

# **The influence of natural style singing on the inheritance of national vocal music**

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**Abstract.** In view of the continuous integration of global culture, the category and form of singing style is becoming more and more diversified and national. The diversification of musical form has brought about bigger threats to Chinese traditional musical forms and meanwhile it has made the natural style singing in Chinese traditional vocal music getting more and more attention. Therefore, no matter from the academic perspective or the perspective of real demand, the exploration of influence of style singing on the inheritance of national vocal music will be of great value. This article has introduced the generation and the development process of natural style singing on the basis of analyzing the art of national vocal music. And then it emphasizes the positive influence of introducing natural style singing on the inheritance of national vocal music.

## **Introduction**

Each nationality has its own unique ethnic culture which is closely related with the ethnic region, living habits, and language. And their own original folk songs truly reflect the genuineness, spirit and real feelings with music and localism. From original folk songs, we can feel the essence of this spirit and pursue the nature of conducting in the society. The natural style singing is a folk musical singing method created by the masses in working and living practice full of originalities and authenticities. The most important expression in natural style singing is to be original and natural. It refers to a most primitive state reflected in an inartificial condition. And the originality in vocal music means natural sound without any artificial embellishment. Natural style singing, as the result after the combined action by factors of the masses' languages, emotions, cultures, and musical styles, has been loved deeply by the masses. Natural style singing is possessed with very distinctive regional features with sweet, clear and smooth timbres and is greatly influencing the inheritance of Chinese national vocal music.

## **Analysis of Chinese traditional vocal music**

National vocal music refers to a form of the national art after the combination of Chinese traditional singing technique and western bel canto. After research, we can find that the foundation of national vocal singing style still stems from Chinese traditional music expression forms such as the folk songs, Chinese operas, and Chinese folk art forms. This is not only the essential feature of Chinese national vocal music art, but also a point with Chinese characteristics. Chinese national vocal music singing style has continuously developed and changed from the time of the Spring and Autumn to the May 4th Movement, then to the founding of new China and the reform and opening-up so that there appeared some very characteristic manifestation modes and a completed vocal music singing system no matter in the singing mode or the style, which has become one of important teaching methods in Chinese music schools. The essence of national vocal singing style combined with western bel canto is mainly to reflect traditional Chinese culture and to show the charm of Chinese national vocal music art with a lively musical form so that it plays an extremely important role in Modern and contemporary music art system.

## **Formation and development course of natural style singing**

Natural style singing is one of the earliest national vocal music forms. Simply, natural style singing mainly refers to creations from folk originators including performing forms, contents and environment, and one of important forms of artistic presentation which can be sung in a natural or original singing method which usually uses local unique languages and reflects the features of singers and local folk music. It can be said that natural style singing is one of the vocal music performances close to actual production and life of the masses. For example, work song when workers shout out during their labor work, although in a single melody but with deep and solid life environment is a simple original singing method. Natural style singing comes from a verbal communication tool used when folks are far away with each other and have no other suitable contact way. Meanwhile it can adjust and enrich their boring and tough labor life. Natural style singing is with strong regionalism and originality but it does not have much high standard for the singer and it requires simply calling out.

Natural style singing keeps continuously updating, changing and developing and singers from one generation to another generation keep inheriting, processing and refining so as to make it more adaptive to the development and change in current time. However, it is exactly because of this that its practicability is becoming poorer and poorer but with more and more entertainment. But the cultural deposits produced by it can never be denied. Under the circumstance that science and technology is more and more advanced, different cultures influence and penetrate with each other. Various western style singing methods have swarmed into China. This has brought about huge impact on the inheritance of Chinese national vocal music singing. A large amount of traditional singing methods have combined with western sing methods. But as natural style singing has distinctive regional characteristic and thanks to various singing and performance contests in recent years, those original vocal singers have emerged.

Although part of their singing methods stem from their own creations, the majority come from the inheritance of the methods from their eldership. The manner of articulation of those original vocal singers and their accurate command of national songs mainly come from the inheritance from the summary of eldership experience. In this way, the master of natural singing method will be with personalized features. This means that original vocal singers have two roles: the originator and the inheritor.

Folk singers who use natural style singing usually do not receive any systematic vocal music training education so that they cannot master the related music theoretical knowledge and their inheritance of national vocal music is of great randomness so that there are enormous difficulties and uncertainty on whether natural style singing can continue very well and to a large extent it has restricted its own sustainable development. Although natural style singing has great uncertainty in its inheritance, it can never be regarded as lagged behind or not scientific. In CCTV National Youth Singing Contests of recent years, natural style singing has appeared repeatedly attracting more and more modern people.

What has made people feel more shocked is that, when various western singing techniques keep penetrating into traditional national singing styles, natural style singing can help people find everything fresh and new. It is not because how highly proficient this singing method is but because it is an external presentation of some indelible memories.

## **The positive impact of introducing natural style singing on the inheritance of national vocal music**

### **It can help further enrich the form of national vocal music**

As the old saying goes, only the national is the universal. Natural style singing is one of the most important part of Chinese national vocal music system, as well as the origin of the sustainable

development of Chinese national vocal music. If Chinese national vocal music achieves better development, the only way is to absorb rich nutrition from the source and get relevant inspirations. Natural style singing can be seen as a centralized reflection of the aesthetic tendency of local masses. There a lot of things can be learned from the singing form by national vocal music art. This is of great positive significance for the formal richness and artistic practice of national vocal music. For example, national vocal music can combine some features in national style singing such as sound, feeling, word and spirit and actively refer to many different singing modes in natural style music such as ensemble, antiphonal singing and polyphonic music and actively adjust the methods of using voices and techniques of tone up and down. In this way, it can not only beautify the aria and singing art of national vocal music, but can also promote the emotion and melody of Chinese national vocal music to obtain persistent fusion so as to make national vocal music more naturally beautiful. On the other hand, taking in natural style singing through national vocal music can better promote Chinese vocal music culture so that natural style singing can be accepted by more far-sighted and sensible people in the society.

For example, the platform of CCTV National Youth Singing Contest has help these original singers come into people's sight who were unfamiliar for them before so that people in different fields know more about them and natural style music obtain more and more attention.

### **It helps to promote the diversified development of national vocal music**

At present, Chinese national vocal music art is developing in a diversified tendency because natural style music art reserved in different places of China have long historic tradition. Each nationality has own abundant languages and distinctive folk-custom producing admirable natural style singing. In 1980s during organizing Chinese traditional vocal music art, it was found that the amount of Chinese traditional folk songs were about 400 thousand. It was rare in the worldwide countries as there were such rich advantages in traditional vocal resources. Natural style music culture has reserved the most refined musical information in the survival of each nationality, as well as one of the most fundamental spiritual elements for Chinese local civilization to realize sustainable development. It can be said that Chinese national vocal music undertakes the important duties to further spread national traditional culture. Although tradition should be a living creature which keeps developing in the change, with the continuous change of production method and life organization methods, the presentation of music art will definitely change with the continuous development of time and various positive and beneficial explorations deserve to be encouraged.

The foundation to achieve innovation is to deeply understand the natural style singing music of each nationality and to give enough care for the development. In the innovation process of each ethnic music art, never discard own characteristic at the cost of overturning traditional music art. Chinese national vocal art should keep absorbing richer nutrition from the natural style singing to obtain new development, which is the only way to avoid its declination. Natural national vocal music can be seen as the important basis of national music art and more and more people explore the transition of deep into national music for better inheriting and keeping developing Chinese national vocal music. Part of natural style singing which adhere to traditional agricultural production and life method must be introduced into museum type protection mechanism guaranteeing the basis living and creation condition for the inheritors of natural style singing so as to maintain its originality.

### **It helps to promote national vocal music teaching**

Currently, natural style singing has attracted great attention from the whole society and become one of the hot points in Chinese literary and art circles. Vocal music teaching workers should have a cultural self-awareness, i.e. to maintain the diversity of Chinese national vocal music with all heart.

During the promotion of natural style singing, the inheritance can be through folk channels as well as through the music teaching classes in colleges and universities. Students in vocal music major can touch and get close to natural folk songs in class study so as to further experience the charm of natural style folk songs.

During the teaching process of national vocal music art, we should try best to form a diversified new type vocal music teaching concept to prevent the similarity of cultivated male singer like Yan Weiwen and female singers like Peng Liyuan. We should establish the cultural self-awareness in vocal art and try to learn from folk art. In fact, in 1950s and 1960s when new China was founded, Hu Songhua and De Dema, and other senior singers paid great attention to learn from folk vocal music art. For example, the singer Hu Songhua has had in-depth study from Yi nationality singer Bai Suzhen many times to learn how to sing Hai Lai style, learned from Mongolian singer Hazahbu on how to sing classic long song pastoral, and learn from Zhu ZHonglu, then "king of flower" on how to sing Hui nationality flower, and learned from Uyghur singer Yulawas on Mukam art. After fully absorbing all excellent traditional folk singing methods, his singing was sincere and with solid foundation and strong nationality properties so that he has been loved by a great amount of fans for ten years.

Part of music lovers think only one singing method is scientific, bel canto. And they also think only western bel canto is a system by itself. But it is not the case. Chinese traditional national vocal music is not only unusually brilliant in styles genres but also it has accumulated many rich experiences with strong regional characteristics and various genres. National vocal music in broad sense is not limited to singing folk songs, but actually it contains dramas, quyi, and other artistic forms owned by each national minority. For example, a large amount of drama genres such as Kunqu Opera and Peking Opera has extremely rich singing theories and experience and they have formed extensive and profound singing system. Regarding the theoretical system, a comprehensive and systematic vocal music monograph "The theory of singing" has appeared in Yuan Dynasty. In reality, some national minorities have their own independent and completed vocal singing system but lack of concluding and inductive abilities.

## Conclusion

To sum up, natural style singing is the representative of excellent Chinese nation culture which shows not only modern people's persistent pursuit of aesthetic art but also people's true feeling of nature-admiring. Pay great attention and fully recognize the important value of natural style singing on inheriting national vocal music, and try as far as possible to absorb the nutrition of natural style folk songs into national vocal music art so as to further promote the development of Chinese national vocal music art and to well inherit Chinese excellent traditional culture.

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