

# Study on the Inheritance and Development of Chinese Folk Songs Against the Background of "the Belt and Road Initiative"

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## ABSTRACT

Chinese folk songs are an important part of traditional Chinese culture, and also are bridges for the communication between the historical dimension and the geographical dimension of the Chinese nation. "The Belt and Road initiative" provides a good platform for the inheritance and development of Chinese folk songs in the new era. Relying on the national development strategy, Chinese folk songs should enrich and optimize traditional music through the establishment of an education system and the innovation of expression methods. By formulating multi-angle communication strategy and integrating excellent foreign musical elements, the development goal of Chinese folk songs can be realized, so as to continue the vitality of Chinese folk songs and expand the influence of Chinese folk music.

*Keywords: the Belt and Road Initiative, Chinese folk songs, inheritance, development*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Chinese nation has created folk songs with different styles and rich contents in different historical periods, which show the social life of the people and the social outlook of different times. Folk songs have been sung for generations in various forms. As the most important part of Chinese traditional culture, they always have the significance of inspiring, resisting foreign enemies and praising diligence. They have been written into the spiritual gene of the Chinese nation through the long history and social evolution. In the new era, with the development of economic globalization, China has put forward the "Belt and Road initiative", and values such as "openness", "self-confidence" and "inclusiveness" have gradually been popular. China's folk songs are frequently on the world stage, and are also faced with the impact of multiculturalism and the choice of development direction. Chinese folk songs should take advantage of the opportunity and platform brought by "the Belt and Road Initiative", root in traditional music essence, adhere to face the public, the world and the future, promote the further spread of the Chinese folk songs, build the Chinese folk songs with new connotation, easy spread, multi-level forms in the new era.

## II. THE NATIONALITY AND COSMOPOLITANISM OF CHINESE FOLK SONGS

### A. *The historical evolution and national characteristics of Chinese folk songs*

Chinese folk song is one of the most popular and moving art forms in Chinese culture. Its development process has experienced the evolution of ancient instrumental music, music and dance of ancestors, songs of Chu and pre-Qin Dynasties, Yuefu poems of Han and Wei Dynasties, Daqu of Tang Dynasty, music modes of Song Dynasty, Zaju of Yuan Dynasty, Beiqu of Yuan Dynasty, biography of Ming, Suqu of Ming and Qing Dynasties, local opera and modern new music. The invasion war in modern China made western music widely spread in China. Many Chinese created new types of Chinese music combined with the characteristics of western music. The concept of Chinese traditional folk music refers to the traditional Chinese music performed with traditional Chinese instruments in the form of solo and ensemble. According to the artistic characteristics, it can be divided into folk songs, song and dance music, rap music, opera music, folk instrumental music and comprehensive music.

Chinese folk songs have different connotations and singing forms in different times, but they have never been divorced from the core of Chinese traditional music. The artistic style of Chinese folk songs pays attention to the treatment of melody and charm,

emphasizing that the form is scattered and the spirit is not scattered, which is similar to other traditional cultural forms such as poetry, calligraphy and painting. Therefore, Chinese folk songs have a unique artistic conception different from foreign music. They strike a delicate balance between emptiness, reality, movement and stillness, and more implicitly and meaningfully express the state of mind of performers or composers. They use the techniques of variation, inheritance and combination, and reproduction to present a harmonious and appropriate way of the mean under dialectical thinking. In addition, Chinese folk songs, poetry and dance complement each other. It also uses the national singing method with bright and vivid, clear articulation. Through artistic expression, the combination of the three shows the national style and features of tact, tenacity, harmony and patience, and conveys the national spirit.

In the process of historical development, Chinese folk songs are closely related to Chinese culture, people's life, social form, production and development. They are precious wealth of Chinese folk music culture. They are imprinted in the depth of the Chinese nation's thought and have special characteristics and significance of the Chinese nation. People have a strong sense of identity and affinity for Chinese folk songs, but it is easy to lose in the process of development. Especially in the current all-media era with the integration and impact of diverse cultures, it is particularly important to protect the nationality of Chinese folk songs.

#### *B. The worldwide spread of Chinese folk songs*

The national is the world. Music, as a way of communication, is the common language of the world, and has a huge role in cultural exchange and dissemination. With the enhancement of China's comprehensive national strength and the improvement of its international status, Chinese folk songs are also known to the people of the world. At the first Sharm el-Sheikh Asian International Film Festival in March 2019, Chinese Silk Road Band used traditional folk instruments such as Erhu and Pipa to perform Chinese Peking Opera and classical local music of countries along "the Belt and Road routine". The National Peking Opera Troupe of China and the Emilia Romani theatre foundation of Italy jointly created the Peking Opera "Turandot", which was toured in Italy in February 2019 and caused great repercussions. Facts have proved that the self-contained "isolated" culture can only make culture stagnate. It is necessary to explore the global development potential of culture, and collide with more cultural exchanges, so as to make Chinese folk songs emit new charm, produce greater influence and output creative content.

At present, Chinese folk songs have had a great impact on the world, but they are still facing the dilemma of communication and development. First of all, the mode of communication is relatively single. At present, the mode of music transmission has changed to rely on the Internet, and it is transmitted to all parts of the world through all-media, supplemented by the traditional interpersonal connections such as genetic inheritance, geographical inheritance and industrial inheritance and human-computer interaction. With the rapid development of all-media in China in recent years, and the lack of international discourse power, the international discourse system has not yet been established, and the non-governmental network international exchange activities are not smooth. By relying on the Internet free communication and official music interaction, China is difficult to better grasp the interpretation power and communication effect of Chinese folk songs. Secondly, aesthetic barriers and religious beliefs form obstacles. The countries along "the Belt and Road" route involve 4 major civilizations and 3 major religions. Different regions and different cultural traditions, ethnic customs, traditional aesthetics, and cultural environment have all created barriers to the international recognition of Chinese folk songs. Moreover, the lag and uncertainty of China's cross-regional cultural communication are likely to cause misunderstanding and obstacles to China's folk songs.

It can be seen that the development of Chinese folk songs in the future should be mainly from two aspects: the inheritance of traditional music and the effective dissemination through "the Belt and Road Initiative". It is necessary to solve the development dilemma of Chinese folk songs in the new era, give consideration to the nationality and the world of Chinese folk music, find effective ways of inheritance and development, and promote the innovation and upgrading of Chinese folk songs.

### **III. INHERITANCE AND INNOVATION OF CHINESE FOLK SONGS**

#### *A. Construction and improvement of education system of Chinese folk song*

Education is the cornerstone of development. Due to various reasons such as social history, cognitive level and so on, China's folk songs are not perfect in terms of theory construction, teaching staff construction and curriculum setting, which leads to the obstacles to correct understanding, wide dissemination and audience evaluation of folk songs. It is better to establish a broad sense of Chinese folk songs education system, so that the folk songs with truly universal value can be recognized and inherited. It is required to cultivate people's extensive understanding of Chinese folk songs

and artistic aesthetics, and carry forward the Chinese folk songs of the new era on the basis of inheritance.

Cognitive and aesthetic training should start from childhood. However, at present, there are many kinds of music teaching materials in schools at all levels. The music teaching materials compiled by teachers are limited to their own musical literacy and cognitive level, which has shortcomings in folk music education. Therefore, it is better to gather more teachers, compile more authoritative Chinese song textbooks, and systematically establish a knowledge system of Chinese songs, so as to expand social influence, better inherit folk songs, and establish applicable standards in a certain range. Due to China's vast territory and significant regional differences in multi-ethnic countries, it is necessary to pay attention to integrating local characteristics when teaching songs with teaching materials, especially adding music elements, so as to make teaching and practice have more local characteristics.

Scientific and reasonable curriculum is an important way to put the theory of folk songs into practice in people's life. For the development of folk songs curriculum, it is mainly to let students really get the influence of folk songs, and should start from the "quality" and "quantity" of the curriculum. "Quality" means that the teaching contents and methods should be diverse and excellent. In terms of content, on the basis of imparting music theoretical knowledge, it should not make such knowledge superficial, but should popularize folk songs to students from various perspectives, such as musical background, playing instruments, creators, performers and the meaning of songs, so as to dig deeply into the connotation of folk songs and keep up with the Times. "Quantity" refers to the number of courses and teaching contents. In the university campus with fierce competition, the elective course of songs should not be set too much. The colleges and universities should focus on music appreciation after class, so that students can form the habit of appreciating folk songs after class and in leisure time. And then, folk songs can really integrate into life and be deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. In class, teachers should mainly play the role of imparting knowledge, stimulating interest and recommending excellent works.

#### *B. Innovating the expression of folk songs*

Keeping pace with the times and blazing new trails in a pioneering spirit are the important reasons for the long history of all cultures. Nowadays, the wave of information technology is impacting every industry. With the development of big data analysis, AIoT system and cloud computing system, the expression form of folk songs is no longer confined to the traditional mode of singer singing and audience

listening, but changes to the coexistence of various forms of expression. In today's era of information exchange and convenient transportation, Chinese folk songs should penetrate into all aspects of public life through various media. Folk songs should actively seek common ground with popular music and western music while reserving differences, and add new elements to the traditional forms, so as to expand the expressive force and enhance the audience's impression. At the same time, music listening software, short videos, variety shows and so on have broadened the way for the audience to obtain folk songs. In the future, folk songs will mainly strengthen the contact with the audience by means of human-computer interaction.

#### **IV. GLOBALIZATION AND DIVERSIFIED DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE FOLK SONGS**

##### *A. The external communication strategy of folk songs*

"Working behind closed doors" cannot effectively inherit and develop folk songs. It is the only way for the development of folk songs to go abroad and go to the world. The external communication strategy of folk songs should be based on the cooperation mechanism, cultural identity and content innovation of folk music, so as to truly expand the influence of folk songs and enhance the soft power of national culture.

It is required to establish and improve a mechanism for the exchange and cooperation of songs, establish long-term friendly relations of musical exchanges with neighboring countries on the basis of "the Belt and Road Initiative", and use various means and forms to increase communication opportunities. In September 2014, China National Music Orchestra launched a large-scale ethnic concert "Silk Road", which presents the Chinese dream concert of National Cultural Renaissance to the audience relying on the inheritance of Chinese traditional culture through a comprehensive stage art integrating national orchestral music, national vocal music and digital multimedia technology. Cultural exchange activities among the countries along the Belt and Road route can not only promote the folk songs to learn from others, but also convey China's political and cultural values and cultural feelings through the music carrier. Relevant departments should not only attach importance to carrying out multi-form music exchange and appreciation activities, but also actively cooperate with other countries to jointly cultivate music talents. Specifically, China's higher music colleges and countries along the "Belt and Road route" have reached an education alliance, communicated the education plan and skills of music talent cultivation, formulated the transnational exchange program of university talents, and helped Chinese folk songs to integrate into the tide of globalization through music forums, tours and other forms.

According to the characteristics of the audience in different regions, it is required to customize the content and strategy of folk songs in different regions, and follow the market rules. Along the Belt and Road route, there are many religions and countries. When spreading China's folk songs, it should have a detailed understanding of the religious beliefs, customs and aesthetic orientation of the audiences in different regions, so that the Chinese folk songs can be combined with local characteristics to improve the acceptance of songs and avoid subjective assume, cultural misunderstanding and trust crisis. In the selection of tracks, it is better to pay attention to the representativeness and communicability of songs to adapt to the aesthetic and needs of different regions in the new era.

#### *B. Integrated development of Chinese and western music*

In the 1920s and 1930s, two famous masters of Chinese and western music appeared, Huang Zi and Qing Zhu. They explored the use of western music techniques and forms to improve Chinese music, leaving behind such excellent works as "flowers are not flowers" and "the river of no return", which have left precious wealth for Chinese folk songs. In fact, western music and Chinese folk music have different historical and cultural backgrounds. And they have common features in emotional expression and social functions. In the future, culture should seek common ground while reserving, learning and integrating differences. To promote the integration of Chinese and western music, it is necessary to absorb the beneficial parts from the aspects of breathing, resonance, singing, timbre and emotional expression, and integrate them into the performance of Chinese folk songs.

The integration and development of Chinese and western music needs to grasp the dialectical relationship between skills and emotions, and then it can present beautiful works. The integration of Chinese folk songs and western music shows the relationship of organic connection and organic unity. Similar emotions are expressed with different techniques, and the same performance mode has different emotional interpretation. These are the wonderful chemical reactions produced by the integration of Chinese and western music. Only by treating the integration of Chinese and western music dialectically, can the works show the universal humanistic feelings, increase the aesthetic value of music, give meaning beyond time and space, and become a music classic, lasting for generations.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

The inheritance and development of Chinese folk songs complement each other. Only on the basis of

inheritance can people not forget the original intention and stick to the core. Only under the premise of development can people have a long history and burst into vitality. "The Belt and Road Initiative" creates good connection for the inheritance and development of China's folk songs. Against the background of "the Belt and Road Initiative", it practices the nationalism and the world of Chinese folk songs, and opens up the way for the inheritance and development of Chinese folk songs. There will have more outstanding folk songs in the future, constantly promoting the progress of China's folk music and the prosperity and development of folk culture.

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