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A Study of the Regional Characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's Choral Music Works

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Abstract

Background and Aim: This article takes the regional characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works as the main research subject, aiming to sort out the regional music characteristics and regional performance characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works, to better guide the creation of contemporary Chinese choral music works.

Materials and Methods: The research method of this thesis is mainly the literature analysis method and qualitative analysis method. The literature analysis method is mainly used to collect and sort out the information about Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works, which mainly comes from China Knowledge Network, Yunnan Provincial Library, Yunnan Provincial Museum of Literature and Art, the Internet, publishers, and purchased books. The qualitative analysis method is mainly used to screen the regional dialect characteristics, regional music style characteristics, regional music theme characteristics, and regional music cultural characteristics used in the relevant literature to classify the categories.

Results: The main purpose of the study is to refine and summarise the regional characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works, which include four aspects, namely, regional dialect characteristics, regional music style characteristics, regional music theme characteristics, and regional music cultural characteristics.

Conclusion: Liu Xiaoqeng composes his works with the regional dialect liner notes, folk songs, or ditties of Yunnan Province as his main materials. These dialect liner notes, folk songs, or ditties have very different regional language characteristics and distinctive modal music styles. It is these characteristics that make Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works have distinctive regional characteristics.

Keywords: Liu Xiaogeng; Choral Music Works; Regionality; Characteristics Liu Xiaogeng; Choral Music Works; Yunnan; Regional Characteristics

Introduction

Chinese ethnic folk music has distinct regional characteristics, and Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works are no exception. The regional characteristics of the music he creates are derived from ethnic folk music from various parts of Yunnan Province in China. Due to extremely complex geographical and climatic conditions, Yunnan Province in China has created social and cultural forms with very different characteristics in different regions and ethnic groups. Therefore, there are great differences in music styles across Yunnan Province, and the variety of music is extremely rich.

China's Yunnan Province referred to as "Yun" or "Dian", is located between 21°8′-29°15′ north latitude and 97°31′-106°11′ east longitude. It has a vast territory and complex geographical terrain. Yunnan Province is a low-latitude inland area, with the Tropic of Cancer running across the south. The terrain is high in the northwest and low in the southeast. It descends step by step from north to south. It is a mountainous plateau terrain. The mountainous area accounts for 88.64% of the total area of the province. It spans There are six major river systems: the Yangtze River, the Pearl River, the Yuanjiang River, the Lancang River, the Nujiang River, and the Daying River. The eastern part is the East Yunnan and Central Yunnan Plateaus, which are part of the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, with an average altitude of about 2,000 meters. They are characterized by gently undulating low mountains and round hills, and develop various types of karst landforms; in the west, there are alternating mountains and canyons, and the terrain is steep. , the relative height difference between mountains and canyons exceeds 1,000 meters. The tops of mountains above 5,000 meters are covered with snow all year round, forming strange and majestic mountain glacier landforms. The province's altitude varies greatly, with the highest point being 6,740 meters above sea level and the lowest point being 76.4 meters above sea level. The climate of Yunnan Province belongs to





subtropical and tropical monsoon climate, and northwest Yunnan has a plateau mountain climate (Xie & Xie,2012).

The regional characteristics reflected in the music are distinct (Stokes, 2020). Because regionality is an inherent characteristic of a musical work, music creation, and singing usually originate from the daily production and life of a regional ethnic group, and each regional ethnic group has its own culture. And regional ethnic culture must be born from specific natural geographical and climatic conditions. Culture is a tool for human society. A certain culture to which a regional ethnic group belongs represents the social laws of that ethnic group. Music belongs to a certain regional human group and is part of the social culture to which it belongs. In daily production and life, people of various ethnic groups in Yunnan, China, express their views on labor, love, family affection, friendship, natural scenery, gods, and everything in the world through singing. This music is not only a concentrated reflection of the living habits, language, aesthetic taste, and folk customs of the people of various ethnic groups in Yunnan Province, but also the source of the regional characteristics of ethnic folk music in Yunnan Province (Wang, 2017). Therefore, the regional background of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works, such as "Waisaro", is the Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, which is the southwest border of China. The entire prefecture has towering mountains, dense forests, and rolling hills. It is the Tropic of Cancer with the largest preserved area in the tropics rainforest. Mood liners such as "Saluo, Ailuo, Bala" and the decorative sound "woo" without specific meaning are unique to Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture. For example, the geographical background of " A Nest of Sparrows " is the Jianshui Red River area in southern Yunnan, which has mountains, karst plateaus, basins (bazi), and river valleys. It is the Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture. Liu Xiaogeng integrated the Jianshui Honghe local dialect in "A Nest of Sparrows" and used the unique Haicai tune of the local Yi people to enhance the musical atmosphere. The warm and melodious music reflects the resolute and bold national customs in mountainous areas and dam areas.

Ethnicity and regionality are often intertwined in the field of culture or art, and this is also shown in the creation of Liu Xiaogeng's musical works. Liu Xiaogeng has always been thinking about the issues of "regionality" and "ethnicity", and each of his musical works is drawn from the ethnic and folk music of different regions in Yunnan Province. He collects these regional geographical ethnic and folk music materials, integrates them into his musical works with skillful modern compositional techniques, and uses the music with regional and ethnic characteristics. He collects these regional folk music materials and integrates them into his musical works through skillful modern composing techniques, using the sound elements with regional and ethnic characteristics to demonstrate the regional characteristics of a certain ethnic minority, thus giving the works a new vitality of the times.

Objectives

- 1. Analyze the regional musical characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works, and explore how regional music materials affect Liu Xiaogeng's choral music creation.
- 2. Analyze the regional performance characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works, and explore how regional music materials affect Liu Xiaogeng's choral music creation.

Literature review

Most of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works come from Yunnan Province, China, Therefore, it is first necessary to analyze the geography, landforms, climate change, and humanistic characteristics of Yunnan Province in China to understand the regional characteristics of Yunnan Province in China. This part of the information mainly comes from the two public reports "Location and Area of Yunnan Province, China" and "Natural Overview of Yunnan Province, China" issued by the General Office of the People's Government of Yunnan Province, China. The main content of "The Three Musketeers of Yunnan Composition" written by Chen Jinsong and Hou Jingyi is the creative characteristics and part of the music scores of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works. Here, the content of the relevant regional music characteristics and performance characteristics is used in the text. Shen Yuanyuan's article "Analysis of Regional Characteristics of Chinese Folk Music" and Wang Bo's article "Discussion on the Regional Characteristics of Chinese National Folk Music" mainly elaborate on the common regional characteristics of Chinese ethnic music. The article "Thoughts on the Modern Process of Chinese Music" written by Yu Yifan mainly discusses the issue of how Chinese music integrates regional characteristics and modern characteristics. The article "Dialect and Chinese Culture" written by Zhou Zhenhe and You Rujie elaborates





on the influence of regional languages on song lyrics and singing styles. The article "Research on the National Characteristics and Singing Style of Liu Xiaogeng's Vocal Works - Taking " A Nest of Sparrows " and "Waisaro" as Examples" written by Xie Jiachen mainly draws on his analysis of the regional characteristics of specific songs.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is shown in Figure 1.

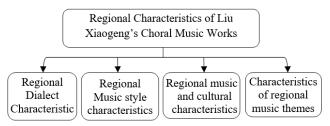


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework **Note:** Constructed by the author

The backbone framework of this paper consists of four main parts, namely: regional dialect characteristics, regional music style characteristics, regional music theme characteristics, and regional music cultural characteristics.

Methodology

The research method of this thesis is mainly the literature analysis method, which is mainly used to collect and sort out the information about Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works, which mainly comes from China Knowledge Network, Yunnan Provincial Library, Yunnan Provincial Museum of Literature and Art, the Internet, publishers, and the purchase of books. The qualitative analysis method is mainly used to screen the regional dialect characteristics, regional music style characteristics, regional music theme characteristics, and regional music cultural characteristics used in the relevant literature to classify the categories.

Results

1. Introduction to Liu Xiaogeng and His Music Characteristics

Liu Xiaogeng is an outstanding composer. Male, born in Yunnan, China in 1955. China's national first-level composer, professor, master's tutor, expert at the Literary Creation Center of the Propaganda Department of the Yunnan Provincial Committee, the first dean of the Music School of Yunnan University of the Arts, and vice chairman of the Yunnan Musicians Association. Composer Liu Xiaogeng made use of the unique ethnic minority resources in Yunnan and integrated modern composition techniques to create many valuable choral works, which were performed by many famous choirs in China and won gold medals in various international choral competitions. The choral music works he created are endowed with three major characteristics: "regionality", "nationality" and "modernity". He integrated the music materials of many ethnic groups in Yunnan with modern Western composition techniques and performance forms, creating his musical art characteristics. Liu Xiaogeng used his diligent artistic exploration to bring together the essence of the music of various ethnic groups in Yunnan and integrated it into the long river of music of the world's ethnic groups. When we listen to his musical works, what we feel is the vitality of artistic creation. Music is constantly evolving and changing. Here, Yunnan, China is used as a research sample to explore the regional characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's choral works. The purpose is to grasp the future direction of music creation in Yunnan and find a new integrated development path for the inheritance and development of the music culture of various ethnic minorities in Yunnan.

2. The Regional Dialect Characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's Choral Music Works







An understanding of the lyrics is important when analyzing the geographical context in which the music was produced. Lyrics are an art, and they are the foundation of a song. Every ethnic group has its language, and a place naturally has a dialect or accent that belongs to the people of that place, which is based on the national or official language and develops naturally. Yunnan, China has a vast area, many ethnic groups, and a large population, so naturally, the pronunciation and tone of the language in different regions have their characteristics. Dialectal diction and voice will affect the singing and intonation of folk songs, i.e. words and tunes (You & Zhou, 2006).

Taking "Waisaro" as an example, there are a lot of imaginary phrases without actual meaning in the work, which are unique to the local Dai people in Xishuangbanna, and it has a variety of forms and rich contents, which have a very strong effect of rendering atmosphere and strengthening mood on the expression of the emotion of the song, shaping of the musical image, and the overall acoustic effect. For example, "Water, Ai Wai Sa Luo" in subsection 96-98 of the work is a tone liner, in which "water" has no real meaning, and is a kind of hieroglyphic shout for drinking in local folk songs, aiming at creating a lively and joyful atmosphere. It has a strong local style. For example, the soprano's "woo" in bars 69-71 is a kind of cry, and its function is to set off the chanting with a long tone. Another example is "Saro, Ai LuoAi Luo Ai Luo, BaraBaraBara" at the beginning of the 14th-15th stanzas of the piece, which is also an intonation liner, which has no specific meaning but only uses this kind of ornamentation to express the feeling of a child's jumping. These liner notes, which are emotional tones expressed in the language, are very colorful in Xishuangbanna, showing the gentle and soft-spoken character of the local Dai people.

Taking "A Nest of Sparrows" as an example, it is a female trio singing in American vocal method adapted from a Yi song "A Nest of Sparrows in Xigang Dam" in the Red River region of Jianshui, South Yunnan, incorporating the typical tones of the Hai Cai Cavity and the Huayu Yi three-stringed instrument, while the geographical background of "A Nest of Sparrows" is the Honghe region of Jianshui in South Yunnan, which has mountain ranges, karst plateaus, basins (dams), and river valleys, and is a county under the jurisdiction of the Hani Yi Autonomous Prefecture. A Nest of Sparrows", which incorporates the local dialect of Jianshui Honghe, renders the musical atmosphere with the unique sea vegetable accent of the local Yi ethnic group, and the warm and melodious music expresses the rigid and bold ethnic style of the mountainous and dam areas. A Nest of Sparrows contains several dialects characteristic of the Red River region of Yunnan, which are aurally distinctive, and which Liu Xiaogeng employs as elements of local musical sound. For example, in the sung parts of the work, the word "jiao" in the phrase "Rest your feet." is pronounced "jio"; the word "zhe" in the phrase"it's none of your business"The word "zhe" in "Guan Buni Zhu" is pronounced, "Zhuo". The word "que" in "old bird" is pronounced "qio"; "ge" in "cut the grass after the tree" is pronounced "guo"; "go" is pronounced "guo"; "go" is pronounced "guo"; "go" is pronounced "guo"; "go" is pronounced "guo". "; "ge" in the phrase "where to go (quna li)" and "after the tree is cut, cut the grass" is pronounced "guo". "guo"; "qunali". It is pronounced as "kenuonei" in a triplet rhythm, and "he" in the lyrics "There is a Ni River in Xigangbazi" is pronounced as "huo". huo" (Xie, 2019). The dialectal liner notes of the Honghe region of Jianshui are unique to the accent of the local Yi people and are used by Liu Xiaogeng in his musical compositions as intonation, which mainly serves to coherence the singing tone of the lyrics, and to make the musical tonality of the music rise and fall in an orderly and complete and

3. The Regional Music Characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's Choral Works

Music can clearly express the style of a region. From the sound scenes created by a certain type of music, people can immersively feel the geographical features and folk customs of the area to which the music belongs. From the songs, people can capture Feelings of scenes and vicissitudes of history, this feeling of the world, the times, society, and culture expressed through music cannot be replaced by any other medium.

For example, the musical style of "A Nest of Sparrows" is mainly based on the Jianshui Minor Ditty of the Red River region of Yunnan, which is rich and diverse in content, and can be freely inserted into the chorus and responded to as it pleases, and it can be repeated by overlapping the head and tail or freely imitated and sung along with it to realize the composite of multiple voices, multiple lines, and multiple rhythms. In terms of rhythm, JianshuiXiaoSong has two kinds of boards, one is the free and lyrical loose board (no beat), and the other is the board rhythm in the form of 2/4, 4/4, 5/4, and 6/8 beats. The performance of this Jianshui minor key in "A Nest of Sparrows" mainly has the following characteristics: the tone column is unique, with three degrees, four or five degrees of the three-tone framework, pentatonic modes with semitones and without semitones, of which the pentatonic modes with semitones are



predominant; the tone column is characterized by the sol-si-do-re-fa-sol melodic method, with the adoption of the seventh chord (sol-si-re-fa) and its decomposed progression. The seventh chord (sol-si-re-fa) and its decomposition are carried out throughout the melody, especially the termination of sol-si-fa-sol, which has the typical regional style characteristics of the Red River region in southern Yunnan. (Figure 2)





Figure 2. Sheet of "A Nest of Sparrows" **Note:** Form Liu Xiaogeng

The Hai Cai Cavity, also known as Shiping Cavity, used in Liu Xiaogeng's choral music work "Going Home", also comes from the Red River region of Yunnan. Hai Cai Cavity is mainly composed of several parts, such as the restraining cadence, empty cadence, positive seven cadences, and vernacular cadence, etc. It has a complex structure and a grand length. The core tone of the whole suite is the sol-mi-fa-sol melody, which Liu Xiaogeng deforms into do-mi-sol-fa-mi in "Going Home" and uses it as the theme motif of the whole choral work. Hai Cai Cavity is unique to this region, and this kind of choral music is also one of the regional music styles of the Red River region in southern Yunnan (Figure 3).







Figure 3. Sheet of "Going Home"
Note: Form Liu Xiaogeng

4. The Regional Musical Themes of Liu Xiaogeng's Choral Music Works

Yunnan Province has complex geography and topography, and the uneven altitude topography allows many ethnic minorities to live alone in a relatively closed small area. These ethnic minorities who are divided into various mountainous areas and river valleys have very little communication with the outside world, so their music also shows the original closed characteristics. Therefore, the musical themes of Liu Xiaogeng's choral works are mostly taken from Yunnan Province, largely because the regional ethnic folk music here has original ecological characteristics. Secondly, folk music comes in many forms, such as folk songs, folk songs and dances, raps, operas, folk instrumental music, etc. These folk music are created by the people themselves and are widely spread among the people in various places. It is an art passed down orally. According to the classification of uses, these regional music themes can be divided into six categories: festivals, etiquette, labor, life, children's songs, and love songs.

For example, "A Nest of Sparrows" uses Jianshui minor tunes from Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan Province, which can be regarded as common themes such as labor, weddings and funerals, and festival celebrations. There are many types of such minor tunes, and because they often use dialect words, It has strong local characteristics. The female chorus work "Drunk in the Hometown of Yun" originated from the Bai ethnic minority area in Dali, Yunnan. This piece is a commonly used theme in festival celebrations. "Water Hen" belongs to the theme of children's songs. This piece originated from





Wenshan Prefecture in Yunnan Province. It is a folk nursery rhyme spread in Zhuang villages at the junction of Xichou, Guangnan, and Malipo counties. The mixed four-part choral music work "The Moon Is Getting Married Tonight" is dance music of the Blang ethnic group in the Xishuangbanna area. It is a love song theme. The lyrics adopt anthropomorphic techniques and vividly express the shyness and worry of Blang girls in the Lincang and Baoshan areas of Xishuangbanna when they get married. and mixed emotions of joy (Chen & Hou, 2018).

5. The Regional Music Culture of Liu Xiaogeng's Choral Music Works

Music, as a cultural phenomenon, has both external material forms and internal meaning and value. In the relationship between music culture and social life, the symbolic meaning of music has strong regional differences. As far as the regional symbolic meaning of music is concerned, the music culture of different regions always praises the good life.

The choral music piece "Ritual of Water" composed by Liu Xiaoqiang expresses the "water culture" of Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture. Xishuangbanna is located on the northern edge of the tropics, the northern mountains and rivers can block the southward cold current from the north in winter, while the southern river valleys and rivers are always affected by the warm and humid airflow brought by the southwestern monsoon of the Indian Ocean and the southeastern monsoon of the Pacific Ocean, which results in the formation of the geographic and climatic conditions of high temperatures and heavy rainfall. Therefore, the climate of Xishuangbanna is warm and humid all year round, there are no four seasons, only the difference between dry and wet seasons, the dry season from November to April of the next year, the wet season from May to October, the wet season of up to five months each year is the cradle of the "water culture". To analyze the lyrics of "Ritual of Water", the first is the title of the song "Ritual of Water", which in Dai language is "Shao Biyanglang", meaning "Song of Water". The Dai people in the Xishuangbanna region have a natural love and worship for water, which they regard as a holy substance with life. Water can bring good luck to the people living here for generations, and protect the Dai people living here for generations as if they were gods. In the history, in the 13th century, Buddhism was introduced to this area, because of the custom, of Buddhism in the Xishuangbanna Dai people's field of thought, every year Dai New Year (13-15 April), people will use water to give the Buddha bath, the most important celebration is called "bathing Buddha". Therefore, the belief of the Dai people in the Xishuangbanna region is also figuratively called the "Water Splashing Festival". The "Water Festival" is created based on the local cultural background of worshipping, respecting, and loving the water, and the whole piece of work is tightly centered on "water". In the lyrics, "the song of water, the string of water, the soul of water, the dream of water, the water of life, the holy water" express the emotional connection between the Dai people in Xishuangbanna region and water.

Liu Xiaogeng's choral work for female voices"Drunk in the Land of Clouds" expresses the beautiful humanistic customs and scenic spots of Dali, Yunnan. The lyrics read: "Nineteen peaks reach into the clouds, eighteen streams of clear water circle the hills, the waterfalls dye the green trees with the clouds, the cuckoos smile red in the moonlight, the wind, flowers, snow, and moon are charming to the eyes, I look at my husband's cloud sea with thousands of waves, the marble is like a painting, tie-dyed and colorful clothes, the water passes through the streets, the shadows of flowers are swaying and the flowers are blooming, the Erhai Lake is green and the moon is hanging, the wind dances with the colorful clouds and the blue sky, drunk in the hometown of Yun, the ancient tea horse road invades the setting sun, the three pagodas are silent about the vicissitudes of life., Butterfly Spring water is clear and bright." Analysis of the lyrics shows that "Nineteen Peaks and Eighteen Streams" refers to the mountains and rivers of Cangshan Mountain in Dali, Yunnan from north to south. "Three Pagodas" refers to a group of large-scale Buddhist temples built during the Nanzhao and Dali Kingdoms. The three pagodas are located directly in front of the original famous Chongsheng Temple, forming a tripartite posture. "Wangfuyun" is the most widely spread famous myth in Dali. It is said that the beautiful Princess Afeng of Nanzhao fell in love with a young hunter on Cangshan Mountain. However, her lover was killed by a mage invited by the king. The princess died of anger. On the Yuju Peak of Cangshan Mountain, it turned into a white cloud. Later generations called this cloud the Wangfu Cloud. This group of white clouds that has been entrenched on the mountain peaks all year round has been proven by modern science to be entirely caused by the high flow of air. Its appearance is related to the special geographical location of Cangshan Mountain and Erhai Lake. People have given it such a touching legend, which shows this place. Special geographical and humanistic characteristics.





Discussion

The incorporation of regional music elements into modern music composition creates both opportunities and challenges, particularly in terms of improving listener resonance and optimizing aesthetic experiences. Music from different regions has distinct sounds and ornamental characteristics that reflect their cultural and historical context. These regional elements add to music's diversity and humanity, allowing it to go beyond sound and become a medium for cultural expression and emotional connection (Smith, 2021). However, the challenge is to effectively blend these elements with contemporary music styles in a way that appeals to a wide audience while preserving the authenticity of the original regional sounds.

Liu Xiaogeng's approach to choral music demonstrates how regional music elements can be successfully incorporated into contemporary compositions. Liu's collage techniques combine regional music culture with global multicultural influences, resulting in works that are both locally rooted and internationally appealing. This method of integration reflects a balance of localization and internationalization, which is critical in today's music landscape, where cultural exchange is more prevalent than ever. Liu's work exemplifies how national characteristics can be harmonized with current global trends, providing a model for future music creation (Wang, 2022). His ability to preserve the essence of regional music while making it accessible and relevant to a global audience demonstrates the potential for such integration in contemporary music.

The demand for innovation in music creation is growing as listener preferences shift in response to changing societal norms and technological advancements. The modern listener expects more than just pleasant melodies; they want cultural depth, emotional resonance, and a connection to something bigger than themselves. This is where the use of regional music elements becomes especially effective. By drawing on different cultures' distinct musical heritages, composers can create works that resonate on a deeper level, tapping into their audiences' emotional and cultural identities (Brown, 2020). This approach not only enhances the listener's aesthetic experience but also ensures the survival and development of diverse musical traditions in an increasingly homogenized global music industry.

For modern music creators, the path forward requires a delicate balance of innovation and tradition. To gain popularity and create music that truly moves people, it is necessary to capitalize on one's own country's unique musical wealth while also embracing the broader currents of global culture. This entails a commitment to originality and a willingness to experiment with new sounds and ideas while remaining true to the cultural roots that give the music its unique character. This allows composers to create unique musical styles that not only captivate listeners but also foster a deeper emotional connection, ensuring that their work remains relevant and impactful in a rapidly changing world (Chen & Li, 2023).

Conclusion

Music from different regions shows great differences due to the influence of geographical and cultural environment. By analyzing the regional dialect characteristics, regional music style characteristics, regional music theme characteristics, and regional music cultural characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works, we can find that Liu Xiaogeng uses regional dialects, lining words, and lining words. The composition uses tunes, folk songs, or minor tunes as the main materials. These dialects, lyrics, tunes, folk songs, or minor tunes have completely different regional language characteristics and distinctive musical styles. They are all popular and common music themes. They also reflect a love for hometown, praise of beauty, and hope. These common cultural contents of happiness. It can be said that it is these musical characteristics that have greatly expanded the spread of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works, allowing them to reach a wide audience. At the same time, this also reflects the strong artistic charm and artistic integration of regional music in my country.

Recommendation

Research on the regional characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's choral music works currently only focuses on four aspects: regional dialect characteristics, regional music style characteristics, regional music theme







characteristics, and regional music cultural characteristics. Subsequent scholars need to further study regional instrumental music, regional This article expounds on the creation and performance characteristics of Liu Xiaogeng's musical works in terms of sexual clothing, regional music aesthetic characteristics, etc., thereby expanding the depth and breadth of the regional research on Liu Xiaogeng's musical works.

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