

ETHNOMUSICOLOGICAL METHODS IN THE TEACHING OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL MUSIC

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Abstract

The needs and goals of Chinese traditional music course teaching are consistent with the implementation of ethnomusicology research methods, but there is a lack of mutual integration in these aspects. Chinese traditional music culture is the deepest source for us to enhance the country's cultural soft power and an important way to enhance the country's cultural soft power. The most basic cultural gene of Chinese traditional music must adapt to contemporary culture and coordinate with modern society. It must be promoted in a way that people like and widely participate in, so that it can transcend time and space, transcend realms, be full of eternal charm, and have contemporary value. It is necessary to systematically organize Chinese traditional music resources so that the musical relics collected by the Forbidden City, the musical heritage displayed on the land, and the ancient texts can be passed on. This article presented (1) ethnomusicological theory and methods (2) Chinese folk song, and (3) ethnomusicological methods in the teaching of Chinese traditional music.

Keywords: Ethnomusicological; Teaching; Chinese Traditional Music

Introduction

Chinese traditional music has been in a state of continuous decline, with its living space shrinking since the end of the last century. Many musical instruments and operas have even been lost. Take the national quintessence "Peking Opera" for example. Since it is the national quintessence, it should be deeply rooted in the hearts of the people and can be heard in the streets and alleys. In the golden age when Peking Opera was popular, such a grand occasion did appear, but the actual situation now is that the streets and alleys are full of pop music. Although the state has given strong support to require protection, inheritance and development, Peking Opera still barely survives. The inheritance status of Peking Opera is still so difficult, and other operas are even more difficult.

In basic education such as middle schools, the teaching of traditional Chinese music is not valued, and the importance of folk music is not realized. Primary and secondary school students generally like new and fun things, but it is difficult for them to accept traditional Chinese music, which has a strong inheritance. This has greatly suppressed their interest in learning. In addition, when conducting music teaching, the textbooks are mainly used. In addition, the threshold for recruiting music teachers in middle schools is low, and there are no corresponding requirements for teachers' academic qualifications. In this way, the teachers' own knowledge level and professional skills are not strong, and it is difficult to meet students' music needs during the teaching process.

Ethnomusicological Theory and Methods

The theory and methodology of Ethnomusicology lies in the dual nature of the discipline of Ethnomusicology: Ethnomusicology is a composite of two distinct fields: musicology and ethnography/cultural anthropology. The fusion of the two into one discipline is tricky; not only can one field not be emphasized, but both are required. This duality is particularly evident in the duality of the literature, with one group of people conducting technical analyses of the organization of the acoustic structure of music, while another group explores the function of music in culture, and music as an integral part of culture (Du, 2006).

The history of the discipline of Ethnomusicology always goes back to the 1880s and 1890s in Germany and the United States, and already in those days there was a divergence between the two fields. As above, a group of people viewed music as an independent organized sound system with its own laws. They searched for the origins of music and pushed the new ideas brought about by the theory of evolution. The Heliolithic school in Britain and the Kulturhistorische school in Australia appeared, searching for the origin of music by geographic division; another group, influenced by American anthropology, opposed the theory of evolution and propagation and opened up the study of music in the context of human culture. Not much emphasis was placed on morphological analyses, but on the role/functions played by music in culture and its function in human society and culture. Nettles had tried in 1956 to suggest that the numerous German and American schools of Ethnomusicology were not so appropriate in their designation. Instead of dividing the schools by country and geographical region, they should be divided by differences in theoretical concepts, methods, approaches, and scholarly focus. For even German scholars, many of them do not just focus on analyzing musical forms, and similarly, there is a group of Americans who are obsessed with technical morphological analyses (Wu, 2001).

Basically, although anthropology has had a greater influence on Ethnomusicology, anthropology and Ethnomusicology developed at the same time and influenced each other. Ethnomusicology has been influenced by various theoretical currents as much as anthropology, and there is indeed evidence of this, as Hornbostel, who is considered an important historical figure in the discipline, argues that there is a close relationship between the two. Other scholars hold similar views. As a result, definitions of the discipline show a similar duality. Definitions vary widely, even to the two extremes, depending on the individual (Du, 2009).

“Ethnomusicological theory,” despite its name and despite the fact that it in some ways permeates our field, has yet to take firm root in our disciplinary imagination. Indeed, the phrase appears to be used rarely, in comparison to references to an unmodified “theory” in or for Ethnomusicology. Minimally, Ethnomusicology today engages with three types of theory: social theory, music theory, and discipline-specific ethnomusicological theory. Unmodified references to theory have tended to obfuscate the nature of ethnomusicological

theory and have left ethnomusicologists a bit unsure, and perhaps even insecure, about the relevance and place of theory, however understood, in their work (Yang, 2010).

Chinese Folk Song

The origin and history of Chinese folk songs: Folk songs are the traditional songs of the working people of various ethnic groups, songs created by various ethnic groups in ancient and modern times and at home and abroad with their own stylistic characteristics. For a long time, the ancestors of all ethnic groups have had their own songs, most of which have been passed down orally from generation to generation, the authors of which are unknown.

Folk songs in my country have a long tradition, dating back to primitive society, when our ancestors began to sing during activities such as hunting, transportation, offering sacrifices, entertaining gods, rituals, and courtship. For example, there is a song called "Dan Ge" recorded in ancient literature. The song "Broken bamboo, new bamboo, flying earth, chasing meat" very concisely describes the whole process of hunting labour in the primitive age. Although the whole folk song is only eight characters long, it is like a vivid picture of primitive hunting, which is a valuable resource for understanding the production and life of people in the primitive age, and a treasure of joyful art (Gao, 1980).

The "Song Book of the Zhou Dynasty" is the first poetry collection in my country. Among them, "Guofeng" is a collection of folk songs from 15 regions in the Yellow River basin from the Western Zhou period to the mid-Spring and Autumn period, and is also known as the 15 national styles. From the Western Zhou period to the mid-Spring and Autumn period (11th century BC to 6th century BC), The complex social life, class struggle, and multifaceted living conditions of workers lasted for more than 500 years. Folk songs vividly reflect the spiritual worldview, creative talent, high level of popular appeal, and realist spirit of the workers of the ancient motherland, and have become a wonderful tradition of Chinese folk songs. Although there are not many folk songs left from the Tang Dynasty, the music materials excavated in Dunhuang and the records of Yanyue and Bianwen show that the creation and dissemination of folk songs were very active during the Tang Dynasty (Cheng, 2004).

In the modern Ming and Qing dynasties, as new capitalist economic factors began to emerge, many excellent folk songs with strong popular appeal were created in the extremely sharp struggle between class contradictions and ethnic contradictions. In addition to the wide range of content and fresh, bright, and simple language, the folk songs of this period were freer and more-lively in form than before. From songs such as "Shuilongyin" and "Longsongxing" included in the "Weipu" and the traditional brand song "Shanmen Rokuraku" of the Ming and Qing dynasties, we can see the following. The lyrics, musical composition, and melody performance ability have been greatly improved. After the May Fourth Movement, with the rapid development of the people's revolutionary movement, Chinese folk songs entered a new period of development, and the theme of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle became a new characteristic and historical mission.

With the birth of the People's Republic of China, the creation of folk songs entered a new era. A bright future is unfolding before people's eyes. After travelling through the desert, people's emotions were elevated when they suddenly saw the blue sea that spread out before them, and songs continued to flow from their excited hearts. People sang of infinite love for the Party, Mao Zedong, and a new life. People created masterpieces such as "The East is Red", "Our Leader Mao Zedong", "Liuyang River", and "August Everywhere Sweet Osmanthus".

Classification of Chinese Folk Songs: Folk songs are mostly collective creations of the masses, which are constantly processed and improved in the oral tradition. Their musical language is concise and concise, their musical images are distinct and vivid, and their methods of expression are rich and varied. Common genres of folk songs include labour songs, mountain songs, ditties, children's songs and custom songs. If according to the form and function can be divided into the following kinds:

(1) Highland Mountain Songs: Mountain song is one of the representative genres of Chinese folk songs, which is a kind of short folk song sung by people in the mountain field during their individual labour life, such as grazing, chopping wood, picking burdens, hoeing, and walking on the road.

(2) Labour Horns: Commonly known as the horn or whistle, the labour horn is one of the most important genres of Chinese folk songs, and is commonly sung in all provinces and regions of the country. Its main function is to unify the labour rhythms of the group, coordinate labour movements and regulate people's labour emotions. Various kinds of production work produce various kinds of labour songs. The music of each kind of labour horn is closely related to the characteristics of this kind of labour movement (Wang, 1999).

(3) Rice Field Songs: China's Yangtze and Pearl River valleys are one of the largest rice farming areas in the world. Since ancient times, rice farmers have been accustomed to singing songs to cheer them up when planting rice seedlings, gathering grass, turning water and digging. These folk songs have many names and are always called field songs (Luo, 1999).

(4) Town Ditties: The ditties (or ditties) are a genre of folk songs widely circulated in towns and markets. For a long time, through the processing and honing of professional and semi-professional folk artists in towns and cities, it has formed a series of subject features such as a more even structure, regular rhythm, delicate tunes, and varied thematic contents (Li, 2009).

(5) Yunling Double Tones: For a long time, people thought that all Chinese folk songs were in monophonic form. It was not until the late 1940s that musicologists began to observe the phenomenon of a group of singers singing two parts simultaneously in southwestern China. Most of the voice parts used in these two-voice folk songs are densely intervals of the same degree, major second, major and minor third, fourth and fifth.

Characteristics of Chinese folk songs: Folk songs are the songs of the working people. They are gradually developed by the broad masses of people through extensive oral singing in the practice of social life. It is a singing art closely related to people's lives and has a long and profound historical tradition. The complex and diverse natural environment, the broad cultural background, the numerous nationalities and populations are the main reasons for the emergence of folk music (Gao, 2022).

It has the most direct and close connection with the social life of towns. The authors of folk songs are the people. They create these works to express their lives, express their feelings, and express their will and wishes in their long lives. Regular work and life practice Yes, in the past, workers were deprived of the power to control culture and were all illiterate, not to mention musical scores. However, they created and sang their own songs through word of mouth to meet their needs. Starting from life, such as "Long-term Labor" and "Difficulties in Recruiting Workers", express the miserable feelings of long-term workers who have been deceived and oppressed; "Embroidered Bag" expresses the girl's longing for her lover and her yearning for a happy life; life. The thoughts of the people expressed by folk songs are the most real and profound (Wu, 2001).

Folk songs are gradually formed and developed in the extensive mass improvisation and oral singing. They are the crystallization of the wisdom of countless people. The creation process, singing process and dissemination process of folk songs are integrated into one. The singing process is improvisation, and the arrangement process is singing and dissemination. The musical form of folk songs is simple, plain, easy to understand, lively and flexible.

The Current development of Chinese folk Songs: The current difficulties in the development of traditional Chinese folk songs are due to the following reasons:

(1) Internal reasons: Language is one of the core elements of Chinese folk songs. The tunes of folk songs in various regions are created based on the intonation of local dialects, and the lyrics are written based on local production and living habits. Therefore, language plays a very important role in folk songs. However, with the development of the times and the flow of population, people use Mandarin to communicate for a long time, and the language functions of their own region, such as language habits, language tones, and dialect words, will gradually fade and weaken, so that when singing folk songs in their own region, there will be inaccurate intonation and inadequate understanding of lyrics, which will affect the emotional expression of folk songs.

The reduction of inheritors is very unfavorable to the development of folk songs. The ratio of young people to the elderly in rural areas is seriously unbalanced, so that it is difficult to find an inheritor of the same ethnic group and region. Some young people with good conditions are unwilling to inherit, and those who are willing to inherit are not satisfactory in all aspects. It is difficult to meet the standards of inheritance (Sun, 2011).

(2) External reasons: Modern culture is gradually affecting the ancient traditional culture and tightening the scope of development of traditional folk songs: media is the product of the rapid development of science and technology. As people's ways of understanding information become more and more diverse, new things continue to stimulate people's thinking. In such an environment, people's learning ability is also gradually rising. For example, folk songs are combined with other musical elements or cultural elements, and they are borrowed from each other. Therefore, in folk songs, which are a musical form that shows people's strong will, demands and wishes, there are many forms of expression, such as new folk songs, urban folk songs, and campus folk songs.

With the rapid development of my country's economic environment and technology, machines have replaced traditional manual farming methods, industrialization has penetrated into people's lives, and there are fewer and fewer jobs that require physical labor. Therefore, people rarely need to sing songs to cheer up and relieve fatigue at work, so the natural mountain songs and songs that are sung while working will decrease, and the number of working people who sing such folk songs will also decrease accordingly (Li, 2009).

Due to changes in the use of land, more and more high-rise buildings have sprung up, and people are gradually approaching these reinforced concrete walls, with less contact with nature and more revolving around modern life. Therefore, it is difficult for individuals or groups to create universal folk songs that resonate with labor and nature.

Ethnomusicological Methods into the Teaching of Chinese Traditional Music

From the perspective of ethnomusicology, teachers can use the pentatonic mode unique to traditional Chinese music to teach both theory and practice. For example, they can teach the theory of pitch, intonation and skill switching within the pentatonic mode to help students understand the intonation levels and titles of the pentatonic mode of national vocal works, and the vocalization skills of each pitch. After the theoretical teaching of this stage is completed, teachers must conduct practical training for students based on the teaching content of this stage, that is, after the pentatonic mode teaching is completed, students are required to repeatedly practice vocalization at different pitches, comment on the intonation problems of students' vocalization, and constantly calibrate.

In order to introduce the method of ethnomusicology into the teaching of traditional Chinese music, I suggest using a guided and flexible teaching method. This teaching method is student-led and teacher-guided. The teacher first proposes a theme around the teaching content of traditional Chinese music and requires students to think actively. The results of their thinking come from the students' active thinking. Whether the thinking results are correct or not, and whether there are omissions, should be pointed out by the teacher and given guidance. In this way, students are more likely to accept the teaching content.

During the teaching process, teachers can guide students to recreate traditional Chinese music under the method of ethnomusicology. For example, in the vocal music teaching of higher normal music majors, the theme can be folk songs of northern Shaanxi, and students can be required to create and sing by themselves in combination with the ethnic cultural background of northern Shaanxi. The work only needs one paragraph. Then, during the singing, the teacher can adopt a voting system and organize all students to vote on the performance works. The works with high votes can get certain rewards. However, no matter what the voting results are, teachers should point out the problems of the works and encourage students to strengthen their learning to make up for them. Under this condition, repeated teaching will improve students' understanding of music and practical ability.

Establish a correct concept of folk music teaching. According to the relevant requirements of compulsory education formulated in my country's music curriculum, music courses are an important part of laying the foundation for students' basic cognition. The middle school stage is an important stage for students to establish basic cognition, cultivate good habits, and strengthen humanistic literacy. It is very necessary to use folk music to help them understand my country's diverse folk music culture. Therefore, in the teaching process, teachers should fully realize the importance and necessity of ethnomusicology theoretical knowledge, pay attention to music teaching and folk music teaching according to the psychological characteristics of students, and formulate a set of folk song teaching guiding ideas and teaching concepts that meet the actual situation of students.

In the actual teaching process of Chinese folk songs, teachers should constantly innovate and optimize the educational content, focus students' attention, create a good classroom atmosphere, and encourage students to feel the charm of national music, so that it can be better inherited and carried forward. A good pre-class introduction is a key step in the beginning of education, which affects the educational effect and quality of the classroom. This requires teachers to focus part of their educational attention on the pre-class introduction, which is conducive to students quickly entering the learning state and creating a good music education atmosphere.

When adding ethnomusicology content to folk song teaching, we should pay attention to letting students fully experience Chinese traditional music and stimulate their interest in learning. In the teaching of folk song music in middle schools, teachers should formulate teaching plans based on students' psychological characteristics, select appropriate teaching content for students, and carry out music teaching. In order to stimulate students' interest in learning folk songs, in classroom activities, students can be led to experience the music of different ethnic groups, so as to understand the characteristics of each ethnic music and improve the quality of students' learning. It can also achieve the penetration and promotion of Chinese traditional ethnic music culture through experience.

New Knowledges

From the perspective of ethnomusicology, teachers can use the pentatonic scale model unique to traditional Chinese music to teach both theory and practice. Adopt guided and flexible teaching methods. In the teaching process, teachers can guide students to re-create traditional Chinese music under the method of ethnomusicology. These methods can improve students' understanding of music and practical ability. In short, it is to establish a correct concept of folk music teaching. In the actual teaching process of Chinese folk songs, a good pre-class introduction is a key step at the beginning of education. In the teaching of folk music in middle schools, teachers should formulate teaching plans based on the psychological characteristics of students, select appropriate teaching content for students, and conduct music teaching. Teachers should innovate classroom teaching and guide students to experience folk music.

Conclusions

Chinese traditional music culture is the deepest source for us to enhance the country's cultural soft power and an important way to enhance the country's cultural soft power. The most basic cultural gene of Chinese traditional music must adapt to contemporary culture and coordinate with modern society. It must be promoted in a way that people like and widely participate in, it is necessary to systematically organize Chinese traditional music resources so that the musical relics collected by the Forbidden City, the musical heritage displayed on the land, and the ancient texts can be passed on.

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