



# A Study on the Inheritance of Yangzhou Ditty Tune “Nan Diao”: Take “Qinghe Weather” for Example

Langyue Sun<sup>1</sup>(✉) and Xinwei Li<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> School of Music, Suzhou University of Science and Technology, Suzhou 215009, Jiangsu, China

12213161020@post.usts.edu.cn

<sup>2</sup> School of Music, Xi'an Conservatory of Music, Xian 710061, Shanxi, China

**Abstract.** “Nan Diao” is a representative tune of various folk art forms of Jiangsu Province, China. Among these forms, the most famous one is “Nan Diao” of Yangzhou Ditty, an ancient folk art form of Jiangnan culture, and “Qinghe Weather” is one of the representative songs in it. The reason why it has been passed down so far is worth further investigation on its inheritance history, inheritance of singing style and lyric, and its inheritance of innovation.

**Keywords:** Yangzhou Ditty · Nan Diao · Chinese Quyi Music · Chinese Quyi Inheritance

## 1 Introduction

Yangzhou Ditty, also known as Xiaoqu, is closely related to Zhugong tunes of Song, Jin and Yuan dynasties, Sanqu of Yuan Dynasty and the popular tunes of Ming and Qing Dynasties, and it shares the same origin with Kun Opera. With its long history, Yangzhou Ditty is also regarded as an indispensable treasure of Chinese Quyi culture. In China, the folk art forms are known as Quyi, Qupai to represent the names of different tunes. As a representative style of folk art forms, Yangzhou Ditty contains a large variety of Qupai system, and there are 97 of them [1]. “Nan Diao” is the most famous one among the “Five Modes of Ancient Chinese Music”, which are “Ruan Ping”, “Nan Diao”, “Die Luo”, “Li Diao” and “Po Yang”. It is poly-phonetic, with tortuous and lingering melody, which can give people a kind of beautiful and graceful hearing experience. Moreover, its speed is slightly slower, which is convenient to express the feelings of suspicion, hesitation and anxiety [2]. The representative repertoire of “Nan Diao” of Yangzhou Ditty includes “Qinghe Weather”, “On the Green Lotus Leaf”, “Ding-dong” and so on. Among them, “Qinghe Weather” has been passed down to the present day, and it expresses the deep resentment of unmarried ladies. To this day, it is still sung by ditty artists and students in college opera clubs. Therefore, how did such ancient songs pass down over the long river of history is worth further exploring. Starting from this question, this paper will study from its inheritance history, inheritance of singing style and lyric, and its inheritance of innovation.

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## 2 Green Hills Never Turn Bare: Inheritance History

### 2.1 The Name Evolution of “Nan Diao” Since Ming and Qing Dynasties

At present, the earliest record about “Nan Diao” is in the Ming Dynasty from “Wanli Wild obtained Compilation” Volume 25: “During the Jia and Long years, there were popular tunes such as ‘Nao Wugeng’, ‘Ji Sheng Cao’, ‘Luojiang Yuan’, ‘Tongcheng Ge’ ‘Ku Huang Tian’ and so on, from the two Huai River to the south of the Yangtze River.” Later generations also excerpted this section to the Ming Dynasty Jialong year’s “Gu Qu Za Yan” in the “fashion tunes”. Visible at that time “Ji Sheng Cao” Qupai spread widely (Fig. 1). The “Ji Sheng Cao” here is a popular song in the Yuan and Ming dynasties, and it’s also the predecessor of today’s ditty “Nan Diao”. Wei Ren also noted in “Yangzhou Opera Examination” that the sentence pattern of “Ji Sheng Cao” in Yuan and Ming dynasties is very similar to that of “Nan Diao” in today’s Yangzhou Ditty, which both consists of seven sentences [3]. Since then, “Nan Diao” has flourished till now.

Nie Feng, the famous inheritor of Yangzhou Ditty, argued that according to the singing style, “Ji Sheng Cao” used to be divide into “Southern Ji Sheng Cao” and “Northern Ji Sheng Cao”, but with the evolution of the Times, artists gradually changed their name to “Nan Diao”. In the Qing Dynasty, “Nan Diao” was renamed “Nanjing Diao” from “Ji Sheng Cao”. Li Dou’s “Yangzhou Painting Bouts” recorded: “The Jing tone, Qizi tone, Wharf tone, Nanjing tone and so on, spread from all directions.”, which vividly shows the wide spreading of “Nan Diao”.

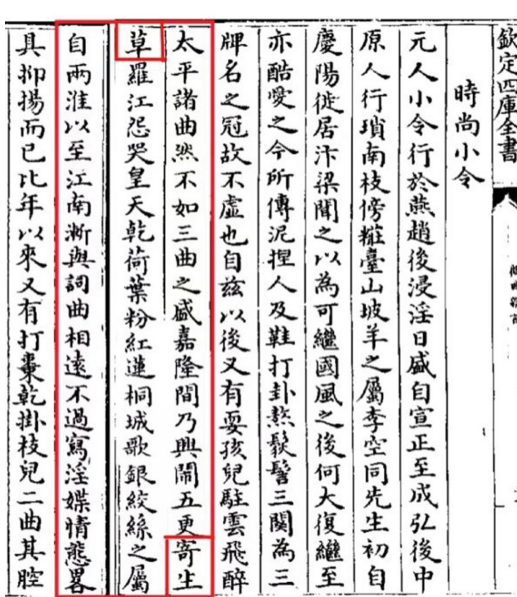


Fig. 1. The source of “Ji Sheng Cao” in “Gu Qu Za Yan” (Xiang Jiequan, Anqing, the Origin of Huangmei Opera: The Intercourse between Ruan Zihua and Shen Decfu and the Record of Tongcheng Song, Sohu, 2022.6.14)

## 2.2 The Twists and Turns of the Inheritance of “Nan Diao” and “Qinghe Weather” Before and After Liberation

Before liberation, there was no formal organization to teach Yangzhou Ditty singing. “Playmates” who liked Yangzhou Ditty mostly gathered in “Quhui”, which was similar to the singing competition. To join the activity, it is also necessary to follow the “Qu rules” of “Quhui”. In the handwritten notes of Wang Wanqing, a Ditty artist, it is mentioned that after 1830, when the first generation of Yangzhou Ditty gathered and “Quhui” opened the strings, everyone first sang “Flowers”, “Beans” and “Grass” (namely “Ji Sheng Cao”, namely today’s “Nan Diao”) [4]. Meanwhile, this record further confirms the long history of “Nan Diao”.

Not long after the found of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, the opera school built by the local government together with many folk art groups performed and taught Yangzhou Ditty. Led by Wang Wanqing, a large number of Ditty artists emerged. Later, two monographs of great importance for the inheritance history of Yangzhou Ditty “Nan Diao” appeared, namely, the Yangzhou Ditty Interview Report, which was completed by Zhang Ming, professor of the Institute of Chinese Music of the Central Conservatory of Music, after his field investigation in Yangzhou and Nanjing for nearly two months in November 1962. The other one is Yangzhou Ditty which is written by Wei Ming in June 1985 and published by Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House. These two books respectively included the names and copies of hundreds of “Nan Diao” songs, including “Spring”, “On the Green Lotus Leaf”, “Qinghe Weather”, and recorded the musical examples of “On the Green Lotus Leaf”, which made outstanding contributions to the research of Yangzhou Ditty [5, 6]. In the 1970s and 1980s, to improve the situation of scattered performances of Ditty artists in Yangzhou, Zhu Xiangsheng, co-organizer of Yangzhou Ditty Research Office, contacted Nie Feng, Zhan Guozhang and other famous Ditty artists jointly established Guangling Ditty Friends Association. From then on, Yangzhou Ditty artists had a fixed place for activities [7].

Since then, Yangzhou Ditty reached another prosperous period. Wang Wanqing, Zhan Guozhang, Xiao Ronggui, Zhang Meiyun and other artists all treat “Nan Diao” “Qing and the weather” as an important performance repertoire. At the same time, the recording technology has begun to take shape, many Ditty artists used this technique and left many valuable learning materials for later generations.

## 2.3 Today, Music Score Example of “Nan Diao” – “Qinghe Weather” Appears

The first complete official score of “Qinghe Weather” was written in 1994, which was published by China ISBN Central Publishing House, edited by the National Editorial Committee of the China Quyi Music Ensemble. The China Quyi Music Ensemble (Jiangsu Volume·Volume 1) records the single-tone simplified version of the recording score of Wang Wanqing, which was collected in Yangzhou by Zhang Ming of the China Music Research Institute in 1962, and the band vocal ensemble simplified version of the recording score of Xiao Ronggui, which was recorded in Zhenjiang People’s Radio Station in 1988 The book [8]. A brief score of the “Ding-dong” was also recorded. Many years later, in 2008, Nie Feng reproduced the ancient Gauge spectrum of “Qinghe Weather”, which was originally provided by the descendants of the late Ditty master

Wang Wanqing and was copied, arranged and translated by Wang Xiaolong, a doctor of music, before being handed down to him again. “Qinghe Weather” is the third copy of the ancient score of Yangzhou Ditty reproduced in the world after “Splitting Jade” and “Little Sister”. It also proves that in the long inheritance process of Yangzhou Ditty, it not only has oral instruction, but also has the form of inheritance supplemented by Gauge spectrum and script score [9]. Later, people sang it by the ancient score, or recorded the simple score and staff score according to the recording, which led to the widespread of various musical scores of “Qinghe Weather” in books and on the Internet. Nowadays, many schools in Yangzhou and Nanjing have set up professional courses on intangible cultural heritage on campus, which are taught by inheritors combined with music scores.

For more than 600 years, “Nan Diao” still occupied the dominant position of the Ditty style in Yangzhou.

### **3 No Language, No Access: Inheritance of Singing Style and Lyric**

The repertoire of Yangzhou Ditty is divided into single Qu style and Qupai combination style, also known as “single sheet” and “diverging Qu”. The repertoire of “Nan Diao” is mostly “single piece”. Since “Nan Diao” was inherited more than 600 years, artists have mainly passed down classical pieces from generation to generation by oral teaching. Without a complete score, artists must understand and interpret them according to many rules of their singing style and lyrics. Up to now, a sound and language system has been formed for the traditional tunes.

#### **3.1 Rules of Lyrics**

##### **3.1.1 Structure of Lyrics**

To study the law of “Nan Diao” lyrics of Yangzhou Ditty, the author sorted out and compared the lyrics of three most representative pieces “Qinghe Weather”, “On the Green Lotus Leaf” and “Ding Dong”:

It can be seen from Table 1 that the lyrics of “Nan Diao” mainly talk about ladies’ grievances and historical events (Table 1). These pieces are divided into two parts, mostly include seven sentences, and the last two sentences are repetitive. The number of words in each sentence is not strictly fixed, which is formulated according to the needs of the lyrics plot.

##### **3.1.2 Composition of Character Rhyme**

First of all, in terms of rhyme, it can be seen from Table 1 that, similar to other opera lyrics, the Chinese lyrics of “Nan Diao” pieces at the end of each sentence all revert to the same rhyme. For example, “Qinghe Weather” and “On the Green Lotus Leaf” both rhyme with Chinese pronunciation “an”, while “Ding Dong” rhymes with “ao”.

Secondly, in the aspect of enunciation, “Nan Diao” pieces such as “Qinghe Weather” is still sung in Yangzhou dialect, which has a very different rhyme composition from mandarin Chinese. Yan Nanzhi An, a scholar in the Yuan Dynasty, first mentioned

**Table 1.** Comparison of lyrics of the three songs of "Nan Diao".

Track Names		"Qinghe Weather"	"On the Green Lotus Leaf"	"Ding Dong"
Lyrics (word count)				
	Sentences			
Previous Piece	First Sentence	Clear weather, warm temperature, people start to wilt, 清和天气 人初倦, (7)	There was a dew on the lotus leaf, 青荷叶上有个露珠儿现, (11)	Ding-dong! Fired three Wolf cannons, 轰叮咚! 放了三声狼烟炮, (10)
	Second Sentence	Wheat waves, wind blows, willows continue to roll, 麦浪风翻 柳絮颠, (7)	The infatuated person grabbed it with her fingers 痴心人儿用手去拈。(8)	The Red Hare Pentiums and the flag flutters. 秀旗招展赤兔马跑。(8)
	Third sentence	Noticing before the steps, one after another, rose slices, 见阶前, 纷纷坠落, 蔷薇片 (10)	About to grab, it rolled away. 正欲拈, 他咕嘈滚得不见面。(12)	Embroidered with the flag of the Commander of the Three Services, Han Shou Ting Hou Guan, 上绣着三军司马汉寿亭侯关字旗号, (15)
	Fourth Sentence	Rolling up bead curtain, appear in pairs, new born young geese fly out. 卷珠帘, 飞出对对, 新雏燕 (10)	Poor me, gave you my heart. 可怜我一片真心将你恋。(10)	Armed with the Green Dragon Crescent Blade, he was ordered to come and capture Cao Cao. 手持青龙偃月刀, 奉命前来捉曹操。(14)
Later Piece	Fifth sentence	Green moss on the stem, lotus leaves like coins, 绿苔满茎, 荷叶如钱, (8)	You divided here, while reunited there. 你在这边拆散, 却到那边团圆。(12)	Our advisor, Zhuge Liang, has the highest calculation, 我军师诸葛亮他的算计最高, (12)
	Sixth sentence	Sunset smokes, setting sun slanting, the melancholy lady's yard, 晚霞烟 夕阳斜照, 深闺院, (10)	Pity my fiery heart is deceived by this cold object. 可怜我热烫烫的心肠反被这冷冰冰的东西骗。(19)	Let Cao Mengde be counted in the battle of Chibi, the defeated soldiers had to take the Huarong Trail. 算就了曹孟德, 赤壁鏖兵, 兵败败兵必走那华容小道,(21)
	Seventh Sentence	Sunset smokes, setting sun slanting, the melancholy lady's yard, 晚霞烟 夕阳斜照, 深闺院, (10)	Pity my fiery heart was deceived by this cold object. 可怜我热烫烫的心肠反被这冷冰冰的东西骗。(19)	Let Cao Mengde be counted in the battle of Chibi, the defeated soldiers had to take the Huarong Trail. 算就了曹孟德, 赤壁鏖兵, 兵败败兵必走那华容小道,(21)

the musical aesthetic concepts of “clear articulation, mellow tone” in his famous classic opera music Treatise on Singing [10]. Among them, the “clear articulation” in the author’s opinion, which means “Don’t consult on the flat side of the cavity. You must first say the word and then return the cavity” [11]. Therefore, when students of the course of “Intangible Cultural Heritage into Campus” learn this piece, they must first learn how to read the lyrics in Yangzhou dialect. Notably, there are some differences between Yangzhou dialect and mandarin Chinese in pronunciation. First of all, the “r” in mandarin Chinese is changed into the flat “l”, such as “ren → len”. The diphthong vowel in Yangzhou dialect, mandarin words often read into the monophonic vowel, diphthong vowel “ai, ei, ao, ou” turn into “ε, e, ə, əu”, such as: “bead” (zhu → zəu). When the lyrics are recited, the inheritor teachers in charge of teaching will remind and correct the students’ pronunciation of the lyrics, especially the three lyrics containing the diphthong vowel: “bead” (zəu), “chick” (cəu) and “as” (ləu), to restore the charm of articulation contained in Yangzhou Ditty itself.

### 3.2 Singing Rules: Develop Around the Basic Aria Type

Professor Tan Xin from Nanjing Normal University argued in her paper Research on the Music Culture of Jiangsu “Five Modes of Ancient Chinese Music” that qupai music in the long-term inheritance and evolution of each Qupai has accumulated a unique routine of the tune, this tune has strong stability, is conducive to learning and inheritance, in line with the characteristics of oral inheritance, [2] which means every Qupai has its basic tune type, and each piece develops around the basic tune type. For example, “Qinghe Weather” is based on the core tone series of “Nan Diao”, “re dol la sol”. In the first sentence of the whole song, the “basic tune” is formed, and the following phrases are mostly repetitions and variants of the basic tune. Take the version sung by Wang Wanqing as an example (Fig. 2):

The overall melody of this “basic aria type” is arching up, based upon Chinese pentatonic mode. Chinese pentatonic mode includes five basic tones: 宫Gong, 商Shang, 角Jue, 徵Zhi, 羽Yu, which respectively represent “do, re, mi, sol, la”. This basic aria type starts from a long Gong tone with Yu tone embellish cavity skills, goes up to the Shang tone and then gradually does a second and two third degrees of progressive downward, and finally ends from the Jue tone to the Zhi tone. The basic aria type and its variants appear in a total of 20 places in the whole melody of Qinghe Weather, accounting for 72% of all cavity segments and cavity types [2]. It not only greatly reduces the burden

#### Basic Aria Type



Fig. 2. The Basic Aria Type of “Qinghe Weather” [2]

of music notation for ditty artists in learning, but also deepens the singing memory of this song for the audience.

The song “Qinghe Weather” is a “带变宫的六升徵调式”, which means it’s a Six-tone mode with an extra “si” and start with “sol” and a two-segment structure with changing repetition. The author summarizes the specific form structure of Wang Wanqing’s singing version as shown in Table 2.

Same to the common format of the Yangzhou Ditty “Nan Diao”, “Qinghe Weather” is divided into two pieces, with four sentences on the upper piece and three sentences on the lower piece. As most of the “Nan Diao” of Yangzhou Ditty concluding note law, “Qinghe Weather” mostly ends by the characteristics of Shang tone and Zhi tone. Although the seven sentences in the previous and later pieces have no strict form or matching requirements for the number of lyrics, the whole song still follows A two-paragraph structure with variation and repetition of “A-B-A’-B’-B-A’-B””. Each sentence is connected by a similar melodic passage.

In combination with the table and the above analysis, it can be seen that the end tone of each sentence is the end tone of the “basic aria type” or its variant, which further verifies the stability of the above “base aria type”. At the same time, the author observes that the last two sentences in the upper and lower parts of the music are usually richer than the opening sentences and the accents, which are also closely related to the number of words sung. Among them, the last two lyrics of the upper and lower pieces are respectively “燕Yan” and “院Yuan”. These two words have a particularly long drawl. Their melody is a variation of the “basic aria type”, which is the embodiment of the ending tone.

**Table 2.** Analysis of the Form Structure of “Qinghe Weather”

Paragraph	Previous Piece				Later Piece		
	First Sentence	Second Sentence	Third Sentence	Fourth Sentence	Fifth Sentence	Sixth Sentence	Seventh Sentence
Structural Properties	A	B	A'	B'	B	A''	B''
Bar Position	4–15	16–24	28–43	44–60	64–73.	76–91.	92–108
Bar Count	12	8.5	16	16.5	9.5	16	17
End Tone	Shang	Zhi	Shang	Zhi	Zhi	Shang	Zhi



**Fig. 3.** The Melody of “燕Yan”, the Last Lyric of Previous Piece of “Qinghe Weather” (Wang Wanqing’s Version)



**Fig. 4.** The Melody of “院Yuan”, the Last Lyric of Later Piece of “Qinghe Weather”(Wang Wanqing’s Version)

The melody of the Lyric “Yan”, the last lyric of Previous Piece, uses progressive intervals to link together (Fig. 3). First from the Jue tone, down gradually progressive to Zhi and then gradually back to the Jue tone, and then three consecutive downward progressive to Yu tone again back to the Jue tone, and then down to Yu tone, suddenly four degrees up jump into the high Shang tone, and finally progressive down to low Jue tone, end in a cycle of the Zhi tone. Thus, “Yan” drawl cavity in the “basic aria type” frame expansion, including four downward progressive intervals, four upward progressive intervals and a four degrees of upward jump.

At the same time, the last lyric “Yuan” of the Later piece also contains five downward progressive intervals, five upward progressive intervals and a fourth skip up jump on the frame of the “basic aria type” (Fig. 4). These two piece of melodies are in a continuous drawl, exactly matched with the emotions of the characters. The image expresses the melancholy of the lady in boudoir to see chicks in pairs and sunset slanting in the boudoir house.

### 3.3 The Rule Between the Lyric Tone and the Melody Trend

Yangzhou Ditty has a smooth melody with mellow charm, mainly sung in Yangzhou dialect, and its singing characteristics are mainly “soft”, with soft opening, soft processing and soft closing. When listening to the version of “Qinghe Weather” sung by different ditty artists, the author found that although different ditty artists learn the songs mainly by oral teaching, each artist has a different singing style, and their lubricating tone is also different. For example, Mr. Wang Wanqing, one of the founders of the famous Guangling Ditty Friends Association, uses a conservative lubricating tone with a simple and elegant singing style. Only in rare long tones join appoggiatura or Boeing, or join a third appoggiatura at the beginning of the lyric. The singing style of Xiao Ronggui, the inheritor of the Jin School of Yangju Opera, is euphemistic, sweet and full of lingering charm. She adds a progressive appoggiatura at the beginning of almost every lyric and at the beginning of the guttural tone, and some long tones are processed by Boeing. But in general, the main melody structure of “Qinghe Weather” they sing is almost the same. The author speculates that one reason is that the artists sing in the Yangzhou dialect, and the tone of the Yangzhou dialect has a certain rule with the melody trend of the repertoire.

The tone of Yangzhou dialect is very particular. According to Zhao Yuanren’s Fifth Degree Marking Method, the tuning values of the four tones of Mandarin Chinese should be Level Tone 55, Rising Tone 35, Falling-rising Tone 214, and Falling Tone 51 (Fig. 5) [12].



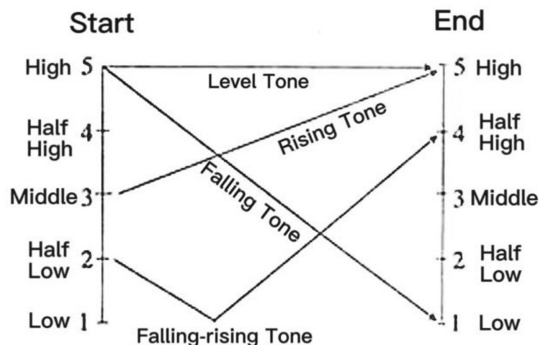


Fig. 5. Fifth Degree Marking Method, Tones of Modern Mandarin Chinese

However, the tuning values of the five monosyllabic tones of Yangzhou dialect are: Level Tone 11/21, Rising Tone 35/34, Falling-rising Tone 42, Falling Tone 55, and Entering Tone 4. And Level Tone changes from 11/21 to 33 before Level Tone, Rising Tone does not change tone before any tone, Falling-rising Tone changes from 42 to 44 before any tone, Falling Tone changes from 55 to 53 before any tone, and Entering Tone changes from 4 short tone to 53 short tone before Entering Tone [13]. Take the first half of the first sentence of Qinghe Weather for example:

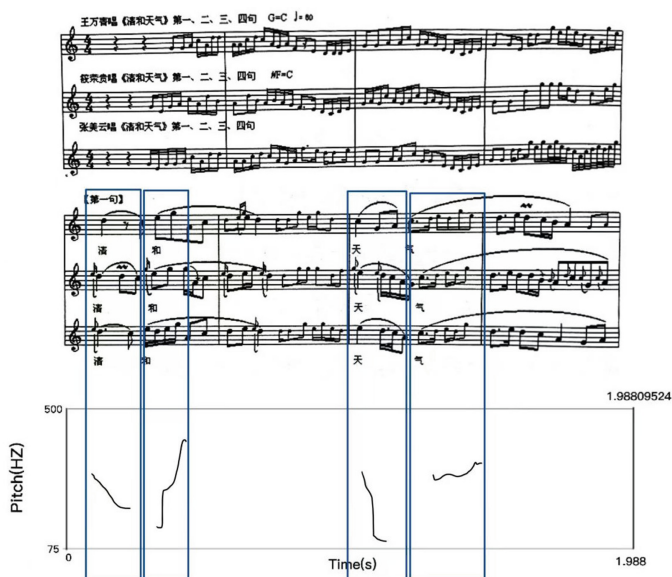
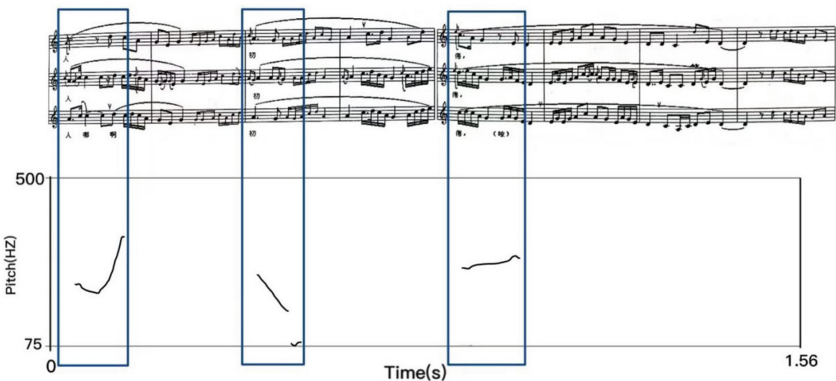


Fig. 6. The Pitch Curve Enetered by Praat Software to Read the First Sentence's Lyric Tone of “清和天气 Qinghe Weather” in Yangzhou Dialect, Namely the Frequency Peak Profile, and the Comparison with the Melody of the Three Versions Sung by Wang Wanqing, Xiao Ronggui and Zhang Meiyun [5].

The lyrics of the song “Qinghe Weather” were recorded in Yangzhou dialect, the digital audio was imported into the sound processing software *Praat*, and the frequency peak profile of the digital audio was generated (Fig. 6). The author first excerpted the first half of the first sentence of the song. From the examples and pictures, we can see that the “清Qing” of “Qinghe Weather” was originally Level Tone in Mandarin, but the tone value is 21 in Yangzhou dialect. The outline of the overall audio frequency peak shows a gentle downward curve. Meanwhile, the melody lines of the three Ditty artists singing the word “Qing” all start with the Shang tone with or without the lubricating tone, and then descend to the Gong tone for two degrees. It also shows a gentle downward arc. Looking at the word “和He”, the “He” in Mandarin and Yangzhou dialect is Rising Tone 35, the frequency peak profile is upward, and the melody of “He” sung by the three Ditty artists is generally from the Jue tone to the Zhi tone, is a progressive third, and then fill in or add lubricating tones, the melody line is also upward at the beginning. Look at the “天Tian” word, its tune value is also changed from Mandarin Level Tone 55 to Level Tone 21, its audio frequency peak contour line down, conforms to the Gong-Zhi, Jue-Shang melody line sung by artists. The same is true for the word “气qi”, which changes from Mandarin Falling Tone 51 to Yangzhou dialect Falling Tone 55. The peak frequency of the audio frequency generally presents a relatively gentle contour line. Besides, the singing part of the three Ditty artists is a two-beat long tone Gong tone, which is also consistent with the trend. Take a look at the second half of the first sentence of this song:

The same is true for “人初Ren Chu” in the second half sentence. According to the above analysis, the audio frequency peak contour of the Yangzhou dialect pronunciation pitch of the three lyrics “Ren Chu” is consistent with the opening line trend of the corresponding paragraph of each word (Fig. 7). According to the author’s statistics, there are 62 words in the song “Qinghe Weather”, among which only 6–7 words at the end or the beginning of the sentence do not fully conform to the above rules, and the words following the rules account for 88.7% of the total number of lyrics. It can be seen



**Fig. 7.** The Pitch Curve Enerated By *Praat* Software to Read the First Sentence’s Lyric Tone of “人初倦People Start to Wilt” in Yangzhou Dialect, Namely the Frequency Peak Profile, and the Comparison With the Melody of the Three Versions Sung By Wang Wanqing, Xiao Ronggui and Zhang Meiyun [5].

that the tone of Yangzhou dialect has a deep influence on the Melody trend of “Qinghe Weather”.

Not only this song but also the whole “Nan Diao” Qupai and other Qupai of Yangzhou Ditty follow such a rule. Professor Tan Xin argued in *Research on the System Composition and Evolution of Yangzhou Ditty Style* that Qupai “Yin Niu Si” melody trend is basically consistent with the lyric tone. Among them, lyrics in Level Tone or Rising Tone or Falling-rising Tone are mostly progressive. Within the third degree, the Falling Tone is often jumping, with a large span interval of four and six degrees. The Entering tone is mostly short pronunciation. She concluded that the Qupai melody of the whole Yangzhou Ditty has the characteristics of single character singing tone [1]. Li Xiaonuo, a teacher from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, argued that not only vocal music works, but also modern piano works adapted from local folk songs, there is a phenomenon of melody trend in line with dialect tones [14]. It can be seen that dialect characters and tones have a profound influence on the melody trend and harmony progress of music works since ancient times!

The above three laws have provided essential supports to inherit the song “Qinghe Weather” and the whole tune “Nan Diao” of Yangzhou Ditty.

#### **4 Innovation is the Vitality of Science Building: Inheritance of Innovation**

Nowadays, With the help of performance, video, recording, composition examples, and intangible cultural heritage on campus, the classical pieces of Yangzhou Ditty are commonly known by people. Meanwhile, driven by the new wave of music in the new era, musicians have also created innovative works integrating Yangzhou Ditty with popular music and classical music, which is another form of inheritance of Yangzhou Ditty under the background of the new era. For example, Dai Quan’s song Daoqing adds vernacular lyrics to the new understanding of the Yangzhou Ditty classic song Banqiao Daoqing, which has a unique flavor. The New Yuefu·Yangzhou Ditty series is a combination of Yangzhou Ditty and jazz music, performed by electronic organ, saxophone, guitar and other western instruments [15].

In December 2020, the ancient song “Qinghe Weather” also gave birth to a new piece of innovative music in the new era. The Opera Club of the School of Music of Nanjing Normal University created the original tune New Nan Diao, adapted from the ancient song by the composer Li Dong. In terms of tonality, New Nan Diao no longer follows the six-tone mode of Qinghe Weather, but uses the western mode of b minor, which is easy to integrate into western instruments. In terms of melody, it also uses more-than-three-step progressive skips, and leaves out many complicated drawles and embellishments. Most of them are one-word-to-one-tone. In the accompaniment, it omits the interludes which are particularly important in “Nan Diao”. In terms of orchestration, Western string band and national Sizhu band are integrated, which is different from the “Open Seat” singing form of Yangzhou Ditty, that is, Three to seven people sit around the middle table on three sides, facing the audience, and sing with traditional Chinese instruments in hand. Traditional accompaniment instruments such as dulcimer, sihu and hardwood clappers are given up, and the traditional national accompaniment band such

as guzheng, pipa, erhu, and bamboo flute are used instead. On this basis, eight violins are added, so that the overall harmonic texture of the band is richer and softer. In terms of singing and performance, the singing style of Yangzhou Ditty shares the same origin with Kun Opera, so it combines the appearance of the maidenly female role in Kun Opera with the elements of Han Chinese clothing. Four “flower gods” in Han Chinese clothing holding lotus flowers surrounding the melancholy lady who sings in Kun opera costumes, walking round the stage. The language still follows Yangzhou dialect, and the performers are no longer unified movements and lyrics, but continue the “One sings, all follows” rule, the performance can be regarded as an audio-visual feast.

Although “New Nan Diao” has different innovative forms in tonality, melody, orchestration, singing, and performance, its core of inheriting Yangzhou Ditty’s tone “Nan Diao” has not changed. Before learning “New Nan Diao”, students had nearly a semester’s experience of learning the intonation of the old “Qinghe Weather” and the figure of Kun Opera from the inheritors. Students worked with teachers in the dance room and concert hall to repeatedly refine the pronunciation, intonation and lyrics. In this process, they inherited this cultural treasure of Chinese opera subtly. At the same time, the elder generation who appreciate ditty also shows the interest in every performance of “New Nan Diao”.

The recognition of the elder generation further proves that the new era is inclusive, but also indirectly shows that the innovation of “New Nan Diao” really achieves the compatibility of “innovation” and “inheritance”. Such inheritance and innovation will emerge one after another in the future!

## 5 Conclusion

Thanks to the hard records, rescue, and publicity of generations of inheritors, musicians and scholars, Yangzhou Ditty “Nan Diao” can be inherited and continued for hundreds of years and show us the thickness of its history, the charm of its singing style and lyrics, and the popularity of its innovative works. It is with the historical data provided by these “inheritors” that the author can make a detailed analysis of “Qinghe Weather”, the representative repertoire of Yangzhou Ditty tone “Nan Diao” in different levels of inheritance. Last but not least, traditional opera music is an eternal treasure and an eternal flower in the garden of Chinese traditional culture. As an important part of Jiangnan traditional opera music culture, Yangzhou Ditty has been listed as an intangible cultural heritage. May our Chinese opera culture last forever!

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