



A Comparative Study of the Music of the Turghut Mongolians and the Kalmyks of Russia

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Abstract. During the historical period, the Mongolian people of the Turghut tribe moved westward from their original residence to the grasslands along the middle and lower reaches of the Volga River due to special reasons. Returning east in 1771, the compatriots who stayed there became part of the later Kalmyks. Because the two are affected by differences in history, country, environment, etc., they have different characteristics in music. This paper takes the music of the Mongolian people of Turghut and the Kalmyks of Russia as the research objects, and tries to explore the similarities and differences between the two by using the method of audio-visual research and comparative analysis. Through the research results, it's find that the two show a certain degree of differences in the use of musical instruments, rhythm characteristics, and emotional conveyance of songs. The author hopes to contribute to the research in the field of cross-border music in Torghut through this article.

Keywords: Turghut · Kalmyk · Music comparison

1 Introduction

Turghut belongs to the Oirat Mongolian tribe in China, and now mainly distributed in the Kalmyk Republic of Russia, western Mongolia, and China's Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu, Inner Mongolia Alxa and Hulunbuir regions. The word "Oirat" is the general name of the Western Mongolian ministries in the Qing Dynasty of China. In the Yuan Dynasty, it was called "wuyici", in the Ming Dynasty, it was called "WACI", in the Qing Dynasty, it was called "weilat" or "elut" [1]. According to historical records, the Torghut tribe is the descendant of Wang Han, the leader of the Kleit tribe [2]. In the later period, due to the attack of the surrounding tribes and the influence of the imbalance of the forces in four Oirat tribes, the Turghut tribe decided to find new places in 1630, and arrived on the grasslands where is rich in water and grass in the lower reaches of the Volga River, and people lived a new nomadic life. In the process of migration and distribution, ethnic elements such as Turks and Russians were gradually absorbed. In the second half of the 17th century, Turghut tribe worked and lived here, established the nomadic Kalmyk

khanate, formulated relatively perfect regulations and systems, and established political power for more than 10 years [1].

The Kalmyk people are descendants of the Mongolian Oirat people, mainly living in the Kalmyk autonomous republic on the northwest coast of the Caspian Sea in the lower reaches of the Volga River in Russia [1]. In the second half of the 18th century, due to the longing for the motherland and the long-term unbearability of the harsh taxation and internal interference of the tribes by the foreign government, the Mongolian people of the Turghut tribe under the leadership of heroic leader Ubashi Khan, returned to the east in 1771 secretly, but due to the exposure of the plan and the weather reason, some Turghuts could not return to their hometowns and stay there, later became part of the Kalmyks.

National music represents the form of conveying musical characteristics among different groups. Through the study of different national music, people can find the folk customs and national spirit behind the culture from the form and connotation of songs. The production and development of music has strong characteristics of the times. Due to different cultural backgrounds and customs in different historical periods and different ethnic regions, there are great differences in the style, content and form of music [3]. Minority music can maintain the vitality and vigor of minority culture, transmit national characteristics to the public in the form of music, and highlight the characteristics of minority areas more clearly [4]. In addition to embodying the characteristics of traditional Oirat music, the Mongolian music of turhute tribe also embodies its unique national music charm through the application of tobshur, sawulden dance music, long tune and Humai. Kalmyk music not only retains the characteristics of the traditional Mongolian music of the turhuts to a certain extent, but also shows its unique musical charm due to the influence of other surrounding ethnic groups and the changes of its own environment and lifestyle. Due to historical reasons, changes in their living environment and production methods, the turhuts and Kalmyk Mongolians have some differences in the use of musical instruments, the rhythm of classic songs and the expression of song emotions. By analyzing, comparing and summarizing the musical characteristics of the Turghut Mongolians and Kalmyks, people can help sort out the musical similarities and differences between the two and reasons for difference, enrich the musical forms of the Oirat Mongolians, and protect the Oirat Mongolian musical culture diversity. Minority music culture is an important representative of each country's excellent traditional culture. Most of it is drawn from the visible daily life of residents in minority areas. It's a perfect combination of art and life in minority areas, has both distinctive national characteristics and rich cultural heritage, and has very high cultural value and deeper development significance [4]. Based on the above factors, this paper takes audio-visual reading and literature reading as the research methods, selects the commonly used musical instruments, rhythms and song emotions as the research objects, and tries to grasp the analysis points of this paper from the perspective of the commonness of musical instruments, the change of rhythm and the environmental impact of song emotion communication. This paper is divided into three chapters to explore the connection and differences between the two from the perspectives of commonly used instruments, rhythm characteristics, and song emotions. Among them, the commonly used musical instruments are the traditional musical instrument Tobshur of the turhute department,

and the rhythm characteristics are the classic songs of the two in the corresponding countries. The emotion of the songs mainly analyzes other aspects except the homesickness caused by national historical reasons.

2 The Similarities and Differences of Commonly Used Musical Instruments

Plucked instruments have a long history, a wide range of types and shapes, and are the most distinctive musical instruments. They are widely used by the working people in nomadic life when they sing greetings and carols on traditional festivals and sacrifice ceremonies, or when they play or accompany in folk storytelling, epic telling and legend telling [5].

“Tobshur”, also known as “Tubshur”, is a gue, with beautiful timbre, easy playing and strong expressiveness, and is deeply loved by people of all ethnic groups. It is a plucked instrument widely used by the Oirat Mongolian people in Xinjiang [6]. Today, Kalmyk Mongols often use this musical instrument in stage performances and folk life. “Tobshur” is also known as “tau bhu Shur” and “Tubu Shur”. Among them, “tob” means “plucking” in Mongolian, and “Shur” means the sound change of “Chao Er”, which means to resonate with the vibrating body by plucking. “Chaoer” means “resonance” in Mongolian [7]. Sauer is a kind of gue, which is generally composed of a resonance box, a handle, a string twist, a bridge and other parts [8], there are no frets on the handle, just use the right hand to pluck the strings and the left finger to match, then can perform. When musicians perform musical instruments with Tobshur, they can often produce music that is full of rhythm, pleasant timbre, and changeable modes. At present, there are few records of Tobshur music scores. Among the collected works, most of them are the Accompaniment score of rap “Janger”, the folk song, and the dance “Sawuerden” [9]. In the rap janger, performers often sing the lyrics while playing the piano, showing the different rhythms and chords that Tobshur can present, according to the different repertoires. In the dance “sawuerden”, Tobshur, together with musical instruments such as the horse head Qin, presents a unique tone and melody when the dancers shake their shoulders and change their gestures. It shows certain musical characteristics among Mongolian tribes and adds a certain level to the music of the Chinese nation. Due to its beautiful appearance, simple production, and easy portability, Tobshur has naturally become an essential musical instrument for the celebration and entertainment of the ancient Oirat nomads, and forms an inseparable segmentation relationship with the “Sawuerden” dance [10].

In the Turghute tribe, in addition to being widely presented in stage performances, ordinary people also have masters playing tobosuer in their homes. In the cross-border ethnic music system, homologous ethnic groups not only have common cultural appeals, inherent characteristics of music, etc., but also live in the diverse cultural contexts of surrounding ethnic groups and are affected by their history, migration, geography, country and politics. Influenced by many factors, there are differences in the deep connotation of its unique musical performance and cultural beliefs and other behavioral factors [11]. In the Republic of Kalmykia, in addition to traditional songs such as the heroic epic “Janger”, Tobshur is also used in dance music forms with local characteristics. By

exploring their use of Tobshur and other musical instruments, people can explore their differences in music to a certain extent.

Due to the surrounding environment and the spiritual needs of the people, the Kalmyks gradually developed a type of dance music that was different from the Sawuerden dance music. In the accompaniment, different playing rules are also presented, which has rich local cultural characteristics, conveying the meaning of the Kalmyk Mongolian people expressing the joy of festivals. In terms of song characteristics, when Kalmyk Mongolians used Tobshur, they would not only play classic oirat songs, but also present other musical styles with this instrument. Different from the classic dance music, in the gradually developing Tobshur dance music, the Kalmyk Mongols will also use this instrument to present a new form of music with cheerful, festival and celebration types, as well as a new form of Mongolian rap and chant songs that has gradually evolved from the traditional repertoire.

The Turghut tribe and the Kalmyks also share musical instruments such as the harmonica, imitating the sounds of animals in the soundtrack, conveying people's praise for nature and a better life. Through the analysis of the types of repertoire played by the Mongolians of the Turghut tribe and the Tobshur of the Kalmyks, it can be known that the two still maintain the same roots and similar performance forms in traditional music and rap songs, but in terms of dance music, the Kalmyk Mongols not only used it in the "Sawuerden", but also derived new types of music that require Tobshur instruments due to the needs of the spiritual development within the nation and the influence of the surrounding environment. For example, in wedding and festival celebrations, musicians will use Tobshur to accompany music with fast rhythm and high tone.

3 The Rhythm of the Songs

Rhythm, in simple terms, is the combination of musical notes according to the rule of note length. The essence of music is rhythm. It can be said that rhythm is the primary factor of music. Rhythm affects the melody, and makes the music present rich expressive force. The alternation and change of rhythm is just like the tonality of poetry. The fast and slow rhythm, or the expression of elation or pause, forms a contrast between strength and weakness, and makes the music change in priority [12]. The rhythm with fast frequency can often convey people's strong feelings, while the music with slow rhythm can often tell stories and human inner feelings. The famous music theorist Percy caichus believes that rhythm is the soul of music and makes music full of vitality. Under the influence of rhythm, music will have a sense of rhythm, meaning and attraction [12]. The rhythm characteristics of the northern folk music show ups and downs due to its unique nomadic and hunting culture.

The Oirat Mongolian people have a variety of music with national characteristics, such as the lyrical long tune with slow rhythm, and the dance music with fast rhythm and lively style. The author takes the typical dance music "Sawuerden" as an example. It can be found that its rhythm features in the dance music is the feature of dotted rhythm, with a unique sense of rhythm, rhythm patterns include but are not limited to: **X·X X·X X·X X·X X·X X·X XXXIX XX XX XIX·X XXX X·X XI**, or present a rhythm that simulates the sound of hooves, like: **!XXX XXX XXX XX** etc.

Culture is an important symbol for the formation of ethnic groups. The migration of ethnic groups will change the geographical distance, but the similarity of cultures is indelible [13]. In Kalmyk music, it also has homologous rhythm characteristics, but it has a unique rhythm type due to the influence of the surrounding Russian nationalities, Caucasus nationalities, Turks, etc., such as the song "Sharka Barka", the rhythm types included: **X·X X·X XXX X·XlXXXX XXX XXX XXXlXXX X·X XXX X·XlXXX XXX XXX X·Xl** etc., the high-frequency use of 16-min and 32-min rhythms presents a cheerful and lively musical emotion. In such repertoires, Kalmyk performers usually use tap dance to convey special emotions along with the rhythm of the dance form with the changing hands. When Tobshur is used as an accompaniment, it's rhythm adapts to the style of the repertoire and also produces a faster sense of rhythm. The rhythm of music is a reasonable division of time. Different division methods form phrases, beats, bars, etc., the bars can be further divided, these can be combined into the rhythm of music in some way and form a rhythm system [14]. By analyzing the rhythm characteristics of the two, people can gradually grasp the influence of the environment on the rhythm form of Mongolian music in Turghut, and sort out the development mode of traditional rhythm under the influence of other factors. Through this part of research, it can be seen that in terms of music rhythm, turhute Mongols and Kalmyk Mongols have the common feature that they both retain the rhythm type in the traditional track "sawuerden". The difference is that in addition to cooperating with Tobshur to show classic rap chants and dances, Kalmyk Mongols have derived new rap chants in the form of traditional rap accompaniment, and because of the influence of surrounding environment, In the style of dance music, it embodies a variety of rhythm styles.

4 The Expression of Emotion in Songs

Emotion in music art is selective, because the performers of music and art works have different personal experiences and life experiences, their understanding of music works is also different. What emotions they choose to use determines the personalized charm of artistic images [15]. In addition to its professional mode, rhythm, timbre and other contents, the emotion behind the song is also one of the important factors that determine the final presentation form of the song. Through different types of songs, people can feel the feelings and themes of the creators and stories in the style and content of songs. National songs can not only show the happiness of myths and legends and festivals within the nation, but also, to a certain extent, permeate the feelings of people precipitated by environmental changes and historical factors [13].

The Turghut Mongolians have experienced family ruins, serious loss of livestock and property, and the impact of the harsh environment on the historic relocation of the road to the east, so the tribal people always have a little sadness for this special history in the hearts of the tribal people. Through music, people can find that, in addition to the songs that sing praises to heroes, festival celebration songs, and express emotions, For example, in the classic track jianger and the dance song sawulden, most of the songs of the Turghut Department present a sad tone, expressing the nostalgia for the lost relatives and the sympathy for migration, the sadness of the road hardship and the longing for the motherland. German philosopher Feuerbach believes that people can only understand

the emotional content of music through the emotional experience obtained from music, that is to say, the emotional content of music can not be expressed by language.

The Turghute tribe crossed the Central Asian grasslands and lived with other ethnic groups among various landforms such as grasslands, Gobi, deserts, etc. Therefore, its music forms regional characteristics in geographical space, needs to be grasped from the static nature and dynamic trajectory [16]. At the beginning, when the Kalmyk people failed to return to the motherland with their compatriots, they also suffered from grief and separation. They were always thinking of their compatriots and looked forward to returning to the embrace of the motherland as soon as possible. Until now, most of the traditional Kalmyk songs had a lot of feelings of missing their hometown, such as a long tune called "Song of Altai" circulated in Kalmyk, which represents the local people's yearning for the place where their ancestors lived.

The current ethnomusicology research can not use isolated and static research thinking to examine and interpret the ethnic characteristics of traditional music and the change of musical cultural identity, but to place the traditional music culture of a certain ethnic group in its long-term political and social, history, and social resources and benefit distribution, immigration, modernization and internationalization and other multiple contexts to observe and examine three-dimensionally, so as to dynamically grasp the historical trajectory and ethnic characteristics of the development and change of traditional music [16]. The emotional connotation in music is caused by certain social life and is related to certain thoughts. The emotional experience of music can not only stay at the level of appearance, but also needs the experience in the heart. This article finds that with the division of the Kalmyk people in Russia and the influence of surrounding Cossack music, Russian music, Caucasian and Turkic music, and the creator is driven by inspiration, Kalmyk music has gradually derived other modes and developed more styles, for example, in the song "Sharka Barka", it expresses the wedding etiquette of the newlyweds at the wedding scene, such as the dance music of such festivals and the tunes of mutual exchange of feelings between lovers, wedding etiquette and religious customs, through rhythm, lyrics, The change of modal has continuously enriched the emotional characteristics of the song.

Through the analysis of the musical instruments, rhythm, and song feelings of the Mongolian and Kalmyk peoples of the Turghut tribe in China, people can understand the cultural, historical and musical connections and similarities and differences between the two, which will help to sort out this heroic tribe of Western Mongolia in China acts on the similarities and differences of music in different countries and environments under the influence of the road of return to the East, broadening people's horizons on the musical change patterns of grassland cross-border ethnic groups under the influence of historical influence, and enhancing national culture identity.

In the study of Mongolian culture, there has always been limited information about Oirat in Western Mongolia, especially music. Neither the corresponding art textbooks nor the connection with the Kalmyk Mongolians with homologous musical cultural characteristics, are lacking sufficient evidence to demonstrate. The research and investigation of the development and change of cross-border ethnic music will inevitably involve the consideration of multiple cultural contexts such as political power, discourse system, cultural communication, cultural change, ethnic identity and political identity [17].

5 Conclusion

Homologous folk music has some common features. Exploring its surface form changes and deep-seated differences can provide theoretical support for the richness of music. Folk music not only contains unique modes and types, but also has unique styles in musical instruments, rhythms and songs. This paper analyzes the musical characteristics of the Mongolian people of the Turghut tribe in China and the corresponding tribes in the Kalmyk Republic of Russia. Through the research results, it is found that the two have certain similarities and differences in the commonly used musical instruments, song rhythm characteristics and song emotions. From the perspective of intuitive music appreciation, by analyzing the specific rhythm characteristics of the two and the use of musical instruments, this paper can explore the musical evolution of the people of the Turghut tribe of the Republic of Kalmykia due to the influence of the surrounding environment, as well as the overview of the musical characteristics in Erghut Mongolian tradition. By excavating Turghut and its relationship with Kalmyk, the author hopes to provide a tentative research angle for the sorting out of the music culture between the two, and provide insights into the Mongolian culture of the Turghut tribe, the characteristics of Oirat music and the heritage protection work provides a meaningful perspective.

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