

From Ancient Scores to the Present: A Study on the Living Inheritance Path of Qin Songs

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Abstract: This article focuses on the inheritance and evolution of the ancient art form of qin songs from ancient scores to the contemporary era, and deeply analyzes the challenges and opportunities faced by its dynamic inheritance. Through the review of historical documents, field research and the analysis of contemporary inheritance practice cases, the development characteristics of qin songs in different historical periods were explored, and the influences of factors such as the interpretation of ancient scores, inheritance methods and social environment on the inheritance of qin songs were revealed. On this basis, an innovative path for the dynamic inheritance of guqin songs has been proposed, including the digital organization and interpretation of ancient scores, the construction of diversified inheritance models, the integration with modern culture, and the integration into the education system, aiming to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the sustainable development of guqin songs and promote the inheritance and promotion of this precious cultural heritage in the new era.

Keywords: Qin Song Ancient genealogy; Living inheritance; Inheritance path; Cultural innovation

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1. Introduction

Qin song, as a brilliant pearl in ancient Chinese music culture, is an art form that combines singing with guqin performance, carrying rich historical and cultural connotations as well as unique artistic aesthetic value. It originated in the Pre-Qin period and has undergone thousands of years of development and evolution. At different historical stages, it has presented distinctive artistic features, reflecting the cultural atmosphere, aesthetic concepts and people's spiritual pursuits of the society at that time.

Ancient scores are an important carrier for the inheritance of guqin songs, recording key information such as the melody, rhythm, lyrics, and performance and singing techniques of guqin songs. Due to historical reasons, many ancient scores are confronted with problems such as difficulty in interpretation and discontinuity in transmission, which poses a severe challenge to the living inheritance of qin songs. In contemporary society, with the development of cultural diversity and the change of people's lifestyles, the survival space of traditional music culture has been squeezed, and the inheritance and development of qin songs urgently need to explore new paths.

Studying the living inheritance path of qin songs from ancient scores to the contemporary era not only helps to deeply explore the artistic value and cultural connotation of qin songs, protect and inherit this precious intangible cultural heritage, but also provides references for the innovative development of traditional music culture, promoting the creative

transformation and innovative development of China's fine traditional culture. Therefore, this article will conduct in-depth research from aspects such as the sorting out of historical context, the analysis of the current situation of inheritance, and the exploration of innovation paths ^[1].

2. The historical inheritance of qin songs and the evolution of ancient scores

2.1. From the Pre-Qin Period to the Han and Wei Dynasties: The Origin and Initial Development of Qin Songs

The origin of the qin song can be traced back to the Pre-Qin period. At that time, the qin had become an important instrument for scholars and literati to express their feelings and ideas, and the qin song, as an art form of self-playing and self-singing, gradually emerged. Many chapters in *The Book of Songs* are closely related to qin songs, reflecting the lyrics and musical styles of early qin songs ^[2]. During the Han and Wei dynasties, the development of qin songs entered a new stage, and many famous qin song works and qin players emerged. CAI Yong's "Qin Cao" systematically summarized the themes, forms and performance methods of qin songs, laying the foundation for the development of qin songs in later generations ^[3]. During this period, the ancient scores of guqin songs mainly existed in the form of written scores, which described the positions where the strings were pressed and the playing techniques through words. Although they were not precise enough, they provided an important basis for the inheritance of guqin songs ^[4].

2.2. Tang and Song Dynasties: The prosperity of Qin songs and the improvement of ancient scores

The Tang and Song dynasties were the golden age of Chinese culture and art, and the qin song also ushered in a period of prosperous development. The love and participation of scholars and literati in the creation and performance of qin songs have enabled them to reach a relatively high level. Many famous poets such as Li Bai, Du Fu and Bai Juyi all left behind poems related to the music and songs, reflecting the wide influence of the music and songs in the society at that time. During this period, the reduced character score gradually replaced the written character score and became the main form of the ancient score for qin songs. The reduced character notation, by simplifying information such as fingering and string positions into specific symbols, greatly enhances the efficiency and accuracy of recording guqin scores, providing convenient conditions for the inheritance and dissemination of guqin songs ^[5].

2.3. Ming and Qing Dynasties: The Inheritance of Qin Songs and the Differentiation of Schools

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the inheritance of qin songs placed greater emphasis on master-apprentice transmission and family succession, giving rise to various schools of qin songs. There are certain differences among various schools in terms of the singing style, playing techniques and repertoire selection of guqin songs, which enrich the artistic expressiveness of guqin songs. Meanwhile, during the Ming and Qing dynasties, the ancient scores of guqin songs saw significant improvements in both quantity and quality ^[6]. Many collections of guqin scores emerged, such as "Songxian Pavilion Guqin Scores" and "Dahuan Pavilion Guqin Scores". These guqin scores not only included a large number of guqin song works but also provided detailed annotations and explanations on the playing and singing methods of guqin songs, offering rich materials for the inheritance of guqin songs ^[7].

2.4. Modern and Contemporary Times: The Dilemma of the Inheritance of Guqin Songs and the Rise of Ancient Score Research

Since modern times, with the transformation of society and the impact of Western culture, traditional music culture has faced unprecedented challenges, and the inheritance of qin songs has also fallen into a predicament. Many pieces of guqin songs have gradually been lost, the number of inheritors has sharply declined, and the performance and dissemination space of guqin songs has been restricted. However, against this backdrop, the study of ancient scores gradually emerged ^[8]. Scholars began to attach importance to the collation, interpretation and research of ancient scores of qin songs, attempting to restore and pass on the traditional artistic style of qin songs by excavating the information in ancient scores ^[9]. The

research during this period laid a theoretical foundation for the living inheritance of qin songs^[10].

3. The challenges faced by the dynamic inheritance of contemporary Qin songs

3.1. Difficulties in Interpreting Ancient Genealogies

Although certain achievements have been made in the study of ancient scores, the interpretation of ancient scores of qin songs still faces many difficulties. On the one hand, some symbols and terms in ancient genealogies have become difficult to verify their exact meanings due to their long history, which poses an obstacle to the accurate interpretation of ancient genealogies. On the other hand, the musical information recorded in ancient scores is relatively limited. The records of the rhythm, timbre, and emotional expression of the qin songs are not detailed enough. It is necessary for the inheritors to supplement and improve them with their rich experience and artistic perception.

3.2. Shortage of inheritance talents

The inheritance of guqin songs requires compound talents with solid guqin playing skills, good singing abilities and profound cultural literacy. However, in contemporary society, due to the influence of the education system and social environment, the number of young people willing to learn and engage in the inheritance of guqin and song is limited. The current inheritors are generally of advanced age, facing the risk of a transmission gap, which makes it difficult to expand the talent pool for the inheritance of guqin songs.

3.3. Changes in the social environment

Based on the theories of cultural communication and sociology, contemporary society presents a fast-paced lifestyle driven by industrialization and informatization. Meanwhile, the cultural consumption market has become highly diversified due to globalization and the development of digital technology, resulting in the dispersion of public attention resources and a continuous decline in attention to traditional music culture that requires deep immersive experience and has a high understanding threshold. As a niche art form, the guqin song is constrained by the classical nature of its performance form and the uniqueness of its artistic aesthetics, facing the predicament of a small market size and a fixed audience group. Moreover, the emerging music forms such as pop music and electronic music, which have emerged due to modern music technology, have rapidly occupied a dominant position in the cultural consumption market with their convenient dissemination channels and strong sensory stimulation. Although new media such as social media and short-video platforms have expanded the channels for music dissemination, they are more inclined to spread music content that meets the entertainment needs of the general public, further squeezing the survival space of qin Ge. This has led to huge challenges for the promotion and dissemination of qin ge in contemporary society due to insufficient adaptability of dissemination channels, changes in audience aesthetic preferences, and fierce market competition.

4. Innovative Paths for the dynamic Inheritance of guqin Songs

4.1. Digital Organization and interpretation of ancient Genealogies

Based on the theory of digital humanities and interdisciplinary research methods, modern digital technologies such as high-resolution image scanning and digital audio collection are employed to systematically digitize and standardize the storage of ancient scores of guqin and songs scattered in various ancient books and unique editions, thereby establishing a comprehensive database of ancient scores of guqin and songs that includes multimodal data such as score images, textual annotations, and performance audio. Provide scholars and inheritors with a convenient and efficient platform for consultation and research; Meanwhile, with the aid of computer music analysis technology, the decrement sign and musical form structure in ancient scores are parsed. Combined with artificial intelligence algorithms, the musical parameters such as rhythm patterns, pitch systems, and timbre characteristics are quantitatively analyzed. Moreover, the research results of music archaeology and music history are integrated to deeply explore the musical information contained in ancient

scores. Attempts are made to restore the original appearance of guqin songs in the historical context through methods such as simulated performances and virtual exhibitions, providing more scientific and accurate theoretical basis and technical support for the academic research and inheritance practice of guqin songs.

4.2. Construction of Diversified Inheritance Models

Based on the theory of “living inheritance” of intangible cultural heritage and the innovative concept of cultural dissemination, we break through the traditional closed inheritance model mainly based on master-apprentice transmission and family inheritance, and build a diversified inheritance system covering systematic education in professional colleges and universities, social popularization and promotion, and digital dissemination on the Internet. That is, by scientifically setting up professional directions such as guqin and song performance and guqin and song theory research in music colleges and universities, a professional education system including courses such as guqin and song history, performance techniques, singing training, and piece composition is systematically constructed to cultivate professional inheritors with solid theoretical foundations and exquisite skills. Meanwhile, diverse popularization and education activities should be carried out by leveraging social forces. Through holding special lectures where experts and scholars deeply analyze the cultural connotations and artistic features of guqin songs, stratified training classes for people of different age groups and basic levels, and immersive experience activities that integrate guqin making experiences with improvisational creation of guqin songs, the public’s awareness and enthusiasm for participating in guqin songs can be enhanced. In addition, by fully leveraging the technological advantages of the Internet platform, a digital teaching platform integrating teaching videos, live-streaming classes, online Q&A sessions, and virtual performance experiences should be established. Combined with social media, activities such as community operation for guqin and song enthusiasts and online competitions and performances should be carried out to break through the limitations of time and space and achieve the wide dissemination and sustainable inheritance of guqin and song art.

4.3. Integration with Modern culture

Based on the theory of cultural innovation and the perspective of cross-art category integration, the guqin song is combined with modern music styles such as the rhythm and cadence of pop music and the intense beats of rock music. Through innovative adaptation and creation, its melody, harmony and orchestration are reconstructed using modern music production techniques, while breaking through the single form of artistic expression. It integrates across boundaries with diverse art forms such as the body language of dance, the narrative tension of drama, and the audio-visual aesthetics of film and television to build a comprehensive artistic expression system of “music - dance - drama - film and television”, and actively participates in international cultural exchange activities, domestic art exhibitions, and various cultural festivals. With the help of a multimedia communication matrix and immersive performance Spaces, Comprehensively display the artistic charm and cultural connotation of the guqin song, thereby effectively enhancing its adaptability and social influence in the contemporary cultural consumption market, and achieving the creative transformation and innovative development of traditional guqin song art in the modern cultural context.

4.4. Integration into the education system

The integration of guqin songs into the education system is of great value, but it faces many challenges in the implementation process. There are problems such as a shortage of teachers and insufficient teaching resources in the basic education stage. Many music teachers lack professional knowledge and teaching experience of Musical Instruments and songs. The higher education stage is confronted with predicaments such as unclear disciplinary positioning and insufficient collaboration among industry, academia and research. To address these issues, it is necessary to establish a multi-departmental collaborative mechanism. The education department, in collaboration with the cultural department and art colleges, should carry out training programs for teachers of guqin and song to enhance their professional qualities. Increase policy support and financial input, and encourage social forces to participate in the development of Qing education

resources; Improve the evaluation system of guqin and song education, incorporate guqin and song learning into the comprehensive quality evaluation of students, and stimulate students' learning motivation.

Incorporating guqin songs into the national education system and through the popularization and promotion of basic education and the professional deepening of higher education, a long-term mechanism for inheritance and development can be established. This measure not only helps cultivate compound talents with both traditional cultural background and modern artistic accomplishment, but also promotes the creative transformation and innovative development of the art of guqin and song in contemporary society, injecting new vitality into the inheritance of China's fine traditional culture.

5. Conclusion

As a treasure of ancient Chinese music culture, the inheritance process of qin songs from ancient scores to the present day has witnessed the development and changes of Chinese music culture. Although the dynamic inheritance of guqin songs faces many challenges in contemporary society, through the exploration of innovative paths such as the digital organization and interpretation of ancient scores, the construction of diversified inheritance models, the integration with modern culture, and the integration into the education system, guqin songs are expected to regain new vitality and vigor in the new era.

The living inheritance of guqin songs is not only the protection and inheritance of traditional music culture, but also the safeguarding and construction of the spiritual home of the Chinese nation. We should fully recognize the cultural value and artistic charm of guqin songs, and actively take effective measures to promote the inheritance and development of guqin songs. The inheritance of guqin songs also requires the joint participation and support of all sectors of society, forming a inheritance pattern that combines government leadership, social participation and school education, to create a favorable environment for the sustainable development of guqin songs.

In future research, it is necessary to further explore in depth the theoretical and practical issues of the inheritance of guqin songs, and constantly improve the paths and methods of the living inheritance of guqin songs. Strengthen the assessment and monitoring of the effectiveness of the inheritance of guqin songs, adjust the inheritance strategies in a timely manner, and ensure that this precious cultural heritage of guqin songs can be effectively protected and passed down, making contributions to the development of human civilization.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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