

Reflections on Image Narration and Ethnography Writing of Ethnic Music in Tibetan-Yi Corridor*

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Abstract—After Mr. Fei Xiaotong put forward the concept of "Tibetan-Yi Corridor" for the first time, anthropology/ethnology focuses on the ethnic culture of Tibetan-Qiang-Yi cultural corridor. Subsequently, other disciplines began to carry out the corresponding topics from the perspective of cultural corridor. In May 2017, the Tibetan-Yi Corridor Music Research Center of Leshan Normal University held an academic seminar on image narration and cross-border study of ethnic music in Tibetan-Yi Corridor, which actively promoted and enriched the multi-dimensional perspective and methods of ethnic music research in Tibetan-Yi Corridor. From the perspective of ethnomusicology, this paper mainly discusses and ponders on the philosophical enlightenment of the concept of Tibetan-Yi Corridor to the study of ethnic music, the image narration of ethnic music, music ethnography writing and cross-border ethnic research methods, and the way to implement them.

Keywords—*Tibetan-Yi Corridor; image narration; music ethnography; Nazi people; cross-border ethnic groups*

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1978, Mr. Fei Xiaotong first put forward the concept of "Tibetan-Yi Corridor" in his speech on identifying the Nationalities of China at a meeting of the National Committee of the CPPCC. "Tibetan-Yi Corridor" is a historical-ethnic regional concept, but also refers to the region of the academic research. It mainly includes the mountain and canyon region formed by a series of North-South trending mountains and rivers in the adjacent regions of the present Sichuan, Yunnan and Tibet. In this cultural corridor (or cultural circle), Tibetan, Yi, Qiang, Lisu, Bai, Naxi, Pumi, Dulong, Nu, Hani, Jingpo and Lahu people, and other nationalities who speak Tibeto-Burman language are now living there. Among the Tibetan-Burmese language tribes, most of which are Tibetan and Yi-language tribes, as well as some Altaic-language migration tribes. It is the treasure house for studying ethnic music and dance.

The concept of "Tibetan-Yi Corridor" is of great significance to national and regional studies. First of all, "Tibetan-Yi Corridor" mainly includes the crisscross

mountain and gorge areas of six rivers, Minjiang River, Dadu River, Yalong River, Jinsha River, Lancang River and Nujiang River, and Leshan is at the confluence of the three rivers. In this sense, it is clearer to study the diachronic and synchronic distribution and inheritance of the boatman work songs in the Minjiang River and Dadu River from the perspective of Southwest China. Secondly, the concept of "Tibetan-Yi Corridor" makes a clearer study of the genres, themes, musical forms of minority music and the evolution and integration of minority ethnic music. Thirdly, rely on the academic perspective of the Tibetan-Yi Corridor, and take this opportunity to fully establish the academic exchange platform and cooperation platform of the research center, and integrate interdisciplinary research through the cultural perspective of the Tibetan-Yi Corridor.

II. REFLECTIONS ON IMAGE NARRATION OF ETHNIC MUSIC IN TIBETAN-YI CORRIDOR

Contemporary technological advances and the proliferation of cyber culture have created the "self-media" era (for example, we can clearly record music-related information and data through mobile phones in field surveys). In ethnology and cultural anthropology, the use of image records is relatively perfect; in the study of cultural anthropology it has a "place". Visual anthropology and other disciplines have made the theoretical and practical research on image record.

However, in the study of ethnomusicology, the use of image recording is later than that of anthropology. So, in addition to the text and other research achievements in the study of national music, how to make good use of image narration is an academic topic before us. For example, there are several questions worth pondering: first, how does image narration play a role in the entire research results, takes which part or point of the field investigation as achievements and considers the function of narration image to the achievements. Second, how to complete the image narrative theme, shooting process, and use which techniques and think other making issues. Thirdly, consider the ethical and career issues in the image narration. Of course, it mainly concerns cultural taboos of the Cultural Bureau in the recording and presentation. Therefore, for the technical operation of ethnic music image narration, we should pay attention to the following issues or links: first, how to write the script and

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shoot; second, how to conceive the use of narrative techniques; third, how to reasonably use lens language; fourth, how to improve post production links. In addition, the most noteworthy issue is that the image narrator respects the cultural bureau's values and ethics.

III. REFLECTIONS ON NAZI MUSIC ETHNOGRAPHY WRITING

For more than ten years, the author has always adhered to the basic work of collecting and collating data in the investigation of minority music in Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou and other places. Especially, in the study of "Nazi" music, it has been emphasized that how to grasp the basic data and how to write music ethnography. The ethnic groups with unique cultural characteristics live on the border of Sichuan and Yunnan. The academic circles have studied the historical origin, ethnic affiliation and cultural phenomena of Nazi people from different perspectives, and have made many achievements. In a word, his ethnic affiliation basically includes: first the Nazi people belong to the Naxi branch, and second, the Nazi people are Mongolian descendants. In addition, some scholars believe that the Nazi people are Mosuo people. They call themselves Nazi, and "Nazi" is the pronunciation of Chinese words. There are about 45,000 people in this minority nationality. They mainly distribute in southwestern Sichuan Province and several adjacent counties in northern Yunnan Province. There are more than 10,000 people in Yanyuan County of Sichuan Province, more than 10,000 people in Muli Tibetan Autonomous County, more than 1,000 people in the suburbs of Dukou City and Yanbian County respectively, and more than 20,000 people in Ninglang Yi Autonomous County of Yunnan Province.¹ (p 96-101)



Fig. 1. Nazi folk artists in Gubaishu Village, Yanyuan County²

As far as the writing content of Nazi music ethnography is concerned, the main purpose is to find out the problems through field investigation, so as to explore and find the solutions and specific ways to solve the problems. Specifically speaking, it includes the following points: first, through the description of music ethnography, make systematic sort and deep analysis on the traditional ritual music and folk songs of Sichuan Nazi people. On this basis,

further explain the significance and function of traditional music in the Nazi cultural network. Second, go in-depth study on spread and concentrated culture of traditional music of Nazi people, and further explore the reasons for the composition of its music culture. In other words, it is to make a more comprehensive "synchronic-diachronic" analysis and study of the traditional Nazi music in Sichuan Province. Third, make a thorough investigation on Nazi people's musical customs, musical concepts and musical identity, and further expounds the cultural identity of the Nazi people and other issues, and from the perspective of traditional music put forward constructive opinions and theory on group belonging and identification of Nazi people. Fourth, on the basis of the study of music ethnography, analyze the communication and blending between the traditional music of Nazi people in Sichuan and the music culture of other ethnic groups.

To sum up the research contents of Nazi music ethnography, the main content of this subject includes two parts: field investigation and desk writing. Firstly, on the basis of the original field investigation, the author further deepened the data from field survey, so as to enrich and perfect the living data of traditional music of Nazi people in Sichuan as much as possible. Secondly, on the basis of solid data, the paper analyzes and explains the traditional music of Nazi people in Sichuan, and puts forward persuasive theoretical viewpoints. Among them, the key and difficult points to break through basically include the following two points: first, how to select and determine the factors, such as folk artists, music customs and rituals, and how to deepen and broaden the scope and content of the investigation; second, through the investigation of the living data of traditional music, how to classify the genres and themes of traditional music clearly, and how to present and construct the vivid ethnographic texts of Nazi traditional music, so as to further analyze and explain the purpose.

IV. REFLECTIONS ON CROSS-BORDER STUDY OF ETHNIC MUSIC IN TIBETAN-YI CORRIDOR

Cross-border research is very important in ethnic music in Tibetan Yi Corridor. As far as cross-border ethnic music research is concerned, the author believes that this is a paradigm of contemporary ethnomusicology and Chinese ethnomusicology, because a research paradigm is composed of several theories and theoretical perspectives. In other words, a research paradigm is constructed on the basis of a number of studies, so cross-border ethnic music research has reason to become a research paradigm. Since it was put forward in the field of ethnomusicology, and in the process of exploration and practice we have achieved certain research results, which provides new research ideas for ethnomusicology. Especially, the comparative study of cross-border ethnic studies can best explain the changes of music culture of an ethnic group, the influence of different institutional cultures on music and so on. Mr. Zhao Tarim, in recent years, has been actively promoting the theoretical improvement and practical research work of cross-border ethnic music. "Cross-border ethnic groups" are homologous ethnic groups separated from neighboring countries for

¹ Li Shaoming. Ethnic Minorities in the Border Area between Sichuan and Yunnan. Social Science Research, 1st Issue in 1983.

² Photo: shot on Jan. 12, 2015, by Zhou Tegus.

historical reasons. They are mainly distributed in the neighboring countries of Northeast Asia, Central Asia and Indo-China Peninsula of Southeast Asia. The particularity of these groups lies in its diachronic and synchronic continuity of music culture, which can provide us with fresh cross-border resources to deepen the study of ethnic music, and then better establish a mutual reference system for the study. In the national project "Memoir of Cross-border Ethnic Music Culture in the Lancang-Mekong River Basin", Mr. Zhao Tarim extended Wang Guowei's theory of "double evidence", including different type of archaeological and documentary materials, to the mutual confirmation of field data in different regional spaces at home and abroad, thus realizing historical reconstruction.

The author believes that in the cross-border, cross-cultural research of ethnic music in Tibetan-Yi Corridor, comparison is an effective research perspective. For comparative studies, Max Mueller, the founder of religious anthropology, once said to Goethe, "Knowing a one-sided of view means knowing nothing". He further explained: "When comparative linguistics researchers boldly adopted Goethe's view: 'knowing one language means knowing nothing at all', people were surprised at first, but soon they realized the truth of this sentence. Did Goethe mean that Homer and Shakespeare know no other language than their own mother tongue, and therefore Homer did not know Greek, and Shakespeare did not know English? No, it isn't! It means that Homer and Shakespeare do not really understand what language is, although they can use their mother tongue very skillfully."³ In the comparative study, the author paid attention to the following relations (see the graph of ethnic music relationships in Tibetan-Yi Corridor).

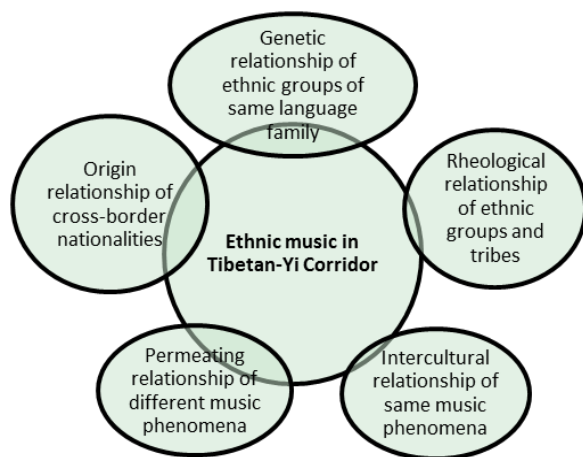


Fig. 2. Graph of ethnic music relationships in Tibetan-Yi Corridor.

V. CONCLUSION

The Tibetan-Yi Corridor is the treasure house of living ethnic music, as well as the music treasure house of cultural exchange and blending of ethnic music. Therefore, in order to fully dig the deep meaning of ethnic music in Tibetan-Yi

Corridor, in the research methods, first of all, the field study is taken as the cornerstone of research methodology. Secondly, pay attention to the "diachronic-synchronic", "time-space" and "theme-guest" observation perspective of ethnomusicology: in the study of music culture in ethnomusicology, there is a vivid metaphor: "observe fish in the water", rather than taking "fish" out of "water" to analysis its specimen structure. This shows that the perspective of ethnomusicology is not only focused on the internal structure of the living "fish", but also on the blending relationship between "fish" and "water".

In May 2017, the Tibetan-Yi Corridor Music Research Center held an academic seminar on image narration and cross-border study of ethnic music in the Tibetan-Yi Corridor ①. Based on the existing video recording results of the ethnic music – Memoir of Cross-border Ethnic Music Culture in the Lancang-Mekong River Basin, a key project of the State Social Science Foundation, the seminar also explored the application of cross-border research paradigm to the ethnic music research in Tibetan-Yi Corridor. The purpose is to fully deepen and expand the academic multi-perspective of the study of traditional culture in the Tibetan-Yi Corridor, strengthen the basic, countermeasure and prospective research exchanges and cooperation of ethnomusicology in the music culture study of the Tibetan-Yi Corridor, and build up the research paradigm of cross-border ethnic music in theory and practice and highlight the tension of image narration in the study of ethnic music.

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³ Max Mueller. Introduction to Religious Studies. Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1989, 10-11.