

Philosophy of Cultural and Creative Innovation in Lusheng Musical Instruments in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture

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Abstract: The study focused on the philosophy of cultural and creative innovation in Lusheng musical instruments in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture. It employed a qualitative research methodology, which entailed conducting interviews and observations with a diverse group of informants, including Lusheng musicians, cultural leaders, artisans, and community elders. The research found that highlights are a complex interplay between philosophy, cultural heritage, and creative innovation. The traditional 6-pipe Lusheng, deeply embedded in the cultural practices of the Miao and Dong communities, is a powerful symbol of cultural identity and continuity. The evolution of the Lusheng focuses on the philosophy of cultural preservation and the creative innovations that have enabled the instrument to adapt to modern contexts. Through the pioneering work of Mr. Dong Dan Gan and his successors, the Lusheng has transformed from a traditional instrument with limited tonal capacity to a versatile musical tool capable of performing a wide range of compositions. This transformation underscores a philosophical commitment to maintaining cultural roots while embracing necessary changes to remain relevant. The study further examines the multifaceted role of the Lusheng in various aspects of community life, including funeral rituals, celebration festivals, economic activities, and education. This reflects a dynamic interplay between tradition and innovation, ensuring its ongoing cultural significance. Strengthening education, encouraging innovation, promoting tourism, and supporting government initiatives are essential to preserving this heritage. These efforts will ensure the Lusheng remains vibrant and relevant for future generations.

Keywords: Lusheng, Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, Cultural Heritage, Creative Innovation, Philosophy

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of the Lusheng, a traditional wind instrument made of reed pipes, highly valued by many ethnic groups in Southwest China, demonstrates a significant interaction between cultural legacy and inventive

progress. The Lusheng serves as a musical instrument and a representation of the cultural heritage, beliefs, and historical stories of various communities, such as the Miao, Dong, Shui, Gelao, Yao, Zhuang, Yi, and others who have been using it for generations. The classic six-pipe Lusheng and its contemporary multi-pipe successors represent distinct versions of a musical instrument and phases in an ongoing process of cultural adjustment and creativity (Xu & Karin, 2024). The philosophical conflict between maintaining tradition and accepting progress forms the foundation of the Lusheng's cultural and creative innovation. Cultural legacy, namely traditional musical instruments, acts as a storehouse of shared recollection and identity. The Lusheng, known for its unique sound and its significant role in communal events, including festivals, ceremonies, and social gatherings, is an essential part of the cultural identity of the ethnic minorities in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, located in Guizhou Province. Therefore, any alterations made to the Lusheng instrument are not simply mechanical adjustments but also profound declarations regarding the interconnectedness of the past, present, and future (Meng & Champadaeng, 2024; Wu, 2012; Xu, 2021). The advent of the multi-pipe Lusheng throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s signified a notable change in this association. In Guizhou Province, musicians and artisans joined forces with the aim of enhancing the musical potential of the Lusheng instrument. Their collaboration resulted in the addition of extra pipes to the standard six-pipe design. This innovation enabled the Lusheng to perform in several modes and include chromatic scales, so broadening its range of music to encompass both traditional folk melodies and more intricate compositions, including renowned foreign songs. This artistic pursuit delved into the evolution of cultural items, preserving their fundamental nature rather than solely focusing on technological improvement (Zhao et al., 2008). Philosophically, the creation of the Lusheng instrument embodies a continuous exchange between novelty and conservation. The traditional six-pipe Lusheng instrument, which has limited tones by design, represents a deep connection to ancestors' traditions and the natural rhythms of community life (Huang, 2012; Wang & Huang, 2024). The multi-pipe Lusheng represents a progressive mindset that welcomes new opportunities while also respecting traditional traditions. This phenomenon exemplifies a more comprehensive philosophical position the communities hold that tradition is not fixed but rather a dynamic process that can adjust and develop in reaction to evolving conditions (Chen, 2024; Kertz-Welzel, 2016). The study of Lusheng in ethnomusicology, cultural preservation, and creative

innovation explores the philosophical and cultural dimensions of the Lusheng, a traditional instrument central to the identity of ethnic minorities in Southwest China. It sheds light on the complex balance between tradition and progress, providing a sophisticated understanding of preserving cultural heritage and promoting creative advancements (Koskoff, 2020; Liu & Chuangprakhon, 2024). The evolution of the Lusheng from the traditional six-pipe to the modern multi-pipe version provides valuable insights into the interaction between cultural legacy and inventive progress, reinforcing the importance of preserving cultural artifacts in ways that allow for adaptation and growth. This study investigates the philosophical dimensions of cultural and creative innovation surrounding the Lusheng, a traditional musical instrument and cultural artifact. While previous research has explored the Lusheng's significance, it has yet to delve deeply into the philosophical aspects guiding its evolution, particularly how communities balance preserving tradition with embracing innovation. This study addresses this gap by examining Lusheng's development through a philosophical lens, viewing tradition as a dynamic and evolving concept. The study aims to provide insights into the respectful and forward-looking preservation and innovation of cultural heritage while highlighting the Lusheng's current role and significance within its community by exploring the creative processes behind the instrument's innovations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Historical Evolution of the Lusheng

The historical development of the Lusheng instrument. The historical progression of Lusheng and its wider category, the Sheng, reflects the intricate advancement of Chinese culture and society throughout thousands of years. The Sheng's first documented appearances, as recorded in oracle bone inscriptions from the Yin Shang Dynasty, signify the commencement of its connection with both music and ritual (Gong et al., 2021). During the Western Zhou Dynasty, the Sheng instrument gained significant importance in court music, playing a crucial role in the development of a ritual and music system that had a widespread impact on all social strata. During the Eastern Zhou Dynasty, there were additional improvements in Sheng designs, which continued to develop during the following dynasties. During the Han Dynasty, the Sheng became highly esteemed, while the Sui and Tang Dynasties saw the instrument thrive alongside the extensive cultural interactions of the time (Cheng, 2024; Lu,

2022). The Song Dynasty played a significant role in advancing the development of the Sheng by promoting the expansion of folk music, which in turn contributed to the instrument's increased popularity and versatility (Wang & Luo, 2022). During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the Sheng family had substantial growth and success, flourishing in both the royal court and among the general public. The Lusheng instrument held significant cultural significance throughout the Republic of China era and was closely associated with ceremonial traditions. In the People's Republic of China, the Lusheng instrument has remained used for various celebrations, and the introduction of multi-tube Lusheng instruments has ushered in a new era of innovation. The Sheng and consequently the Lusheng, has consistently served as a powerful representation of cultural endurance and liveliness in Chinese society (Ho & Law, 2006; Xu & Rong, 2021).

2.2 Lusheng's General Knowledge in China

The Lusheng, an ancient reedpipe and aerophone instrument originating from southern China, is deeply embedded in the cultural practices of numerous ethnic minorities, including the Miao, Dong, Shui, Yao, She, Yi, Lahu, and others. Its geographical distribution spans several provinces in China, such as Guizhou, Sichuan, Yunnan, Guangxi, and Hunan, and extends to Hmong communities in Southeast Asian countries like Laos, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Thailand. The Miao ethnic group now recognizes the Lusheng as a revered symbol of their cultural heritage, evolving from their migration history (Chang et al., 2024; Qi et al., 2020). It serves as both a means of preserving and expressing their rich historical narrative as well as a vehicle for the transmission of their customary practices. The Yin and Shang Dynasties, where the Sheng family of instruments, including the Lusheng, began to emerge, are the historical roots of the Lusheng. Further evidence from the Ming Dynasty underscores the enduring significance of the Lusheng within the broader framework of Chinese cultural heritage (Wang & Chansuwan, 2022; Weilin, 2022). Based on their angles and shapes, we categorize Lusheng instruments into three main groups, each contributing to the preservation, transmission, and knowledge of this traditional musical legacy (Yung, 2019). The acute-angle Lusheng, characterized by an angle of less than 90 degrees between the sheng bucket and the sheng Miao, typically features resonance tubes that enhance its sound. The right-angle Lusheng, distinguished by a 90-degree alignment between the sheng tube and sheng bucket, may include additional resonators such as gourds or horns. The obtuse-angle Lusheng, where the

angle exceeds 90 degrees, often incorporates a gourd-shaped resonator and multiple pipes, allowing for a range of musical tones (Xu, 2022). These variations in design reflect the adaptability and regional diversity of the Lusheng, which plays a crucial role in maintaining its cultural relevance across different communities.

2.3 The General Knowledge of Philosophical and Cultural of Lusheng

The evolution of philosophical practice in China, much like the development of the Lusheng musical instrument in the Miao and Dong communities, illustrates how traditional principles and methods can be adapted to address contemporary challenges and enhance both individual and societal well-being (Yang & Welch, 2014). In developing countries today, social attitudes toward technology and cultural artifacts like the Lusheng often exhibit a more positive appreciation than in the developed world. The perception that these technologies and cultural practices can reduce labor burdens, increase productivity, and preserve cultural heritage drives this appreciation. However, China's philosophical engagement with technology reflects this positive view in a dialectical relationship with a cultural past and traditional suspicion of technology (Wang, 2013). To illustrate these points, a case study of the emergence of philosophical perspectives on technology in China can be used. The evolution of the Lusheng reflects the historical reverence and skepticism Chinese culture has harbored towards technological advancements. This instrument, deeply embedded in the cultural practices of the Miao and Dong communities, has seen significant innovations over time, reflecting a broader philosophical approach that values both preservation and adaptation (Ding et al., 2024; Fan, 2024). Lusheng's transition from a traditional 6-pipe instrument to more complex multi-pipe variants highlights the same philosophical trajectory observed in China's broader engagement with technology. These innovations have allowed the Lusheng to remain relevant in a modern context, much like how philosophical practice in China has evolved to provide practical guidance for contemporary issues (Tan, 2018). The growing spread of philosophical practice communities across China parallels the increasing embrace of Lusheng music, both of which reflect a desire to integrate traditional wisdom with modern needs.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study on the Lusheng musical instruments in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province, China, adopts a

qualitative research approach. This methodology is chosen for its effectiveness in ethnomusicology theory (Mu, 2003; Rice, 2010). It explores the complex cultural, historical, and philosophical dimensions surrounding the Lusheng, particularly in terms of its cultural heritage, creative innovations, and role in contemporary society.

3.1 Research Design

The research design is primarily ethnographic, focusing on in-depth, context-rich insights into the Lusheng's cultural significance. This design allows for a comprehensive understanding of the Lusheng's role within the Miao and Dong communities, capturing the nuances of its use in various social, cultural, and economic contexts.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

Data collection was conducted through fieldwork, interviews, participant observations, and document analysis.

1) Fieldwork: Extensive field visits were made to key locations in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, where Lusheng music is actively practiced. This involved attending traditional festivals, rituals, and Lusheng performances to observe the instrument in its cultural context.

2) Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a diverse group of informants, including Lusheng musicians, cultural leaders, artisans, and community elders. These interviews aimed to gather personal narratives and reflections on the Lusheng's cultural importance, changes in its practice, and its evolution over time.

3) Participant Observation: Researchers actively engaged in community events where Lusheng music was performed. This immersion provided first-hand experience and deeper insights into the social functions and significance of Lusheng music within the community.

4) Document Analysis: Historical records, scholarly articles, and local archives were analyzed to trace the development of the Lusheng, its cultural roots, and its philosophical underpinnings. This also included the analysis of visual materials, such as photographs and videos, documenting the Lusheng's use in different settings.

3.3 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, focusing on identifying recurring patterns and themes related to the Lusheng's cultural

and philosophical significance. The analysis also involved comparative methods to understand the differences and similarities in Lusheng practices across various regions and communities within Qiandongnan.

1) Thematic Analysis: Key themes such as cultural heritage, creative innovation, and the philosophy of tradition and change were identified and examined. These themes were explored to understand how the Lusheng has been preserved, adapted, and innovated.

2) Comparative Analysis: Different versions of the Lusheng (e.g., traditional 6-pipe versus multi-pipe versions) were compared to assess the impact of creative innovations on the instrument's cultural and musical roles. This analysis also included comparisons of Lusheng use in different festivals and rituals.

4. RESULTS

The study of Lusheng instruments in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province, China, reveals a fascinating intersection of philosophy, cultural significance, and creative innovation. Over time, the traditional Lusheng, deeply rooted in the cultural practices of the local minority groups, has evolved, reflecting the philosophical perspectives of these communities on tradition and change. The Lusheng, as a cultural artifact, embodies the values, beliefs, and historical narratives of the Miao and Dong peoples, serving not only as a musical instrument but also as a symbol of cultural identity.

4.1 Philosophy of Cultural Preservation the Traditional 6-Pipe Lusheng

The traditional 6-pipe Lusheng in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture exemplifies the philosophy of cultural preservation. Generations have passed down the traditional structure and playing techniques of this instrument. In this region, the Lusheng's characteristic acute angle between the blowing and articulating pipes symbolizes the adherence to centuries-old cultural norms. The philosophical approach to preserving the traditional form of the Lusheng emphasizes the importance of continuity in cultural practices, ensuring that the instrument remains a vital part of the community's cultural heritage. The Traditional 6-pipe Lusheng holds significant cultural importance within the Miao and Dong communities of Qiandongnan. Its unique construction, including the resonator made from bamboo, bamboo shoots, or horns, serves not only to enhance the instrument's sound but

also to reinforce its cultural identity. The resonance tube, a distinct feature of the Lusheng in this region, amplifies the sound in a way intimately tied to the community's cultural practices, such as festivals, rituals, and social gatherings. The cultural significance of the Lusheng is further highlighted by its use in traditional ceremonies, where it acts as a medium of communication with ancestors and deities, reflecting the deep spiritual connections embedded within the region's cultural fabric (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Traditional 6-pipe Lusheng

In the Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province, China, the philosophy behind the traditional 6-pipe Lusheng is deeply rooted in the region's rich cultural heritage and creative practices. The utilization of two distinct scale arrangements in the context of the traditional 6-pipe Lusheng reflects a creative innovation passed down through generations. These varying scale arrangements add to the instrument's melodic diversity and complexity and enhance its cultural significance. This diversity is a testament to the philosophy of adaptability and resilience within the community, where the Lusheng serves as a powerful tool for the preservation and transmission of traditional knowledge and practices. Through these creative innovations, the Lusheng continues to evolve, ensuring its cultural heritage remains vibrant and relevant in contemporary times. Each set of pipes is arranged according to a particular scale, forming various modes.



Figure 2: The Sale of Traditional 6-Pipe Lusheng of “Sol” Mode (1)

Figure 2 shows the traditional 6-pipe Lusheng of “Sol” Mode. This scale arrangement is popular in South Guizhou, West Guizhou, and Guiyang City.



Figure 3: The Sale of Traditional 6-Pipe Lusheng of “Sol” Mode (2)

Figure 3 shows the traditional 6-pipe Lusheng of “Sol” Mode. This scale arrangement is popular in parts of the province, such as Hanging County, Danchhai County, and Shipping County.

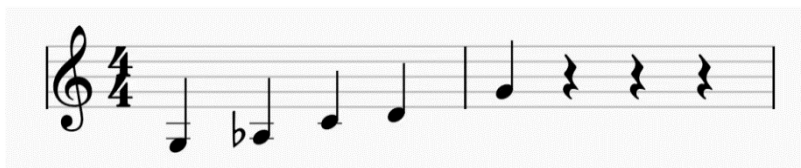


Figure 4: The Sale of Traditional 6-Pipe Lusheng of “Sol” Mode (3)

Figure 4 shows the traditional 6-pipe Lusheng of “Sol” Mode. The scale arrangement of Lusheng is popular in southeast Guizhou, such as Huangping County, Danzhai County, Shibing County, Taijiang County, Jianhe County, and so on.



Figure 5: The Sale of Traditional 6-Pipe Lusheng of “Re” Mode

Figure 5 shows the traditional 6-pipe Lusheng of “Re” Mode. The scale arrangement of Lusheng is popular in the southeast of Guizhou Leishan County and Danzhai County.

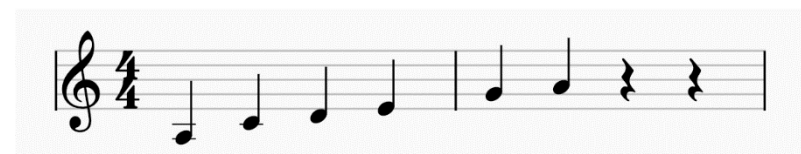


Figure 6: The Sale of Traditional 6-Pipe Lusheng of “La” Mode

Figure 6 shows the traditional 6-pipe Lusheng of “La” Mode. The scale arrangement of Lusheng is popular in Guizhou Province, such as Rongjiang County in southeast Guizhou, Ziyun County in South Guizhou, Wangmo County, and so on. This style of Lusheng is also popular in Bijie and Dafang in the north of Guizhou, Guanling in the west of Guizhou, and near Guiyang in the central region.



Figure 7: The Sale of Traditional 6-Pipe Lusheng of “Do” Mode

Figure 7 shows the traditional 6-pipe Lusheng of “Do” Mode. The scale arrangement of Lusheng is popular in Huangping County and Taijiang County in southeast Guizhou. In the Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province, China, the traditional 6-pipe Lusheng embodies a philosophy deeply intertwined with the region's rich cultural heritage and the spirit of creative innovation. The Lusheng's utilization of various scale arrangements, including the "Sol," "Re," "La," and "Do" modes, reflects the community's adaptability and resilience in preserving and transmitting traditional knowledge. These scale arrangements passed down through generations, contribute to the instrument's melodic diversity and complexity, enhancing its cultural significance across different counties in the region. The philosophy of the Lusheng is further exemplified by the unique construction and playing techniques that vary by region, reflecting local cultural identities. The process of producing sound on the Lusheng—by blowing or sucking air through the pipes to vibrate the reed and resonate within the sound tube—demonstrates the creative solutions developed to ensure the instrument's distinct tonal qualities. The addition of resonance cylinders, which amplify and enrich the sound, highlights how creative innovation has been employed to maintain the instrument's relevance and impact within the community.

4.2 The Evolution of Multi-Pipe Lusheng

In 1956, Mr. Dong Dan Gan embarked on a significant endeavor to enhance the capabilities of the traditional 6-pipe Lusheng musical instrument. He aimed to contribute meaningfully to its preservation and the broader dissemination of its cultural and musical knowledge. The traditional 6-pipe Lusheng, commonly found in Danzhai County, Guizhou Province, China, was limited by its ability to produce only six distinct tones. These limitations restricted the instrument's versatility, particularly in performing a wide range of contemporary musical compositions, and made it less suitable for solo performances.

Motivated by these challenges, Mr. Dong Dan Gan focused on overcoming these constraints, aiming to adapt the Lusheng to meet modern musical demands while preserving its cultural heritage. Recognizing the need to modernize the instrument while preserving its cultural heritage, Dong Dan Gan expanded the Lusheng's capabilities by creating an 8-pipe version incorporating additional tones, specifically the MI and SOL notes, broadening the instrument's musical versatility (Figure 8).

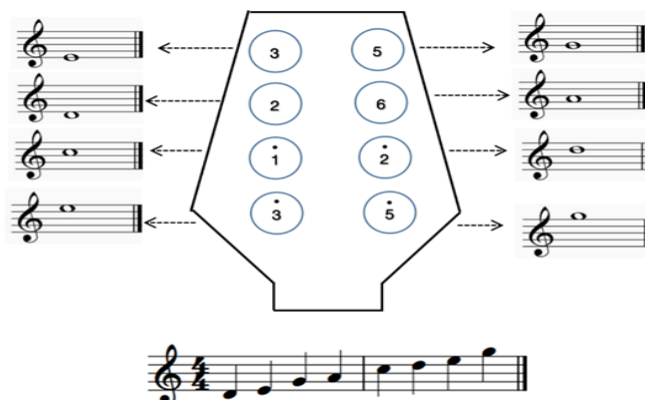


Figure 8: Lusheng Multi-Pipe Structure (8 Pipes) of “Re” Mode

Dong Dan Gan continued to innovate as he progressed, developing an 11-pipe Lusheng that included three more pipes, allowing for a transition from the pentatonic to the heptatonic scale. This innovation significantly enhanced the Lusheng's ability to perform a wider array of musical compositions, thus safeguarding traditional music while adapting it to modern artistic requirements. His approach reflects a deep philosophy of cultural continuity, where traditional instruments must evolve to remain relevant in a changing musical landscape (Figure 9).

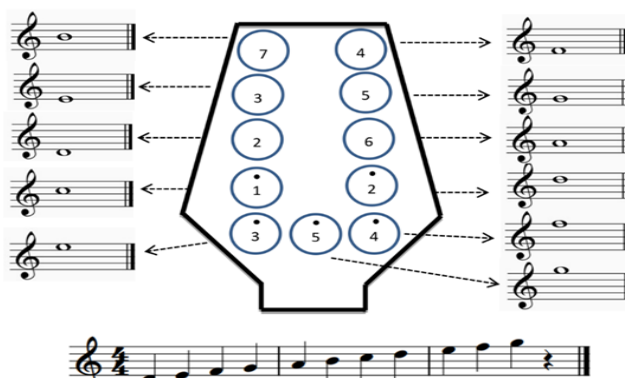
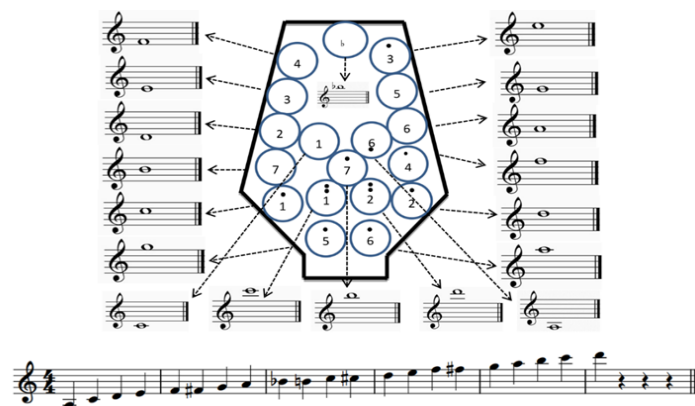


Figure 9: Lusheng Multi-Pipe Structure (11 Pipes) of “Re” Mode

Dong Dan Gan's work also recognized the importance of regional cultural diversity. He customized the Lusheng for various counties in the Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefectures, taking into account the unique musical traditions of each area. By amalgamating different pipe configurations, he developed versions of the Lusheng that could be widely accepted and used by musicians from different regions. Regional variations not only preserved but also enriched the cultural practices associated with the Lusheng, thanks to this crucial effort. Further innovations led to the development of even more complex versions of the Lusheng, such as the 12-pipe, 13-pipe, and ultimately the 18-pipe, 21-tone Lusheng. Each version addressed specific musical needs, such as expanding

the tonal range, facilitating solo performances, and allowing for transpositions required by more complex musical compositions. These advancements were not just technical improvements; they represented a creative reimagining of the instrument, ensuring that it could continue to serve as a vital part of both traditional and contemporary music. Dong Dan Gan's work culminated in the creation of the 18-pipe, 21-tone Lusheng, widely regarded as a groundbreaking achievement in musical instrument innovation. Dong Dan Gan designed this version of the Lusheng to incorporate a wide range of tones and enhance playability, making it suitable for both traditional ensemble performances and modern solo presentations. The 18-pipe, 21-tone Lusheng stands as a testament to Dong Dan Gan's philosophy of balancing cultural preservation with creative innovation, ensuring that the Lusheng remains a relevant and cherished instrument in the musical traditions of the Miao and Dong communities (Figure 10).



rituals. This enduring practice reflects a philosophy of cultural preservation, where the instrument is valued for its historical and spiritual significance and its ability to maintain deep connections between the community and its ancestral traditions. The 6-pipe Lusheng's role in these settings is a powerful symbol of continuity, ensuring that the cultural heritage of the Miao and Dong people is passed down through generations. Building on the foundational work of Mr. Dong Dan Gan, his musical inheritors have embraced creative innovations that have led to the development of enhanced Lusheng variants, specifically the 16-pipe and 19-pipe versions. These modern adaptations have expanded the Lusheng's musical capabilities, allowing it to meet the demands of contemporary music while preserving its cultural roots. The 16-pipe and 19-pipe Lushengs, with their broader tonal range and ability to play more complex compositions, have become integral to everyday entertainment within the community. These innovations have increased the instrument's versatility and appeal, bridging the gap between traditional cultural practices and modern musical expressions (Figures 11 and 12).

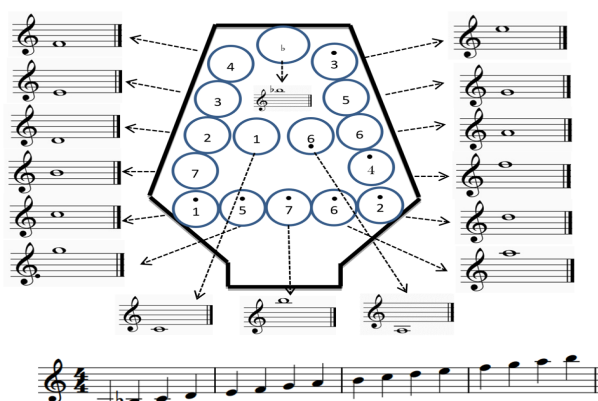


Figure 11: Lusheng Multi-Pipe Structure (16 Pipes) of “Re” Mode

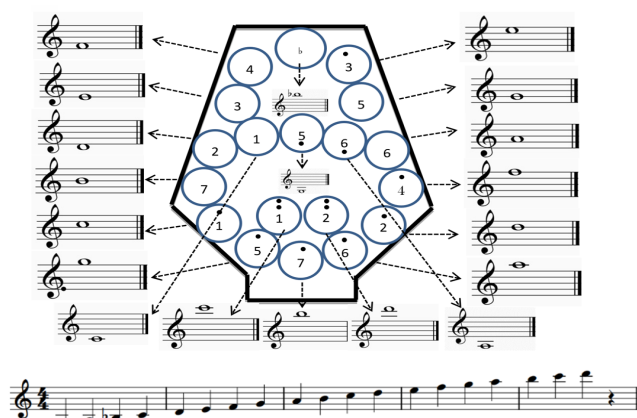


Figure 12: Lusheng Multi-Pipe Structure (19 Pipes) of “Re” Mode

The inheritors of Mr. Dong Dan Gan have continued to honor the

philosophy of balancing tradition with modernity, ensuring that the Lusheng remains a relevant and cherished part of the community's daily life. Their creative innovations have allowed the Lusheng to adapt to new contexts without losing its cultural significance, demonstrating a commitment to preserving the instrument's heritage while fostering its evolution. Through these efforts, the 16-pipe and 19-pipe Lushengs have become symbols of cultural resilience and creativity, embodying the ongoing legacy of Mr. Dong Dan Gan and ensuring that the Lusheng continues to thrive in the ever-changing musical landscape.

4.4 The Multifaceted Role of Lusheng in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture

The cultural heritage of Lusheng musical instruments in the Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture is deeply intertwined with the region's traditions, particularly in the contexts of funeral rituals, celebration festivals, economic activities, and education. In funeral rituals, the Lusheng serves as a cultural and spiritual bridge, connecting the physical and spiritual realms, offering solace to grieving families, and reinforcing community bonds. The philosophy behind its use in these ceremonies underscores the instrument's sacred role in maintaining cultural continuity and spiritual well-being. Lusheng music is integral to cultural practices in celebration festivals, marking significant communal events with its distinctive melodies. The creative innovation of integrating Lusheng into various celebratory customs has strengthened its role in enhancing social cohesion and maintaining the community's cultural fabric. The Drum Zang Festival, held every 13 years, exemplifies Lusheng's pivotal role in honoring ancestral spirits, guiding the souls of the deceased, and ensuring the cultural continuity of these age-old traditions. Economically, Lusheng plays a vital role in local festivals, driving demand for instrument production and performances and attracting tourism. Lusheng's creative innovation in use has transformed it into an economic asset, stimulating local economies through sales and performances. The philosophy of integrating traditional instruments into modern economic frameworks highlights Lusheng's adaptability and relevance in contemporary contexts. In education, the cultural heritage of Lusheng is preserved and promoted through formal and informal learning initiatives. These programs focus on skill development, community engagement, and reinforcing cultural identity. By fostering creative innovation in musical expression, education empowers musicians to explore new artistic avenues

while maintaining the cultural integrity of Lusheng music. This approach guarantees the transmission of Lusheng traditions and heritage across generations, enhancing the community's cultural fabric and preserving the music's dynamic relevance in contemporary times.

5. DISCUSSION

The study of Lusheng musical instruments in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province, China, illuminates a profound intersection of philosophy, cultural significance, and creative innovation. The traditional 6-pipe Lusheng, a cornerstone of the Miao and Dong communities' cultural heritage, exemplifies a philosophy deeply rooted in cultural preservation and continuity (Guo, 2019; Wang, 2014). This instrument, with its distinctive acute-angle construction and resonance-enhancing design, is not merely a musical device but a symbol of the enduring cultural identity of these ethnic groups. It plays a vital role in both sacred and secular contexts, from funeral rituals that connect the physical and spiritual realms to the vibrant celebration festivals that reinforce social cohesion and community bonds (Hu & Sornyai, 2023; Xu & Rong, 2021). The evolution of the Lusheng, particularly the development of multi-pipe variants like the 16-pipe and 19-pipe Lushengs, further demonstrates the instrument's cultural significance. These creative innovations, spearheaded by Mr. Dong Dan Gan and continued by his musical inheritors, have significantly broadened the instrument's musical capabilities, allowing it to meet the demands of contemporary compositions while preserving its traditional roots. These modern Lusheng variants' ability to perform more complex and varied music highlights the adaptability of cultural practices and the community's commitment to preserving their heritage while embracing change (Duan & Choatchamrat, 2023; Li et al., 2022). Economically, the Lusheng has transcended its role as a mere cultural artifact to become a significant contributor to the local economy. The creative innovation in its use during festivals and public performances has transformed it into an economic asset, driving demand for instrument production and attracting tourism (Huang, 2024). The incorporation of traditional instruments such as the Lusheng into contemporary economic frameworks exemplifies an adaptable philosophy that sustains traditional practices through their relevance in modern settings (Chow, 2019). Educationally, the cultural heritage of the Lusheng is actively preserved and promoted through both formal and informal

learning programs. These initiatives are critical in ensuring the transmission of traditional knowledge and skills across generations, fostering a sense of pride and ownership among learners (Erjian & Chuangprakhon, 2023; Yantian et al., 2021). The emphasis on creative innovation within these educational programs allows for the continuous evolution of Lusheng music, ensuring that it remains a vibrant and integral part of the community's cultural life (Shek, 2010; Yip, 2004). By balancing tradition with modernity, education plays a crucial role in sustaining the dynamic relevance of Lusheng music in the ever-changing cultural landscape.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study of Lusheng musical instruments reveals a nuanced understanding of how philosophy, cultural significance, and creative innovation interplay to sustain a rich cultural heritage. The evolution of the Lusheng, particularly under the guidance of figures like Mr. Dong Dan Gan, is a powerful example of how traditional cultural practices can adapt and thrive in contemporary contexts. The Lusheng, as a symbol of cultural resilience and creativity, not only preserves but also enriches and expands the heritage of the Miao and Dong communities for future generations. This ongoing process of creative innovation ensures that the Lusheng remains a relevant and cherished part of traditional and modern musical practices, embodying the enduring philosophy of cultural preservation and adaptation.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthening cultural education programs focused on Lusheng traditions in schools and cultural centers is crucial for preserving its philosophical and cultural heritage. Encouraging creative innovation can make the instrument more versatile, whereas promoting Lusheng through festivals and tourism can increase its visibility and create economic opportunities. The government's financial aid and cultural policies will support these efforts, ensuring the preservation of philosophical values and cultural traditions. Additionally, documenting and digitally preserving Lusheng practices ensures their philosophical, cultural, and historical significance is accessible to future generations. Though limited to a specific geographic region, the study's findings offer practical implications for balancing tradition and modernity. Future research could explore broader

applications. These initiatives will help maintain Lusheng's cultural relevance and creative innovation in local and global contexts.

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