a socialist market economy in response to the slogan of *Jingji jianshe wei zhongxin* (economic construction as the centre) mass culture also introduces market mechanisms, and its products and services join the ranks of those that can be purchased. By publicising mass cultural projects to society, social funds are introduced to encourage more social forces, such as social groups organizations or individuals, to participate in the operation of it. In my opinion, the mass culture in this period mainly served economic construction and was influenced by the market. Although it is still government-led, its characteristics and expressions are quite similar to popular culture. As Paul E. Festa described, "mass culture is in an area where state power, the market economy, and the people (especially as consumers) are intertwined and often in conflict with the practical and realizable activities of everyday life" (Festa 2006: 8).

Phase III: Public Cultural Service System Construction Period (post-2005)

Entering the 21st century, China proposed constructing a public cultural service system based on the actual situation of steady economic development and the people's growing demand for culture. The main content of public culture is to protect the fundamental rights and interests of the public to conduct cultural appreciation and participate in public cultural activities. According to my observations in northern Jiangsu, the main structure of public cultural service system are taking the

government as the leader, public finance as the support, and cultural units of public interest as the platform. As an essential part of the public service system, mass culture has the critical task of enriching the cultural life of the public and providing a kind of cultural nourishment. In this period, the free opening of cultural museums (stations) as public cultural facilities and the free provision of their public cultural services are important symbols of its reform. Public welfare, equality and convenience became the core themes of mass culture in this period. The willingness of the public to participate in mass cultural activities on their own has increased markedly, and this, together with the free facilities, spaces and professional guidance provided by the government, has made it possible for the masses to realise their desire to participate in public culture at their doorstep.

The concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage was introduced into China nearly the same time. It not only largely overlaps in time and purpose with the construction phase of the public cultural service system described above, but also covers much of the traditional folk culture and mass art created since the revolutionary war onward. As Gao Bingzhong, an expert on Intangible Cultural Heritage, notes:

> In China, the protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage is not only a national project but also a social movement. It has attracted broad social participation, changed perceptions in the dominant discourse, redefined many long-devalued cultures with positive values, and transformed the relationship between modern social institutions and grassroots culture (Gao 2017: 168).

Based on my fieldwork and the above theoretical statements about mass art found in the scholarly literature cited here, I believe that Intangible Cultural Heritage and mass culture, as the same kind of government-led social and cultural affairs, share the same goal of passing on and promoting excellent traditional folk culture, and urgently need the participation of a wide range of social groups, especially the general public. In the context of vigorously advocating cultural self-confidence, they naturally come together at the practical level, influencing and benefiting each other. However, we also need to realize the difference between the two; Intangible Cultural Heritage protection emphasises a more dynamic protection of material for future sustenance,

development, and change. Meanwhile, mass culture is concerned with the present and with the impact and influence of culture in the here and now. Therefore, in practice, while mass culture and ICH items can be combined they cannot simply be integrated.

Having examined mass culture in the context of different periods and after exploring its connection with Intangible Cultural Heritage in the new era, we need to turn our attention to the management institutions of mass culture at the governmental level. They are charged with conveying, implementing and enforcing mass culture under the guidance of relevant cultural policies at the grassroots. Likewise, they have distinctive developmental characteristics and practical tendencies at different stages of historical development. Combined with my fieldwork, I will use the example of cultural stations; as stated earlier, I have found that a significant proportion of the total number of bearers have many years of experience there and have served as station managers. In addition to their role as cultural bearers, these people also effectively guide, promote and influence the process of Intangible Cultural Heritage practice. This result led me to ponder deeply how, as a grassroots cultural institution, the cultural station connects and guides mass culture. Why do practitioners with a background in cultural stations manage to make up a significant proportion of the ICH transmission team? What are the commons of these people? What is the connection between the grassroots cultural sector and ICH in reforming governance mechanisms in the new era? All these questions will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

5.2 Grassroots Cultural Institutions: Cultural Stations

Same as the mass culture, culture stations have experienced their ups and downs in the turning points of different eras. Before describing the period of transformation of the cultural station and its characteristics, I would first sort out the affiliation and management relationships between the various cultural institutions within the cultural system at that time, so as to better understand the purpose of its establishment, specific functions and institutional features.

The management system of cultural institutions at that time was vertical and top-down. At the top of the cultural system was the Ministry of Culture, established by the Central People's Government, followed by the cultural departments and bureaus established by the provinces and cities, with the cultural centres directly under the Cultural Bureau as its main operational department. The cultural stations are, in turn, the agencies of the cultural centres at the township level, responsible for developing and operating the cultural centres' cultural work at the grassroots level.[77]

Currently, the academic discussions on cultural stations in China mainly focus on subjects such as sociology, politics and public management. Several of the more representative papers have all summarised and classified the different phases of time that have had a profound impact on cultural stations and have provided descriptions and explanations of the different functional characteristics and tendencies of cultural stations (Zhu 2008; Bu 2014; Wang 2017; Li 2015). Through the integration and distillation of the key information in these papers, as well as combining with the different phases of mass culture previously discussed, I have come up with three key periods of transition that cultural stations broadly experience.

Transition I: From Education to Cultural & Political Advocacy

The earliest form of the cultural station can be traced back to the Guangxu Period[78] of the Qing Dynasty, when the provinces set up preaching halls and the counties and districts set up preaching offices. In Wang Zhining's paper "Jiceng wenhuazhan fuwu cunzai de wenti yu duice yanjiu —yi Jiangsu Y xian weili" (Study on the Problems and Countermeasures of Grassroots Cultural Station Services - Taking Jiangsu Y County as an Example), he mentioned more details about this history:

> After 1911, the Qing Government changed the preaching halls into popular lecture halls, popular education halls and social education halls,

[77] China has adopted a three-tier system of administrative divisions at the provincial (municipalities directly under the Central Government and autonomous regions), county (autonomous counties and cities) and township levels.
[78] The Guangxu Emperor was the penultimate emperor of the Qing Dynasty. The Guangxu Period was from 1871.8.14 to 1908.11.14.

> where many learned people gave speeches and analysed the ills of the society; after 1927, the above halls were gradually replaced by the popular education halls. At the same time, the government issued the *Provisional Regulations on Popular Education*, which stipulated that such popular education centres should have the functions of lecture, livelihood, reading and fitness, etc., and their tasks at that time were to eliminate illiteracy, break down superstition, promote hygiene and publicize common sense (Wang 2017: 5).

The first transition of cultural centres took place in 1949, and the dominant factor behind it was the power of the state. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the People's Government, drawing on the experience of the Soviet Union, took over and rebuilt nearly 1,000 popular education centres left behind by the Nationalist Government during the Republic of China era in the liberated areas, naming them cultural centres, and at the same time constructing cultural stations in grassroots level. At this time, the country was in a state of flux, facing different factors of instability both internally and externally, and there was an urgent in need for an institution to publicise the Party's line and policies, to educate the masses about patriotism, and to strengthen and stabilise national security in the field of ideology. The cultural centre (station) was just such an institution.

The book *Wenhua guan (zhan) fuwu yu guanli* (Cultural Museums (Stations) Services and Management), a training material for grassroots cultural teams nationwide written by Wang Quanji, described the central tasks and specific work of cultural stations during this period in this way:

> During this period, cultural stations mainly cooperated with the central work of the Party and the government, and used this as the primary value orientation for cultural propaganda work. Considering the actual situation at that time, when the material base was relatively simple and crude, each place used local conditions. While using wall posters, boards and other forms, the organization included folk music, dance, and opera, including various folk art forms, to the masses to popularise the propaganda of

current affairs, policies, science. The related artistic creations were quite active before the early 1960s. However, during the Cultural Revolution, the cultural station was strongly impacted and once changed to the Mao Zedong Thought Literary and Artistic Propaganda Team, mainly learning to perform model plays[79] and *zhongzi dance.*[80] It was only after 1972 that some places gradually restored the cultural station establishment (Wang 2013: 2-3).

Transition II: From Cultural & Political Advocacy to Culture with Economy Development

In 1978, China's government changed its centre to the economic construction, and the cultural station gradually recovered from the blow of the Cultural Revolution. In 1981, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the document *Guanyu guanxin renminqunzhong wenhuashenghuo de zhishi* (Instructions on caring for the cultural life of the people), which was the first red-headed document[81] issued by the Central Government in the field of cultural construction since the founding of New China. In1982, the government included cultural centres and libraries in every county and cultural stations in every township in *the* Sixth Five-year Plan.[82] Since then, cultural stations have been fully and rapidly restored and developed.

During this period, the central task of cultural stations obviously shifted from political propaganda to economic development and showed market-oriented characteristics, with two policy-oriented events being particularly typical, namely,

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[79] Model plays are the common name for more than twenty stage art works, mainly plays, which were established as "revolutionary model plays" during the Cultural Revolution.
[80] *Zhongzi* dance is a mass dance of praising, used in the square (large venue) or between, popular in the cultural revolutionary period.
[81] Red-headed document is the title of the document in red font, a general reference to the measures, instructions, orders and other non-legislative documents issued by government agencies, has long been an important grip of administrative organs at all levels to implement administrative activities.
[82] The Sixth Five-Year Plan is the national economic and social development plan of the People's Republic of China for 1981 to 1985. It is mainly for planning major national construction projects, productivity distribution and important proportional relationships of the national economy, etc., and prescribing goals and directions for the national economic development in the long term. It is an important part of China's national economic plan and is a long-term plan.

wenhua datai, jingji changxi (culture sets the stage, economy sings the show) and *yiwenfuwen* (supplementing literature with literature). Bu Qingping explained the former one as:

> organizing and carrying out colourful cultural life through local cultural centres (stations), attracting investment and promoting resources and products with local characteristics in the form of "festivals", which, in essence, promote local economic development (Bu 2014:16).

The latter was the paid services and business activities carried out, including:

> the distribution of audio-visual products, video projection, dance halls, karaoke halls, billiard halls, photography, and so on, using their economic returns to compensate for the lack of funds for the development of cultural undertakings at that time (Wang 2013: 5).

Both were derived from economic motives and utilised the form of literature and art. Although their starting point was a little deviated from the purpose of culture serving the masses, they played an essential role in accelerating the construction of local culture, fully mobilising people from all walks of life to excavate cultural materials and using local folk and traditional cultural elements to create and perform literature and art. The specific case in my previous chapters could fully confirm it, the relevant inheritors with cultural station backgrounds also actively participated in the excavation, collation, and creation of local culture during this period. Among them, Xia Alin even started to show his strong pursuit and love for the local fishermen's culture through this series of activities during the early 1980s.

The construction of cultural stations in this period also gradually became more standardized and legalised, operating on the principal premise that culture was compatible with economic development. It was inseparable from a series of regulations and laws promulgated by the state one after another in this field, among which the representative ones were Article 22 of *the Constitution of the People's Republic of China* enacted in 1982 concerning the development of mass cultural

activities; the *Qunzhong yishuguan, wenhuaguan guanli banfa* (Measures for the Administration of Mass Art Galleries and Cultural Centres) and *Wenhuazhan guanli banfa* (Measures for the Administration of Cultural Stations) promulgated by the Ministry of Culture in 1992, and the *Guanyu jiaqiang shehui zhuyi jinshen wenming jianshe ruogan zhongyao wenti de jueyi* (Resolution on Several Important Issues in the Construction of Spiritual Civilization) promulgated in 1996. All of these laid a solid foundation for the next phase of transforming cultural stations into comprehensive cultural stations based on public services.

Transition III: From Culture with Economy Development to Public Cultural Services

As an essential part of the construction of the public cultural service system, in this stage, the focus of cultural stations changed from culture-matching economic development to safeguarding the fundamental cultural rights and interests of the public, providing diverse cultural products and services for the public, and striving to practice the policy of cultural benefits to the people.

At the beginning of the 21st century, along with introducing a series of cultural policies, the development of mass culture ushered in a strategic opportunity period. These cultural policies include the *Gongong wenhua tiyu sheshi tiaoli* (Regulations on Public Cultural and Sports Facilities) signed by the Prime Minister in 2003; *the Guojia shiyiwu wenhuafazhan guihua gangyao* (National Cultural Development Plan for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan) in 2006, and the *Wenhua qiangguo zhanlue fangzhen* (Strategic Guidelines for a Solid Cultural Nation) proposed at the national level in 2011. At the same time, the Central Finance[83] had invested heavily in the renovation and construction of cultural facilities at the grassroots level. The dual institutional and material support strengthened the public cultural service concept of grassroots cultural institutions, including cultural stations, and cleared the way for their transformation into public welfare development. Wang Quanji points out that:

[83] The central finance is that part of the national treasury which is at the direct disposal of the central government.

> The free access of cultural centre (station) mainly includes two aspects: first, the free access to public space and facilities, including multi-functional halls, exhibition halls, publicity galleries, computer and network classrooms, dance rehearsal rooms, and recreation rooms attached to cultural centres (stations). The second refers to the free provision of basic public cultural services appropriate to their functions, including popular cultural and artistic counselling and training, current affairs and legal science education, public interest exhibitions, mass cultural activities, and guidance of mass literary and artistic creation (Wang 2013: 24-25).

In all three of the case studies explored in this thesis, the bearers and /or performing groups conducted their rehearsals and teaching activities in free venues provided by local cultural stations. Most venues were equipped with tables, chairs, sound, air conditioning, and other infrastructure. Some were even set up as rehearsal rooms when newly built, with additional wooden floors, dressing mirrors, and storage rooms. In addition, the cultural stations brought in instructors with professional backgrounds to provide free training for them regularly.

Recontextualization of the findings from the previous section reveals that the three transitional periods of cultural stations as grassroots cultural institutions basically coincide with the three social development stages of mass culture. The above discussion combined with my field examples, the characteristics of cultural stations can be briefly summarized:

a. Cultural stations have always been at the forefront of implementing grassroots cultural policies.
b. Cultural stations have always been closely connected to the masses, whether for political, economic, or social public service purposes.
c. The cultural performances of the masses have always been an important expression of the output, and these performances are based on the local folk and traditional culture.

Based on these characteristics of cultural stations, it is worthwhile to re-examine the common features of those practitioners of cultural stations, especially those directors/backbones who started working in the 1960s and 1970s that appeared in my fieldwork:

a. They have an excellent ability to understand, interpret, and implement cultural policies. The more outstanding cultural station managers can perceive policy trends, seize opportunities for local cultural development, and have a certain degree of cultural foresight. It is especially critical and evident in the development of the fishermen's *haozi* by Xia Alin and Lu Jiayou.
b. They are often born and raised in the local area. They are familiar with the grassroots situation and have a natural affinity for local culture. They can complete basic cultural census tasks independently and have a certain level of writing and presentation skills.
c. They have solid business skills and have accumulated artistic expertise such as composing, lyric writing, singing and dance choreography., which are commonly used in mass literature and arts, in addition to their respective literary expertise.
d. They are good at socialising and communicating, and are adept at balancing the interests of all parties and handling conflicts. They also have strong organisational and mediation skills.

Apart from that, the culture-bearers of my thesis have a similar background; they choose to work in cultural stations, either out of the continuation of their fathers' work or because of their outstanding literary and artistic talents being selected. As a result, they invariably show pride and satisfaction when talking about the experience. At the same time, this experience is also beneficial and influential for them, both in their position as cultural inheritors and their supporting role in ICH work.

5.3 Grassroots Cultural Sector and Intangible Cultural Heritage

In June 2005, based on successful implementation of the first large-scale national survey of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and the mechanism for surveying it at the national, provincial, municipal and county levels that has been formed and established on this basis. The Intangible Cultural Heritage has officially entered the vision of the grass-roots cultural sectors and has become an important part of their regular work. This is clearly stipulated in the *Xiangzhen zonghe wenhuazhan guanli banfa* (Measures for the Administration of Comprehensive Cultural Stations in Townships), issued by the Ministry of Culture in 2009, namely, the tasks of cultural stations include collecting and organising Intangible Cultural Heritage under the guidance of county-level cultural, administrative departments, carrying out census, display and publicity activities of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and guiding inheritors to carry out transmission and practice activities. In addition, in terms of specific institution building, with the establishment of the Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the China Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Centre at the national level, provinces and cities have set up intangible heritage departments and intangible heritage protection centres in provincial and municipal cultural departments correspondingly. As the administrative end of the county-level units, although there is a more obvious lag, corresponding institutions for Intangible Cultural Heritage protection were also established one after another around 2015.

According to the general requirements of the reform of the Party and state institutions proposed by the CPC Central Committee , the Jiangsu Provincial Party Committee issued the *Jiangsusheng jigou gaige fang'an* (Institutional Reform Programme of Jiangsu Province) and the *Zhonggong Jiangsu shengwei guanyu shixian jigou gaige de zongti yijian* (General Opinions of the CPC Jiangsu Provincial Party Committee on Municipal and County Institutional Reform) in the second half of 2018. Each prefecture-level city has also formulated corresponding reform programmes following it. As of the first half of 2019, all counties (cities and districts) in Jiangsu have basically completed the tasks of institutional reform.

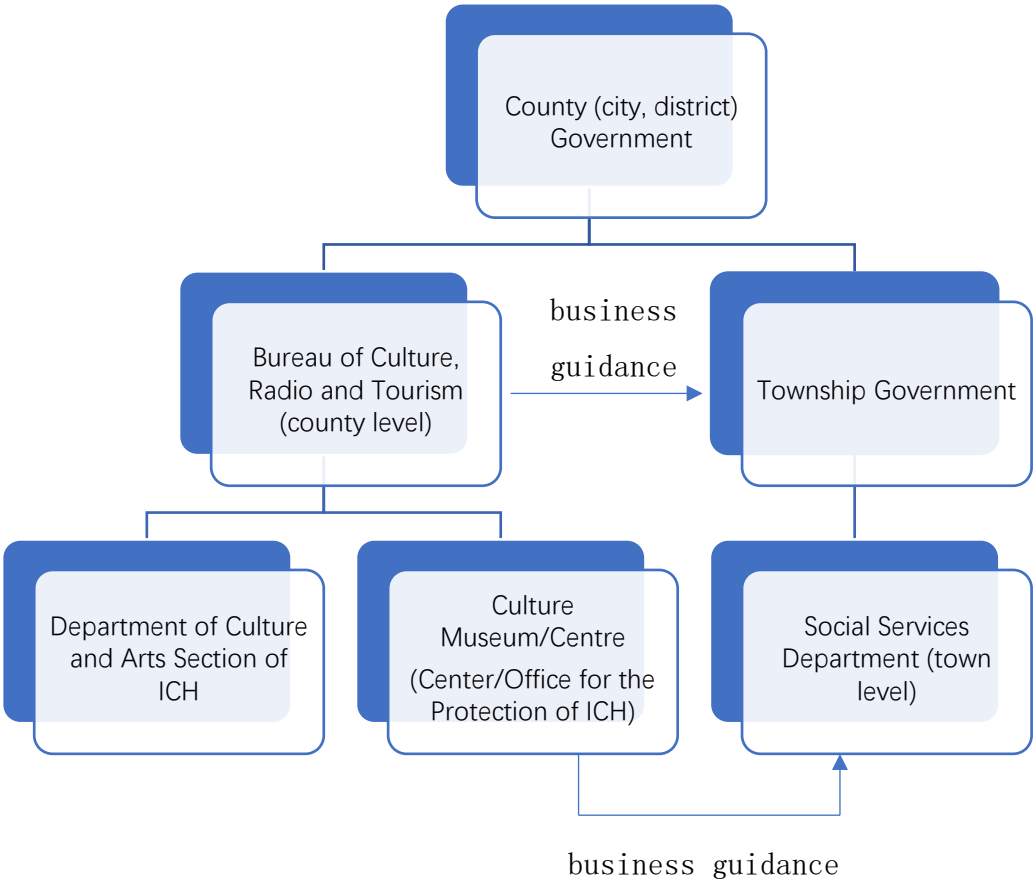
The current round of government institutional reform has made targeted streamlining of the grassroots cultural sector. Since the policy occurred during my fieldwork, I also paid special attention to the implementation of the policy when I visited the grassroots cultural sectors. In the course of the interview with the related people in charge, I was surprised to find that the streamlined grassroots cultural departments and local ICH institutions were linked in many ways in terms of business dealings and mandate implementation. Most notably in that the heads of departments or key managers of both were often the same people. In what follows, I will illustrate the close link between the two at the practical level through texts, diagrams and interview transcripts in the context of my fieldwork results.

After the current round of institutional reform, the Bureau of Culture, Radio, Film and Television, Press and Publication and the Tourism Bureau, which is a public institution with administrative functions, will no longer be retained at the county (district) level. The reorganised Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism (Abbreviated as Cultural, Broadcasting and Tourism Bureau) will replace them, serve as a government department and be responsible for managing cultural affairs in the region, includes the local Intangible Cultural Heritage. In terms of specific sectoral establishments, The Bureau of Culture, Broadcasting and Tourism generally has a culture and art department within. Among them, most have added an Intangible Cultural Heritage section, mainly responsible for formulating regulations related to Intangible Cultural Heritage in the region. In addition, each region also has an executive body for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, mainly responsible for the enforcement of specific policies and regulations.

According to my fieldwork, there are two models of the executive body of ICH in the areas covered in this paper: one is to set up a centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage protection, which is subordinate to the cultural museum, a direct unit of the cultural, radio and television bureau. The director of the cultural museum as the director and a deputy director in charge of specific Intangible Cultural Heritage protection work. The other is to set up an office for Intangible Cultural Heritage protection under the cultural museum. At the sub-county town level, in newly established social affairs bureaus that retain the names of cultural stations, a dedicated

person is deemed responsible for the protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage.[84] Their relationship diagrams (see Figure 5.1) are as follows:

Figure 5.1: Organisational Chart of Local Cultural Departments and ICH



[84] In fact, at the national level, ICH institutions and cultural departments belong to different systems. Although they have business dealings, they are relatively independent, each with a corresponding head and dedicated staff. Theoretically, this should be the case at the grassroots level as well; however, due to the realities of limited staffing and resources at the grassroots level, this is not always the case. As discussed earlier, the county level would establish dedicated Intangible Cultural Heritage institutions, but they are often integrated into the relevant cultural departments for integrated management. In addition the person in charge is either the current head of the corresponding cultural department directly, or an operational cadre with a background in mass culture is assigned to the post. At the town level, Intangible Cultural Heritage and mass culture affairs are generally unified and transferred to the grassroots integrated cultural stations or social affairs bureaus for management. Therefore, mass culture, local cultural departments, and Intangible Cultural Heritage have a profound intersection at the grassroots practical management level based on the guidance of mechanisms.

As a supplementary material to the above discourse, I collected the assessment rule of the local cultural station related to cultural work (2015) (see Figure 5.2) while I was in the fieldwork in Jianggang Town, as follows:



2015年农村文化工作考核细则

考核内容	考核标准	分值
★文化站建设	建有单独设置，建筑面积不低于500平方米的综合文化站，活动项目6个以上，开放时间每周42小时以上（★一票否决项）。其中图书馆分馆正常运行（全年图书借阅量不少于1.8万次）占4分，建成10台电脑以上的电子阅览室并正常运行占4分。按照江苏省公共文化服务体系示范区验收细则要求，单独设置是指文化站没有设在政府办公用房内；如与乡镇（街道）政府办公楼使用同一场地的，需独立成区，并设有专用出入口。	15
村（社区）综合公共文化服务中心建设	100%的行政村（社区）建有面积不低于50平方米综合公共文化服务中心得5分。每个镇建成2个100平方米以上的综合公共文化服务中心得5分。（需提供数据一览表包括：地址、面积、服务人口、服务项目、服务点（电子阅览室）面积和设备等资料）	10
文化示范区工作	配合组织省公共文化服务体系示范区创建检查验收。	5
队伍建设	文广中心实有在编专职工作人员和实有站口派工作人员不少于2人。	2
公共活动	每年举办大型文化活动2次，单项文体活动8次以上得满分，大型活动每次2分，单项活动每次0.5分。（需提供一览表、方案、时间、地点、活动照片等资料）。	8
重点群众文化合作社原创节目	全年每镇创作6个节目剧本（歌曲），每个0.5分（需提供当年新创作的剧本或歌曲）。	3
送戏到村	利用本镇群众文化合作社每年送戏下乡每村1场，完成演出场次得6分。每少1场扣0.5分。（需提供一览表包括时间、地点、内容、演出现场照片等资料）配合市歌舞团送戏下村村村到3分，每少1场扣0.5分。	9
参加市级汇演、调演	输送优秀文艺节目参加全市“哈哈周末”调演、巡演，每个1分。同一节目，不重复加分，满分4分。参加全市汇演、调演，得金奖6分，银奖4分，铜奖2分。不重复计分，不参加不得分。	10
展示推广	宣传推广本镇文化工作，在东台市、盐城市、江苏省、国家级媒体宣传推广的分别得2分、4分、6分、8分。不重复计分，满分为8分。	8
经费投入	镇财政每年有文化经费投入且逐年递增得满分。	5
非遗工作	做好非物质文化遗产知识及相关法律法规的宣传2分；组织申报当地非物质文化遗产项目和代表性传承人1分；为本地的非物质文化遗产项目的传承传播提供必要条件1分；组织或参加本镇、市级以上民俗文化活动1分。	5
文化遗产保护	可移动文物普查数据录入及审核是否按要求完成3分；不可移动文物包括文保单位及控制点，每月要对不可移动文物进行安全巡查，并有检查记录及图片等资料4分；《文物法》及相关法规知识宣传普及，提供相关宣教活动的图片资料，上半年不少于3次3分。	10
全民阅读和农家书屋提升工程	有专职或兼职的书屋管理人员（[illegible]）无吸烟等不文明行为0.5分；书籍分类[illegible]分；各种记载准确无误1分；书屋每周开放不少于五天，具体开放时间应对外公告2分；积极参加培训活动和创建工作2分。支持和配合图书馆总分馆建设2分；踊跃参加读书征文、演讲比赛等各类活动1分。	10
附加项	文化工作获得盐城市级（含部门）奖励加5分，获利省级（含部门）奖励加10分。（需提供文件或证书）	
总分		100

Figure 5.2 Rule for the Assessment of Rural Cultural Work in 2015, 18 December 2020, in Jianggang Cultural Station, photo taken by Li Weiyang.

The rule covers a total of fourteen assessment items, including cultural station construction, village (community) integrated public cultural service centre construction, cultural demonstration area work, team building, public activities, key mass cultural cooperatives' original programmes, sending opera to the countryside, participation in the municipal repertoire, tuning, display and promotion, funding, Intangible Cultural Heritage work, cultural heritage protection, a national reading and rural bookstore upgrading project, out of a total of 100 points. From this rule, it can be seen that the tasks of grass-roots cultural stations are very complicated, and that the work of station managers, apart from Intangible Cultural Heritage, is still generally dominated by mass cultural activities. Therefore, presenting Intangible Cultural Heritage in the form of mass culture can substantially ease the pressure of grass-roots appraisal and improve work efficiency to a certain extent.

5.3.1 Discussion of Interviews with People in the Grassroots Culture or Intangible Cultural Heritage Sector

The following is a discussion of the interviews I conducted with the heads of grassroots cultural departments and Intangible Cultural Heritage institutions. The interviews focus on the common questions that encompass the problems, challenges, and solutions that they have experienced at different stages of their ICH practices. Due to being part of the common geographical area of northern Jiangsu, these cultural departments and ICH institutions do not differ much in terms of staffing, functional attributes, and policy implementation. so their answers are relatively similar when faced with common questions, especially those that address the mechanism level. Therefore, considering the balance between different regions and projects, I will select and present the more representative and complete responses in the interview transcripts.

Q: The staff composition of the relevant cultural departments and Intangible Cultural Heritage institutions, the distribution of responsibilities and an overview of the region's overall development of ICH.

Wang Qingchen (Executive Deputy Director of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Centre of Dongtai City):

> I first joined the Arts and Culture Section in Cultural Affairs Bureau, which had two primary responsibilities at that time: mass arts and intangible heritage protection. The bureau mentioned the idea of an independent ICH section around 2006 or 07 (roughly the same time as the first batch of national ICH lists). It was not until the reform of the Cultural Bureau in 2018 that the ICH section was formally established independently in 2019. In 2020, with a new round of institutional and organizational reforms, cultural heritage (tangible heritage) was merged with ICH to create the current Cultural Heritage Section. The section has

four colleagues, including myself, two in charge of ICH work and two in charge of heritage work. Another colleague and I had worked at the Municipal Culture Museum before taking charge of ICH matters. All had professional backgrounds in mass culture. There is no particular division of responsibilities between the two of us, as we both do ICH-related work, including planning ICH exhibitions (performances), submitting ICH submissions (usually from the municipal to the provincial level), accepting project applications from the grassroots, organizing experts and scholars to evaluate municipal ICH projects, and assisting in the distribution of financial subsidies for the inheritors.

Dongtai's ICH is still relatively fruitful, having successfully declared more than 20 projects at national, provincial and municipal levels, ranking relatively high among our sister units, thanks to our forward-looking plans and arrangements. For example, our parent administrative unit, Yancheng City, has just passed the fifth batch of the municipal-level Intangible Cultural Heritage list. In contrast, we have completed the screening and review of the sixth batch of representative Intangible Cultural Heritage projects in Dongtai City. This planning has left us more space and time for revision and improvement. It has to some extent, ensured the quality of our selected projects and their adoption rate (Wang Qingchen, personal interview, 18 December 2020).

Gao Fei (Deputy Director, Nantong Tongzhou District Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre):

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre in Tongzhou was established in 2014, formerly the Ethnic Folk Culture Centre (established in 2008). At present, only one person is responsible for the substantive work. The tasks that need to be completed each year include the declaration and recommendation of relevant ICH projects and relevant inheritors, the organisation of training for appropriate ICH personnel, the organisation of suitable booths and exhibitions, the verification and distribution of

> relevant auxiliary funds, etc. Tongzhou District is currently rich in Nantong's ICH achievements, with more than twenty representative ICH projects, including national, provincial and municipal levels, involving six significant categories, ranking among the top (about two or three) at the district (county or city) level (Gao Fei, personal interview, 28 December 2020).

Q: Key time points in the development of ICH in the city (county or district), the basis for declaration and changes in declaration trends in recent years.

Shen Yang (Director of the Office of Rudong County Integrated Media Centre; Director of Nantong Folk Literature Heritage Protection Office, Member of Rudong County Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Expert Committee):

> The ICH work started in Rudong County around 2006, just as the first national ICH list was announced. The regular operation of the ICH work is also the last five years, around 2015. The declaration of relevant projects and inheritors was based on the systematic census and inventory work carried out in 2008 for ethnic and folk cultural resources throughout the county. Currently, the three people responsible for visiting and verifying ICH matters in Rudong County are me, the director of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre, Chen, and the director of the Cultural Museum, Ding. In total, we visited people in the townships 5-6 times in 2019.
>
> Regarding the declaration of projects, it mainly depends on mobilizing. However, from 2020 onwards, some people have also taken the initiative to request applications. On the one hand, this is thanks to years of continuous work on ICH. However, the economic element behind it cannot be ignored (Shen Yang, personal interview, 24 December 2020).

Yang Lu (Deputy director of Jinhu County Culture Museum and the vice chairman of Jinhu County Dancers Association):

> The county set up a centre for protecting Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2005 and formally launched the relevant ICH work in 2006; its regular operation must have been in 2014 and 15. The basis for the declaration of projects and inheritors comes mainly from the census and mapping exercise conducted in the county in 2008. The Minqiao *paifu* was also found in that census. The declaration of ICH is basically dependent on our mobilization and requests. In the last two years, some people have started to ask for declarations on their initiative. However, the fact is that our work does not get any easier as people come forward to apply. As the requirements for declaration and approval are getting stricter every year, it is good to have 1-2 projects approved yearly (Yang Lu, personal interview, 24 January 2021).

Q: Assessment requirements and criteria for ICH projects and inheritors in the city (county or district).

Shen Yang (Director of the Office of Rudong County Integrated Media Centre; Director of Nantong Folk Literature Heritage Protection Office, Member of Rudong County Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Expert Committee)

> The Rudong County Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre appointed me as an assessor in 2011. My main responsibility is to assess and identify projects and inheritors at the municipal level. The criteria for assessment are mainly based on the local and scarce nature of the project, with particular priority given to rescuing cultural matters that are on the verge of extinction. Many productive projects are self-conscious from an economic point of view, so we deliberately slow down the process of declaring these projects. As for the bearers, in addition to the localities and scarcities, the purity of their identity is also taken into account, i.e. they receive as little influence as possible from external factors (Shen Yang, personal interview, 24 December 2020).

Yang Lu (Deputy director of Jinhu County Culture Museum and the vice chairman of Jinhu County Dancers Association)

> I am a dance choreographer, so I am always invited to be part of the assessment for all ICH dance projects in the county. My personal assessment criteria are threefold:

a. The project or the inheritor should have a clear and complete transmission lineage, usually over three generations.
b. The project should be culturally unique to the region. If a similar project has already been successfully declared in a neighbouring county or city, there is little point in declaring it again.
c. The emphasis is on local affiliation, mainly on the identity of the inheritor, i.e., a local native-born resident.

> In our past visits, we have come across good projects, but the holder is an outsider, which means that it is something foreign, and we do not consider such cases (Yang Lu, personal interview, 24 January 2021).

Q: Appraisal work and incentives for successfully declared ICH inheritors.

Wang Qingchen (Executive Deputy Director of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Centre of Dongtai City):

> The government gives the national-level inheritors here an annual subsidy of 15,000 yuan, and 10,000 yuan at the provincial level. In contrast, the municipal level does not yet have any financial assistance. We have submitted proposals to the relevant authorities for municipal subsidies, and the government is actively drafting proposals. Therefore, at this stage, the relevant appraisal work in Dongtai is limited to national and provincial inheritors. The specific audit method is based on the inheritors' self-examination, including the completion of performance evaluation forms

> and the declaration of funds for the learning and teaching subsidy, etc. After submission, the relevant departments will visit and verify. Each year, specialized funds are disbursed at the end, so the self-examination tasks would be required to complete in March or April of that year (Wang Qingchen, personal interview, 18 December 2020).

Yang Lu (Deputy director of Jinhu County Culture Museum and the vice chairman of Jinhu County Dancers Association):

> Our appraisal work is usually carried out in August and September each year, mainly based on the documents issued by the higher level of government as the basis for implementation. It is carried out using the inheritors filling in their own forms, supplemented by visits by the relevant staff to verify them. The form focuses on the heritage activities the inheritors do during the year and the related implementation effects. The local cultural curator usually scores it after a comprehensive understanding. Each year, the top 10% of inheritors are selected based on the corresponding scores, which are considered excellent. This selection is only made at the municipal level. The selected inheritors could receive a subsidy of 2,500 yuan from the local government, as opposed to 1,800 yuan given to ordinary inheritors (Yang Lu, personal interview, 24 January 2021).

Yang was kind enough to show me the forms they use for scoring and awarding. It seemed to me that this form and its scoring criteria would be useful to other regions in vetting inheritors and their achievements, the full content of which will be presented in the appendix.

Shi Huangjie (Deputy Director of Qidong Municipal Bureau of Culture, Broadcasting and Tourism; Director of Nantong Musicians Association)

> Qidong has a special guidance document for the appraisal work and specific subsidies and rewards related to Intangible Cultural Heritage. The

government has invested heavily in this area, and the corresponding assessment rules are also stringent and standardized. In 2018, the Office of the Municipal Party Committee and the Office of the Municipal Government jointly issued *Guanyu jiaqiang quanshi xuanchuan wenhua rencai duiwu jianshe shishi fang'an de tongzhi* (A Notice on the Implementation Plan for Strengthening the Construction of the City's Propaganda and Cultural Talent Team), in which 4,000, 2,000 and 1,000 RMB per month are given to each person who is recognized as a national, provincial and Nantong-level ICH inheritor, and 100,000, 50,000 and 30,000 RMB support funding are given to those who are named as national, provincial and Nantong-level ICH inheritance bases respectively. However, This money does not include the special funding for inheritors provided by the national and provincial governments. In response to this document, we formulated and issued the *Qidongshi 2009 feiwuzhi wenhua yichan chuanchengren pingding tongzhi xize* (*Notice Rules for the Assessment of the Inheritors of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Qidong City "for Trial Implementation"*) in 2019. Every quarter we will organize the corresponding personnel to conduct the examination and review. Among them, it is worth noting that the bearers of the performance category must be on stage to perform; the bearers of the skills category are required to demonstrate their craftsmanship. Take the Lüsi fishermen's *haozi* as an example; the Xiajiaban is currently passed down to the fourth generation. When the assessment process began in 2019, the fourth generation of the Xia family made a special trip back from Wuxi to perform on stage and be assessed and graded. Since the government has invested so much money to do this, we must ensure that every penny is spent practically and properly (Shi Huangjie, personal interview, 30 December 2020).

I was fortunate to have access to the original government copy of the relevant rules for 2019 with the help of Director Shi. Compared to other local drafts, which are still being prepared, Qidong City has put the assessment and incentive work for ICH into practice. Like the review of scoring forms developed by the Jinhu Cultural

Centre, this guideline of Qidong would be also inspired to other regions' related ICH work, the full content of which will be presented in the Appendix.

The above interview transcripts almost cover the regions of my fieldwork. They are representative and valuable for the conservation and development of ICH under the guidance of grassroots cultural departments, especially the actual state of affairs after more than ten years of ICH regular work in the past. Integrating similar information from the interviews, I have the following summary and reflections on the facts and common characteristics reflected therein:

a. There is indeed a general situation of overlapping management personnel in the relevant cultural departments and Intangible Cultural Heritage institutions at the grassroots level. It also reaffirms the reality of the shortage of staff and lack of professionalism at the grassroots level. However, years of policy training and long-term front-line practical experience compensate for the problem to a certain extent. The interviewed personnel show the characteristics of the grassroots mechanism of multi-tasking and multi-posting both from their biographical background and practical operation.

b. The ICH protection work in the relevant regions basically started in 2006, coinciding with the announcement of the first-large nationwide census ICH list. Regular operation (grassroots level) of ICH commenced in around 2015, which is nearly ten years behind the time when its ICH was carried out, indicating the difficulty and complexity of administrative units, which are at the end of the four-level inventory system, in maintaining the smooth operation of Intangible Cultural Heritage work. In terms of the trend of declaration in the regions involved, it is obvious that in recent years there has been a shift from passive requests by government mobilisation to active applications by community residents. This change also corresponds to the community participation and mass-led conservation mindset emphasised today, 20 years after the development of ICH. While discovering the progress and

achievements, I also noticed when compiling the interview transcripts that most of the projects actively applied by community residents mainly belong to the production techniques categories; in other words, most of these projects have substantial economic effects. The non-productive performance projects, on the other hand, still depend on mobilisation requests by the government. Local expert committees mainly carry out the selection of projects and inheritors in the relevant regions to protect ICH. Most of these judges are front-line cultural systems and have witnessed and experienced the rise, fall, and development of many traditional cultural things. The interviews clearly show that the evaluation criteria vary slightly in different places. However, considering its emergency, they all take precedence over selecting non-productive projects, emphasizing the selected projects' uniqueness, localness and scarcity.

c. The assessment and reward situation in the relevant regions has not yet formed a universal system. Significant differences exist between regions, especially in the reward and subsidy policy for inheritors at the municipal level, which has yet to be improved. However, it is encouraging to note that the development of ICH has now shifted from the early emphasis on the declaration and comparison of results to the operational development stage of emphasis on assessment and attention to maintenance in the relevant regions.

In the next section, I will focus on the mass art troupes, a vital and popularized tool and platform for the grassroots cultural sector to carry out mass cultural activities and promote ICH. As in the previous section, I will first briefly describe the central tasks and roles of mass art groups in the context of different eras; secondly, I will summarize the existing types, sizes, and characteristics of mass art groups in the light of the specific field content, and focus on the phenomenon of *dama* in art groups, which is closely related to gender dominance, as a way to explore the trend of gender transformation in the transmission, dissemination and teaching of fishermen's culture in the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

5.4 Mass Art Group

As amateur arts groups established mainly by the general public, mass art groups are closely related to the two transformations mentioned in the case summary at the beginning of this chapter - the transformation of folk culture from its everyday state to stage art and the transformation of stage art to popular culture. Combined with the theoretical overviews of mass culture and cultural centres in the previous section, mass art groups can be traced back earlier to the literary propaganda teams of the revolutionary war years, at that time, they were subordinate to the government and mainly focused on the propaganda of current affairs. The participants were mostly literary cadres with professional backgrounds. In the era of economic development, mass art troupes undertook many literary and artistic performances to serve local economic development. In the new period of the development and establishment of the public cultural service system, the mass art troupes have assumed more of a role in meeting the daily cultural needs of the people and providing them with timely services. Most of the mass art troupes highlighted by me in the previous section formed, developed and matured during this period. These art troupes are just as Yang Jun described in his Master's Thesis "Qunzhong wenhua tuandui de zhengfu guanli moshi yanjiu—yi fengxianqu nanqiaozhen wili" (Research on the Government Management Mode of Mass Cultural Teams--Taking Nanqiao Town, Fengxian District as an Example):

> they are mainly located in the rural and urban communities, and they are a kind of spontaneously formed, non-profit-making organization engaged in the act of mass cultural and entertainment production and consumption (Yang 2014:7).

In most of the mass art troupes, there are groups of three to five friends in a single cultural form, such as square dances and bugle performance teams, as well as comprehensive amateur arts and cultural groups of twenty, thirty, or to fifty people, which can independently undertake a part of the local demand for cultural and artistic

performances, and carry out performances including dances, local operas, singing, and sketches and other forms of performances.

The mass art groups covered in the specific field cases in the previous chapters, include the Jianggang *Zhenhaitian* Art Cooperative led by Lu Jiayou, the Jinhu *Jinhehua* Art Group led by Yu Xiangping, the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Folk Art Group led by Wang Chunzhu, the Banqiao Grassroots Art Group established in Sihong, and the various square dance teams established in Hongze. I found that most of the above-mentioned mass art groups have gone through three stages of development:

a. The spontaneous stage, in which the groups are mainly composed of acquaintances. Participants focus on physical exercise and social interaction, there is a high mobility of personnel. Most of their activities occur in the morning and evening and lack systematic training and guidance, with members participating mainly for self-entertainment.

b. The semi-institutional stage, when the personnel are more established, participants have more willingness to perform. They have a relatively fixed rehearsal space and time and have also begun to arrange and receive professional training and guidance. They develop performance plans and try to interface with government cultural departments to get performance opportunities while performing cultural services.

c. The institutionalisation stage. Regarding the embodiment of the system, Gao Jing's interpretation is that:

> the institutionalisation of folk organizations has become the norm nowadays. Many have taken the initiative to be brought under the government's jurisdiction and seek institutionalized shelter, one of the most direct ways is to register officially through the civil affairs department (Gao 2017: 6).

In this way, most mass art groups gain official and legal recognition and

support thus gaining more formal opportunities to present and perform. Wang Quanji has also mentioned that:

> cultural museums (stations) in their own cultural and artistic coaching and training, public service cultural performances and exhibitions, cultural facilities open to the public and other public cultural services, but also for professional arts groups or private arts groups with certain artistic qualifications, in the name of the government to tender for the procurement of cultural and artistic performances (Wang 2013: 28).

> The private art groups here also included the mass art group registered through the civil affairs department. The legitimacy obtained in this way allows, in Deng Nianhua's view, "the group in question to be more normative and socially appropriate, i.e., to recognize a subject or action as desirable, legitimate, or appropriate" (Deng 2011: 93). At this stage, the mass art group has its own distinct organisational structure, with more apparent requirements and standards for rehearsals, performances and even subsidies for carriage afterwards. They are also equipped with costumes, props and even sound facilities and have a certain influence in the local area, being an important part of the local government's cultural department's mass cultural services.

Although mass art groups show a certain degree of autonomy in composition, performance format and organisational management, they are still different from non-governmental organisations. To sum up, mass art groups have maintained close ties with the government, especially local cultural departments, at all stages of their development. In this regard, Zou Haoping summarises that:

> the potential influence of the government on such arts groups is reflected in the fact that the government controls most of the activity venues available for folk associations and has the dominant power to allocate priority to the associations it wants; the government can also influence the associations' popularity through media campaigns and other means, thus

affecting their social viability and ability to obtain resources (Zou 2010: 118).

By comparing the internal structure of these mass art troupes against my case-studies, I found that except for the Hongze Lake *Yugu* Art Troupe, which still maintains its all-male, fishermen-only, profit-oriented character due to the requirements of its original ritual, the other mass art troupes have no special requirements for the background, age, gender, or talents of the participants. These mass art troupes were mostly small to medium-sized, with their membership ranging from a dozen to more than fifty. Most of the members are residents, mainly retired or near-retired middle-aged and elderly people, whose occupations are primarily housewives, workers, craftsmen, self-employed, fishermen, and generally have a low level of education. These mass art groups provide cultural services to the masses, including the local fishermen community, focusing on public interest performances and also can make some economic gains. Although there are no restrictions or requirements on the gender of participants in these art groups, I found during the visit that the proportion of female members in the art groups was significantly higher than that of male members, especially in large and medium-sized or certain types of (e.g., square dance) mass art groups. This result cannot help but make me think deeply. Whether on fishermen's *haozi, paifu* or *yugu*, they were dominated by absolute male power in the traditional context of fishermen's culture. Women are the party to be avoided and ignored, and even their presence in certain occasions or ritual steps is seen as a symbol of misfortune. Which leads me to wonder: why is it that through the medium of mass art groups, female participants become are accepted, recognised, and even encouraged to participate, learn, and share these cultural details?

I think there are two main reasons:

The first is the transformation of the functionality of fishermen's culture. My research deals with fishermen's *haozi*, *paifu* and *yugu*. Although they have always balanced utility and artistry since their creation, in traditional contexts, people are still accustomed to placing them in a physical environment, viewing them purely as labour and ritual, and adhering strictly to the relevant rules of transmission and

dissemination. However, with the rapid development of technology and the economy, the material carriers to which these cultures are attached are eliminated. Their single functionality as labour and rituals is bound to be significantly weakened. Then their artistry will be revealed, just as Zhang Boyu mentioned as an example of the labour *haozi* in his article "Yinyue feiwuzhiwenhuayichan de yuanyang baohu yu fazhan baohu" (Preservation in Situ and Developmental Conservation of Musical Intangible Cultural Heritage):

> when functional music loses its function due to the change of material carriers and social environment, the artistic recreation of its musicality will become a new way to perpetuate its cultural life (Zhang 2015: 46).

Therefore, the fishermen's *haozi*, *paifu*, and *yugu* that mass art groups in the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage are exposed to are already an art form that has been taken out of the traditional context and integrated into new creations, breaking down the invisible gender barriers that have long been set up in the fishermen's culture, and based on which it is reasonable and welcome for the female members to participate in, understand and learn from the art forms.

Secondly, the wide participation of women is closely related to the mass art groups and the content of the mass cultural activities they promote. As an essential means for grassroots cultural departments to promote and popularize mass culture, mass art troupes naturally hope to be accepted, recognized by a wider and larger group of people. And in the long term practice, the relevant personnel have found that songs and dances have always been among the most effective forms of art, so the mass art troupes and their mass cultural activities in most cases are mainly songs and dances. Women always participate in the performance of songs and dances, which is reflected in my specific cases of fishermen's *haozi* and *yugu.* In addition, during my visits, I found that among the female members, especially middle-aged and old-aged women have the highest proportion of participation, and they not only occupy the absolute numerical advantage but also take the lead in terms of loyalty, persistence, and motivation for participation. I believe all these are related to the *dama* phenomenon that has continued to explode in recent years. The article co-authored by

York, Shen and Yang refers to the meaning of *dama* in the traditional context, which is that "*ma* in *dama* means mother in Chinese and that all words related to ma usually indicate a certain age and gender, i.e., a woman between 40 and 60 years old" (York, Shen & Yang 2020: 563). On the other hand, Tian Shi and Ching Lin Pang refer to the stereotypical image of *dama*, namely "*Dama*, a Chinese woman between fifty and sixty, mostly retired, often described as having limited mobility and being confined to the space between the kitchen and the TV room" (Shi, Pang 2022:67). *Dama* appeared as an exclusive term on social media in 2013, initially in connection with the gold rush and later associated with other economic behaviours such as buying houses and investing. The fact that *dama* is at the centre of the phenomenal discussion is inseparable from the prevalence of square dancing in China in recent years. Seetoo, Zou gave a full explanation of the square dance:

> it is public square dancing, totally different from the type of American folk dance with the same name. In Chinese cities and the countryside, as long as it is not raining every morning and evening, groups of mostly middle-aged and elderly women dance together in the open air. Accompanied by recorded music, they dance in park squares, in lots outside buildings and even on the slightly wider corners of sidewalks-basically in whatever outdoor space is empty, flat, and accessible (Seetoo, Zou 2016: 22).

The fervent pursuit of square dancing has also led to the increasing presence of older women in similar collective cultural activities becoming the absolute mainstay of mass art groups. In fact, in addition, to having a roughly fixed age range, *dama* has long since ceased to be a fringe group that spends all day around the kitchen, torn between their children and husbands. As Qi Li notes,

> most of China's *dama* were born in the 1950s and 1960s; they may come from any occupation and have different consumption levels, from senior executives, regular workers, and avid shoppers to traditional Chinese women who are thrifty and frugal (Li 2016: 800).

While they are primarily care-givers, they live out their later years during a period of relative stability, enjoying the security of their pensions, and the vigorous development of public cultural services. Therefore, the *dama* group shows strong self-awareness and self-seeking, and personal enjoyment, accessible experience and self-expression are their important characteristics, which make them actively participate in the activities and performances of the mass art troupes, not only quietly influencing and changing the age structure and gender distribution of the groups that receive the various types of cultures exported through this platform, but also making them become the potential recipients and inheritors of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in a quiet manner.[85]

Conclusion

This chapter is generally based on the first three chapters of the fieldwork. My research focuses on the inheritance and development of fishermen's culture in the context of ICH, so it is inevitable that I need to deal with many government personnel. In the process of going down to the grassroots, I found that in addition to the inheritors of the pure fishermen's identity, the rest of the key players are essentially centred around the dual identities of grassroots mass culture and ICH and the relationship between the two is much closer on a practical level than I had imagined. On this point in this chapter I have been able to show through a lot of interviews, relevant data, thesis ideas and graphs. Thus, at the outset, I have dispelled the stereotype that to study Intangible Cultural Heritage, one must find and tap into its impacts in tourism, science and technology and education. In my opinion, it is precisely because both Intangible Cultural Heritage and mass art have the solid attribute of being guided and controlled by the government that the effects and

[85] This is reflected in the mass art groups involved in all three of my projects. In the fishermen's *haozi* project, in the *Zhenhaitian* Arts Cooperative led by Lu Jiayou, not only is the ratio of male to female participants close to the same, but among the females there is also a predominance of middle and elderly people, who, in the several years of study and performance, have mastered the performance skills of the fishermen's *haozi*. In the *paifu* program, the *Jinhehua* Mass Art Troupe led by Yu Xiangping, although the inheritor Master Zhang dominated the process of the program, most of the actors who perform the role of fishermen in conjunction with Zhang's performances are middle-aged and elderly women. Sheng Chengmei, one of the inheritors of the Hongze Lake *yugu* program, is herself a middle-aged and elderly woman, and the square dance teams she instructed and taught were almost exclusively middle-aged and elderly women groups.

impacts produced by the combination of the two are more long-lasting and solid, and this is particularly evident at a time when normality has just been restored. Of course, whether the combination of mass culture and ICH can be universally applied to every ICH project needs to be studied and analysed over a long period of time and in a large number and diverse examples before reliable result can be obtained to support it.

Appendix

Appendix 1:

Jinhu Municipal Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative Inheritor Transmission Activities Assessment Form

Project name

Basic information about the inheritor(s)	Name		Gender	
	Ethnic group		Date of Birth	
	Home address			
	Postal code			
	Contact details			

Implementation of transmission activities during the year

Assessment contents	Value of a score	Completion	Score	Remarks
Leading apprentices to teach the art and training newcomers. (record the gender, age, duration of practice and mastery of the core skills of the project)	≦ 20			
Carrying out activities of transmission. (transmission method: leading apprentices or centralised training; record the number or time of transmission)	≦ 15			

Organizing or being invited to participate in various Intangible Cultural Heritage promotion and demonstration activities at all levels.	≦20			
Preserve and provide original materials and objects related to the Intangible Cultural Heritage item, and cooperate with the cultural administrative department to do a good job in recording, organizing, protecting and developing the historical origin, transmission genealogy and traditional skills of the Intangible Cultural Heritage	≦15			
Achievements of the representative inheritors. (representative works, awards)	≦15			
Timely reflecting to the cultural and tourism administrative departments the protection of the Intangible Cultural Heritage project and taking the initiative to put forward opinions and suggestions for protection.	≦15			

Overall score	
Assessment level	

Appendix 2:

The Notice Rules for the Assessment of the Inheritors of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Qidong City (for Trial Implementation) in 2019

The appraisal team members are composed of relevant personnel from the municipal cultural authorities, the Municipal Centre for the Protection of Non-Foreign Heritage and the Municipal Culture Museum. There are at least five members of the appraisal team. The Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Centre staff check and record each inheritor's work monthly. The appraisal team conducts a centralised appraisal of them once a quarter. It provides financial support for the inheritors to carry out their inheritance activities according to the appraisal results.

The appraisal totals 100 points and includes the following:

1. whether to develop an annual heritage plan work (10 points) Material review, quarterly assessment.

2. Acceptance of apprentices to pass on their skills (30 points) Material review and year-end assessment.

3. Whether or not to participate in demonstrations, tutorials and other public welfare activities related to ICH organised by ICH centres and heritage bases (40 points) Collective assessment by ICH assessment team members, quarterly assessment.

4. Participation in training (5 points) Material review, year-end assessment.

5. Summary of inheritance work (5 points) Material review, year-end assessment.

6. External exchanges and Awards (10 points) Material review, year-end assessment.

The assessment score of 80 points (inclusive) above the inheritors, the full amount of work allowance. The assessment score of 61-79 points (inclusive) of the inheritors, 80% of the required work allowance. The assessment score of 45-60 points (inclusive) of the inheritors, 60% of the required work allowance. The assessment score 45 (inclusive) below the inheritors, no work allowance. The work allowance is paid quarterly under the results of the work assessment.

Work allowance standards: National Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor, monthly allowance is 4,000 yuan. Provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor, monthly allowance is 2,000 yuan. Municipal Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor, monthly allowance is 1,000 yuan.

AFTERWORD

Ten-Year Fishing Ban and Intangible Cultural Heritage

In January 2021, a ten-year fishing ban was promulgated, its full title was *Changjiang liuyu shinian jinyuqi tonggao* (Announcement of the Ten-Year Fishing Ban Plan for the Yangtze River Basin), issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs. The announcement specifies the scope of the ten-year fishing ban, implementation stages and considerations, involving 14 provinces and cities across the country on the relevant Yangtze River main streams and important tributaries, retiring a total of 113,000 landed fishing vessels and involving nearly 280,000 fishermen (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Press Office 2021).

In reality, this is not the first time that fishing bans have been imposed on the Yangtze River and its entire basin. Similar measures first appeared in the 1980s in marine fisheries production. Due to the special environment of the ocean, the fishing moratorium was implemented at that time instead of the fishing ban. The fishing moratorium is explained in He Juan's 2022 article "Duoyuanliu lilun shijiaoxia de changjiang jinyu zhengce yicheng yanjiu" (Research on the Agenda of the Fishing Ban Policy of the Yangtze River from the Perspective of Multi-source Theory) as:

> A measure to restrict fishing during the breeding and juvenile growth periods of aquatic organisms to ensure the average growth and reproduction of aquatic organisms and to achieve the sustainable development of fishery resources (He 2022: 16).

In accordance with the spawning pattern of most fish species, the fishing moratorium in marine fisheries is imposed for two and three months in the summer. The policy was first explored on a pilot basis in some coastal provinces, mainly for collective trawlers; later, it was gradually extended to all waters, including the East China Sea, Yellow Sea, Bo Sea and South China Sea. With the substantial effects of the fishing moratorium policy in marine fisheries, the policy began to be extended to inland waters, especially the Yangtze River.

For a long time, pollution of the waters, overfishing, sand mining and the construction of water conservancy projects have left the Yangtze's fishery resources in a severe decline. The government-led fishing ban has reached a stage where it has to be implemented. The article "Changjiang liuyu jijiang quanmian jinyu shinian" (The Yangtze River Basin will soon be Closed to All Fishing for Ten Years) co-authored by Li Chuxin and Zhu Yaohu details the implementation and adjustment of the government's fishing ban on the Yangtze River at different stages, as follows:

> In 2002, the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River began to implement a three-month spring fishing ban on a trial basis. Since 2003, the three-month fishing ban became a system that was fully implemented throughout the Yangtze River basin, covering a total of 10 provinces and 8,100 kilometres along the river. Any commercial fishing is prohibited during the fishing ban. Until December 2015, the fishing ban was extended from three to four months through an official adjustment by the former Ministry of Agriculture (Li, Zhu 2019:10).

This leads me to ask: Why did the cycle-stable fishing moratorium system eventually turn into a one-off, ten-year moratorium? The answer can be found in the article "Woguo xiujinyu zhengce yanjin lichen, tezheng yu weilai zhengce shexiang yanjiu" (Study on the Evolution, Characteristics and Future Policy of Fishing Ban Policy in China) co-authored by Sheng Fangfu and Li Zhimeng. They have summarised and evaluated the effectiveness of the regular fishing moratorium system, that is:

> The fishing moratorium system in China has had a positive effect on the management of natural fishery resources. It has led to a broader social consensus among the public about the protection of marine river and lake resources. However, it should also be noted that the effect of fishing moratoriums is often reflected in a certain period during the year, and the long-term effect is not apparent. In the case of the Yangtze River, for example, although the fishing ban system has been implemented, the degradation of ecological functions in its basin is still severe, and the deterioration of fishery resources is not optimistic; the biological integrity index of the Yangtze River has even reached the worst level of 'no fish', which has seriously damaged the water ecological balance and safety of the Yangtze River basin (Sheng, Li 2021:158).

Many other scholars have also been tracking and assessing the pollution and fishery situation of the Yangtze River for more than a decade and trying to provide solutions to it, of which the ten-year ban on fishing is one of the programs that have been the focus of the argumentation and planning. A ten-year fishing ban has become possible with the maturity of investigation, argumentation, and preparation. In December 2016, the former Ministry of Agriculture officially issued the *Guanyu chishuihe liuyu quanmian jinyu de tonggao* (Notice on the Comprehensive Fishing Ban in the Chishui River Basin), deciding to implement a Ten-year comprehensive fishing ban in the Chishui River Basin from 00:00 on January 2017 to 24:00 on 31 December 2026, which is the first tributary of the Yangtze River in China to be completely closed to fishing. With the enactment two Central Government documents, Take the Lead in Achieving a Comprehensive Ban on Fishing in the Yangtze River Basin Aquatic Life Reserve in 2017 and Establish a Compensation System for the Ban on Fishing in Key Waters of the Yangtze River Basin in 2018 (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Ministry of Finance Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security 2019), the ten-year ban on fishing in the entire Yangtze River has officially commenced.

I can pay attention to this issue because the inland waters involved in this thesis are all within the geographical scope of this ten-year fishing ban in the Yangtze River

Basin. However, because it occurred in the final stage of my fieldwork, and considering the overall plan for the completion of the thesis, I did not spend much energy and time on more in-depth fieldwork and research related to it. Nevertheless, I conducted my reflections and some degree of theoretical connection to the ten-year fishing ban itself, contemplating also the potential risk of fishermen's cultural discontinuity, and the significance of using the existing achievements of mass culture and Intangible Cultural Heritage to preserve and transmit fishermen's culture during the fishing ban.

Liminality and Cultural Lag

The length of this fishing ban, the area of the watershed covered, the number of relevant regions, relevant government departments and fishermen subjects involved, and the complexity of the livelihood issues faced are the most in history, which has led to substantial and dramatic changes in the production and life of fishermen in the Yangtze River basin. First, no productive fishing of any kind will be allowed for ten years and will be strictly enforced as a rule, with regular patrols and inspections by dedicated personnel. Second, dismantling a large number of fishing vessels, withdrawing fishing licenses, and cancelling fishing agreements already signed with the government; landings and re-employment training in the areas involved are in full swing; fishing villages in the traditional sense are being dismantled, and thousands of fishermen are facing the dual challenges of relocation and re-employment at the same time. The combination of the surrender and dismantling of production tools, the complete closure of production waters, the blurring of the boundaries of fishing villages, the precise period of the fishing ban, the uncertainty and despondent of the old fishermen, the longing and busyness of the young fishermen all brings to mind Victor Turner's concept of "liminality" (Turner 1970: 95-96).

In Turner's conceptualization, liminality is defined by "ambiguous and indeterminate properties; a state of unity and equality, indistinguishable, reshaped" (Turner 1970:95). In order to explain this concept more clearly, Turner uses ritual-specific examples later to illustrate it. The theory has been far-reaching, and since its

introduction, many scholars have expanded the theory and applied it to cases. In terms of theory expanded, Thomassen borrowed from Max Weber's important sociological questioning, developed and creatively used three different types of subjects, namely:

> single individuals, social groups and whole societies to correspond to three different spatial-temporal dimensions, namely moments, periods, epochs/ specific places, areas, larger regions or continents, exploring the different fields or subject areas to which the concept of liminality may be applied (Thomassen 2009: 16).

Turner's notion of liminality has been applied to numerous, widely varying cases, such as dance spaces where young people travel to enjoy electronic music, dance, and illicit drugs; liminal states constructed by people through extreme metal music; and safe zones constructed by second-generation adolescent immigrants through performance (Jaimangal-Jones 2010; Riches 2011; Gembus 2017). Although these scenes or states describe different themes, in my opinion, they can be grouped together. It is because these scenarios or states embody the characteristics of liminality, and they are all constructed under the influence of external factors. The participants will subjectively approach and accept them, even with the emotions of expectation, yearning, and fervour. People are excited to enter such liminal states, hoping to form a new order through the chaos of time and space, to feel and change things, and finally to find themselves better. In some cases, liminality is explored to figurative identities, such as immigrants or professional musicians of a particular historical period (Wilcox 2011; Butler Brown 2007). These identities themselves contain the characteristics of liminality; however, compared with the former, the marginality of identity is more solidified, static, persistent, and stable; it is more like a compound under the influence of multiple factors with a certain subjectivity.

The ten-year fishing ban, in my case, is more like the latter. The subject pushed to the liminality is a specific group- fishermen who lived and produced around the Yangtze River. Their liminality stage is a fishing ban for ten years, a national-level regulation published and executed by the government. The fishing ban as a limit state is closer to the "special period of a social group" proposed by Thomassen (Thomassen

2009: 16). This situation involves more power and benefits, which becomes more complicated and hard to decide. Although the government prepares a lot for fishermen, including better living improvement, employment training and compensation, the fisher subject is seen more as the party that informs and accepts. They do not even have enough time and preparation to question, reject or delay it. So, this liminality is drastic, painful, and reforming. In this state, fishermen become more uncertain and overwhelmed about the future and take a long time to adapt and adjust.

The ban on fishing has been implemented and enforced for more than two years since it was enacted. After reviewing and analysing most of the academic papers and media reports related to the ban, I found that in the academic world, the relevant scholarly discussions are currently focused on three aspects: first, the discussion on the rationality and necessity of the fishing ban and its various regulations formulated in conjunction with the actual situation of each place (Sheng, Li, Gong 2023; Zhu 2022); second, the tracking, analysis and research on the data related to natural resources such as aquatic environment and fishery production during the implementation of the ban (Fang, Yang, Zhang, Wu, Wei 2023; Luo 2023) and third; the investigation of the livelihood issues such as resettlement and re-employment of fishermen during the fishing ban (Pang, Chen, Bai 2023; Jiang 2023). In the mainstream media, most reports focused on the improvement of the environment and the new life of fishermen during the implementation of the fishing ban. This begs the question: is the fishing ban only about these? Are all the results associated with the fishing ban positive and desirable? What does the fishing ban really mean for the culture of fishermen?

In an article “Yuwenhua zai haiyang shehui bianqian zhong de zuoyong- yi haiyang yumin zhuanxing weili” (The Role of Fishing Culture in the Changes of the Marine Society - An Example of the Transformation of Marine Fishermen) co-authored by Tong Chunfen and Liu Yue, the culture of fishermen is defined as:

> an essential part of human culture, including fish production methods such as fish catching and breeding, as well as fishermen’s unique life, customs, religious beliefs, etc. It is the sum of the achievements of tangible culture,

> intangible culture and institutional culture with transmission and inheritance created by fishermen in their long-term fish production activities (Tong, Liu 2014: 257).

I agree with the tangible and intangible sections of fishermen's culture mentioned in this definition. We should be clear that the formation, development, inheritance, and dissemination of fishermen's culture is mainly based on the tangible culture of fishing boats, fishing gear, fishing villages and other material carriers, while the cyclical and stable fishing behaviour, as the most basic way of survival and production of the fishermen, is an important symbol that effectively distinguishes the fishermen from other groups and demonstrates their identity. As mentioned before, during the ten-year fishing ban, the fishermen involved were not only restricted in their fishing behaviour, but also lost their fishing boats, fishing gear, fishing villages and other material carriers one after another, so it is hard for me to imagine how the fishermen could solve the problems of identity and cultural inheritance under such circumstances. Ten years is not a particularly long time, it is not even enough for a generation to complete the transition, but if we do not pay extra attention to the protection, popularisation and transmission of fishermen's culture during the fishing ban, then the fishermen's community is likely to face the risk of cultural discontinuity and loss.

In the book *Social Change with Respect to Culture and Original Nature*, William Fielding Ogburn refers to the concept of "culture lag", which refers to:

> the time lag between the rate of change of material and immaterial adaptive cultures. According to the theory, when a culture composed of interdependent parts changes, the speed of change of each part is not consistent. In general, material culture always changes before non-material culture, followed by the change of institutions, customs, and values (Ogburn, W.F 1922: 200-213).

Combined with the ten-year ban on fishing, it again shows that in this process of change by policy-led, human-intervened, when the material carriers such as fishing

boats, fishing gears and fishing villages are changed, destroyed or disappeared, the changes and decay of the immaterial fishermen's culture are only a matter of time.

Well, what can we do when faced with this situation? To answer this question, it is good for us to check what we have. In other words, what we have already done to preserve and pass on fishermen's culture. Throughout my entire thesis, my answer is that much has been done to preserve fishermen's culture over the years through the Intangible Cultural Heritage platform and by connecting with mass culture. Whether they are fishermen's *haozi, paifu* or *yugu*, they have all left behind precious written and audio-visual records through timely inscription on the Intangible Cultural Heritage list. In these ten years or so, local communities and individuals have purchased wooden boats; new exhibition halls and pavilions of important material carriers for fishermen, including fishing gear, fishing nets, and tools for daily use by fishermen have been built; collected, recorded, and organized a large number of materials related to fishermen's culture, including proverbs, picture books, folk tales, and ritual plays. Through the activities of the inheritors coming into schools and fishing villages, they periodically show and popularise fishermen's culture to students, employees of fishing companies and descendants of fishermen. Based on the mastery of the original fishing culture, local cultural workers, combined with more popular art forms to create new contemporary mass artworks, promote and spread to a broader public. All these efforts and existing achievements can be fully utilised during the ten-year fishing ban to help fishermen complete the transition of their identities during the liminal period so that they have an effective way to protect and preserve their intangible culture in the culture lag situation. Of course, to confirm all this, it is necessary to conduct long-term tracking and return visits to the fishermen. Therefore, in the next follow-up study, I will pay close attention to this incident, and even conduct more in-depth investigations, in order to continue and improve my research topic on the protection and development path of fishermen's culture (music) in the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

CONCLUSION

In the Introduction and Chapter 1, I have organised and reviewed the literature on Intangible Cultural Heritage, fishermen and fishermen's culture, based on which I have given my understanding of the relevant concepts and made connections with my research. Within the literature review, I show how mainstream explorations of ICH research still tend to be grand in scope, dwelling mainly on theoretical questions. Meanwhile, fishermen themselves have faced (and continue to face) long-term marginalisation in society, resulting in their groups and cultures being overlooked where academic research is concerned. In contrast, in my PhD thesis, I have adopted a more concrete, in-depth and vivid account of fishermen and fishermen's culture, who remain – throughout my research and writing – absolutely central to the present study. In what follows, I will discuss them more under the context of the significance of this study and point out the ramifications of my dissertation for related topics in terms of content writing, structural intention, and in-depth research themes.

Since the concept of ICH was introduced into China at the beginning of the 21st century, a series of actions taken in the name of the state, measures and policies promulgated, directly and rapidly, even with a sense of coercion, have been handed down and implemented layer by layer through the official channels. For a time, all the groups involved may have felt a great, irresistible force of reform. These are described in some detail by Gao Bingzhong, Zhang Junwen, and Long Bill in their 2017 article “The Social Movement of Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage and the End of Cultural Revolutions in China”:

> In China, safeguarding ICH is not just a national project, but a social movement. It has drawn wide social participation, changed ideas in within mainstream discourse, redefined many long-disparaged cultures with positive values, and altered the relationship between the modern social system and the grassroots cultures (Gao, Zhang, and Long 2017: 168).

If the successful selection of *Kunqu* as one of the first "UNESCO Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" is regarded as the starting point of China's intangible heritage, it has been more than twenty years. During these two decades, the Chinese Government has insisted on continuously utilising the power of the State to advocate, promote, and develop the cause of Intangible Cultural Heritage, which is rare worldwide. While we have achieved brilliant results, we have also been subjected to much controversy and scepticism from the outside world since China's ICH so closely combines politics and culture. While ICH rules and systems and their systematic operation tend to stabilise today. I cannot help but wonder whether we can slow down? Perhaps we need to look back and reflect on what substantive changes have taken place in the cultural affairs that we have been involved in through the ICH platform over the past two decades. What measures have been implemented to achieve the expected results? Were there any mistakes and deviations in the process due to various reasons? What are the strengths and weaknesses of State-led and policy-driven Intangible Cultural Heritage in terms of specific cultural preservation and development? This also coincides with Zhang Boyu's view, expressed in his paper "Applied Ethnomusicology in China: An Analytical Review of Practice" that Intangible Cultural Heritage is an important part of applied research in Chinese ethnic music and that more scholars should be encouraged to conduct extensive and in-depth excavations (Zhang 2015: 741-746). The above reflections constitute the first important motivation for me to write this thesis.

Based on the specific items of fishermen's culture (fishermen's *haozi*, *paifu*, Hongze Lake *yugu*) in the northern Jiangsu Province, I described in detail the process of their development and change in the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage. From my perspective, I summarised the characteristics and models of the path that has been or is being formed behind each specific case. It is essentially a way to see the big picture through these small examples, taking these cases as a microcosm of the development of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage over the past two decades and thus triggering a review and reflection on the mechanism of Intangible Cultural Heritage practice more widely. In the fieldwork and writing phase of specific cases, I tried to involve as many and more diverse groups as possible, in an attempt to break away from the more common investigative and writing perspective in the field of

Intangible Cultural Heritage research, which is centred on the inheritor or a single subject. In this dissertation, I focused my research on fishermen, grass-roots government managers, grass-roots cultural business cadres, inheritors of ICH, government officials in charge of ICH, members of the media, and elderly folk culture practitioners from a bygone age. In addition, I also referred to some scholars' relevant field reports and academic opinions. Therefore, in this study, I showed how different groups often present different voices and opinions on the same ICH theme due to their different identities, subject positions, interests, and understandings, which results in a much more rich and varied understanding of ICH ecology and mechanisms. In addition, through my in-depth contact with different groups, I also found that these groups are often interconnected and intertwined with each other and even have unexpected relationships and overlapping identities behind them, which are also important reasons for the deviation in the development path of contrasting ICH achievements within the same ICH project.

The discipline of Chinese ethnomusicology, which is supposed to be centred on openness, equality, and freedom, has at some point developed an invisible mainstreaming and trending value standard for judging cultural significance that directly affects researchers' choice of research objects and contents. This has led two kinds of project to become emphasized. First, researchers are choosing to study cultural expressions that are highly respected in a certain field, favoured by policies, and at the peak of development. Second, cultural products that remain remote, primitive, exotic, and rare nature, which the discipline of ethnomusicology has traditionally favoured, are still sought after. Objects of study, and even specific Intangible Cultural Heritage programmes, that neither possess an apparent major policy development significance nor an aura of pristineness and rarity due to their location in provinces at the forefront of economic development may be overlooked. As I described in the introduction, the culture-bearers of my thesis are group of people living in an area at the forefront of development, the most easily to be seen and yet most overlooked group in watery lands. They have long been marginalised, both in terms of the group itself and in terms of the influence of their culture. During my fieldwork, my "non-mainstream" research choices have been questioned, dismissed, and even belittled to a certain extent on several occasions by related people from

different backgrounds; these comments, such as “what is there to study about this (fishermen’s culture)? What significance can it have?” “Why choose Jiangsu? It’s the frontier of economic development; the culture here is always changing”; “why choose this ICH program? It’s only a municipal program; you should look at our national program here; “you shouldn’t go there; it’s all been converted into stage performances; where is there any fishermen’s culture?”. Though they are expressed differently, these queries point to an underlying and predetermined standard of cultural value that ought to always be quantified. Therefore, the second motivation of this dissertation is that I hope that by focusing on the fishermen’s community through a series of analyses, explorations, and studies of fishermen’s culture, I can evoke the original purpose of this discipline, which is to discover and excavate the unique values behind each culture so that they are worthy of being seen, understood, and respected.

In terms of this dissertation’s specific content and structure, it was organized around a juxtaposing of three fieldwork-based chapters (Chapters 2, 3, and 4); the contents and orders were the fishermen’s *haozi*, *paifu*, and Hongze Lake *yugu*. Although these projects all have a clear geographical attribution in the specific chapters, in the actual fieldwork, as the representative cultural matters of the fishermen, these three were once prevalent among the fishermen’s groups in many places. It is only in other places, they have either been lost and disappeared or only exist in words and phrases, which made it difficult to put them into conservation practice. Therefore, in this dissertation, the musical scores, documents, and information that I collected and recorded in the field, as well as the characteristics of specific cultures and the paths of preservation that I analysed, applies to the fishermen's community in general.

I thought long and hard about ordering the contents of these three chapters in this way; my final choice responded to a proverb widely circulated among the fishermen, which I also mentioned in the introductory part of Chapter 4, namely, “fishermen have nowhere to spend money, either *paifu* or shao *zhiqian*.” The fishermen’s *haozi* represented the fishermen’s way of earning a living, the basis of their survival, which is purely material. In a labour environment, the functional use of the *haozi* is much

higher than its aesthetic expression. As an essential boat-building skill for fishermen, the *paifu* not only provides fishermen with the most crucial material carrier, the boat, but also incorporates ritual content as its the final step, so it is both material and spiritual, and its functional use and aesthetic expression are equally important in practice. As the most representative sacrificial ceremony in the lake area, Hongze Lake *yugu* has a complicated preparation process, strict participation requirements, and elaborate ritual steps, all of which reveal and show the pious and certain spiritual world of the fishermen. In practice, this sacrificial function would be completely dependent on each precise aesthetic expression. Therefore, these three chapters not only show a complete fisherman's life but also contain a deepening and progressive relationship between them, from material to spiritual, from functional tendency to aesthetic tendency. Again, in each of these three chapters, I presented ideas on a cultural program in what appeared to be its more authentic, everyday, natural state, largely unaffected by outside intervention and influence, and then in a state of development and change in response to the times, particularly in the context of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, characterised by external interventions, self-acceptance, and further adjustments. But a dichotomy of tradition vs. innovation, stasis vs development, and function vs aesthetics seems antagonistic and fragmented in each case. Instead, my analyses explore the intrinsic connections between development and continuity, inheritance and change.

In addition to the above, the points and contributions that I have focused on and thought about in my research, which may influence and inspire related topics, include:

Among the three projects of the author, only the fisherman's *haozi* clearly belongs to the music category of Intangible Cultural Heritage. However, all three projects have chosen the same approach, i.e., to make full use of and develop their musical elements (although in some cases, music does not dominate), to revitalize them in the process of transmission, dissemination, and development under the context of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Therefore, what I learn from it is that, as music researchers we cannot just focus on the music element; in fact, music or sound-related activity/performance is a part of a wider whole. We need to pay more attention to the musical and acoustic performances and their underlying aesthetic values, the

hidden meanings that lie behind the scores, which are the critical indicators and references that sustain the survival and development of the project activities and form the conservation path.

In the early stage of my research, I always regarded the Intangible Cultural Heritage Declaration Reports and specific inheritors in various places as the most significant goal of my research. However, when I truly launched into the fieldwork, I found that I overestimated the ICH reports as official sample materials, thus ignoring the problems of standardisation and homogenisation that existed in them, which suddenly brought my research to a standstill. Secondly, for the inheritors, especially those who have been engaged in fishery production and have a pure fishermen's background, I again overestimated and idealised their understanding of and attitude towards the preservation of fishermen's culture in the context of ICH. As a matter of fact, many inheritors from a fisherman's background are elderly and poorly educated. They do not even have a clear idea of what Intangible Cultural Heritage is, and do not quite understand the significance of this mandatory conservation behaviour. In addition, I was not fully prepared and aware of the closed, marginal, and male-dominated nature of the fishermen's groups. Thus, when I entered the group as a young female scholar and as an outsider to the Cultural Affairs Bureau, I encountered many unexpected challenges and crises of trust, so that some of the effects of the interviews and research in the early stage did not meet my expectations. Of course, with the deepening of my research and fieldwork, I adjusted myself to the above situations, such as looking at official materials more rationally, and treating them more as references rather than guides for fieldwork; looking at the understandings and answers of the inheritors more calmly and objectively, and standing more in the other's points of view and background, and searching for the logic and reasons that inform them. When encountering a crisis of trust, relying upon the mediation of local cultural brokers, i.e. insiders as grass-roots cultural officer or local cultural experts. The effectiveness of the research/interviews was maximised through their introduction, presence and even the use of communication in local dialect.

In my previous years of professional training, I was always told to describe what I saw, heard, touched, and felt during my fieldwork in as objective a perspective and

neutral a style as possible. I always thought such a style of fieldwork and ethnographic writing can maximize the original presentation of the investigation. However, when I got into the field and did a lot of substantive work, I found the drawbacks this style brings are also obvious. Firstly, objective presentation is done by subjective individuals through observation, questioning, judgement, and reflection, and all these acts carry a strong tendency toward subjectivity. Secondly, in my opinion, presenting too much of the "objective factual" side of fieldwork can easily lead to homogenisation and templatization of the results of individual fieldwork in the same project, as in the case of the convergence of reports on Intangible Cultural Heritage written by some grassroots departments that I mentioned at the end of Chapter 1. Therefore, in order to avoid such a problem in this research, whether in fieldwork or ethnographic writing, I have included more subjective and detailed observations and descriptions, which are indicative of the environments in which the interviewees (fishermen and grassroots cultural workers) live and work. I have also described the interviewees' clothing, the interviewees' momentary changes of expression during the interviews, my immediate reactions to these changes, the interviewees' reactions to other people based on proximity, and so on. Intentionally reinforcing these subjective observations and descriptions, which initially did not seem relevant to the research object and the problem, achieves the outcome that I can clearly show how my fieldwork, my research, relied upon specific relationships between the many related characters to inform my observations, hunches and analyses in a way that aligns better with the viewpoints and ideas of the fishermen themselves.

Finally, I would like to use this thesis as a small milestone to talk about my future research topics and choice of direction that may be linked and inspired to. Firstly, the results, ideas, and methods of this dissertation can be directly applied to other types of ICH programmes. ICH has been developed in China for more than twenty years, and all aspects of the operation are now stabilized. The interviews with grass-roots cultural leaders/ICH managers in Chapter 5 also show that at the present stage, Intangible Cultural Heritage has basically accomplished primary tasks such as the establishment of regulations, data collection, statistics, and personnel verification, and so should now move on to the next stage of fully exploring, summarising, and selecting the best of the best. The most important thing I learned in relation to the

study of Intangible Cultural Heritage is that it is not a homogenised and standardised subject; instead, it needs to be explored and analysed case by case. Therefore, this field certainly offers me a wide set of choices, I may put more efforts to continue the studies of regional culture or canal culture under the ICH context. Of course, it is certain that the ten-year fishing ban in the Yangtze River Basin that I mentioned in the afterword has already given rise to my preliminary theoretical thinking and research ideas, that is, what will be the impact on fishermen's culture during the ten-year fishing ban? Have existing ICH conservation measures been carried out as usual during the fishing ban, have they been slightly adjusted? What can the new fishermen’s cultural developments that have taken place in the context of the ICH do for the fishermen during the fishing ban? In short, I will continue to pay close attention to this event and make it my first choice for my future research direction.

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