

# Application Of Chinese Folk Music Elements in The Film from The Perspective of Music Diversification

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**Abstract.** As a unique national characteristic of China, Chinese ethnic music carries the Chinese music culture for thousands of years, and is also a link for people to better understand China. With the development of the film industry, folk music has been gradually used in the film and presented in the public view, bringing more novel and attractive creative style to the film industry, and making contributions to the development and inheritance of the Chinese traditional music. This paper analyzes the existing relevant literature about the use of instrumental music, folk song and traditional opera in folk music in detail, discusses how to more perfectly integrate the Chinese traditional music in the future film industry, and how to be better accepted by the public. At the same time, under the background of music diversification, how can better carry forward and inherit the traditional music, so as to better express the unique Chinese music culture to the world. By combining traditional Chinese music with modern music, this form will be more novel, attract the public's attention, and be recognized by more people, and the film industry will be further developed.

**Keywords:** Chinese folk music; diversity; film music.

## 1. Introduction

The Chinese traditional folk music is undoubtedly a wonderful flower in the Chinese national cultural consciousness. In the development of five thousand years of China, it is deeply rooted in the ancient and excellent Chinese national culture of China, and fully reflects the emotion, will and pursuit of the Chinese nation [1]. It is because the traditional Chinese folk music profound background and connotation, is used in the film business, added a fresh element for film business, also enhance the connotation of the film and art, make the traditional Chinese folk music gradually known, accepted by people, popular with people, for film career and traditional music has a promoting role. In the new era, in order to make Chinese film works gain worldwide recognition, it is an indispensable part to fully use traditional music and a means of expression, and it is also an important embodiment of China inheritance and carrying forward the traditional national culture [1]. As the wealth of China, the traditional Chinese music embodies the rich knowledge connotation and the cognition of the ancient music culture. To make this element enduring, it is necessary to keep up with the trend of The Times and integrate into the elements that the contemporary people like. The development of China's film industry has gradually gone abroad and to the world. The folk music elements also integrated into the film have also spread in western countries and are known by more people.

With the development of music and film, although the Chinese traditional folk music is gradually understood, but under the trend of popular music, people love for pop music than traditional music, the traditional music is in a stagnant state, so the combination of traditional music and film also need people more in-depth research and discussion, let the traditional music has further development, promote better inheritance and development of traditional music, let generations can feel the great wisdom of the ancient Chinese crystallization.

The development of film music in China after one hundred silent for sound, not mature to mature, gradually formed the diversified music elements, diversified music style of development situation, under various blend of music elements, music style, nationalization development trend of film music film music art development has injected new vitality. As a country with diverse nations and cultures, China has extensive and profound ethnic music cultures. At present, Chinese film music art and

national instrumental music, folk songs, opera, rap, singing and dancing elements combination promotes the effective application of Chinese folk music in the film, therefore, the essence of national music elements to refining and sublimation and applied to the film works, to promote the prosperity of the film art industry [2]. In order to promote the development and inheritance of Chinese folk music and the better development of the film industry, this article mainly gives examples of how folk music is used in film and gives suggestions for the better integration of Chinese folk music and film.

## 2. Music Diversification

As an indispensable part of human culture, music plays an important role in carrying history and culture and expressing emotions. Due to different regions, different history and culture, living habits gradually formed the world music diversified state, the construction of diversified music culture, can promote cultural diversity and different regional music cultural communication, reduce cultural conflict and cultural prejudice, enhance mutual understanding between different countries and regions and respect, promote cultural globalization, become cultural important link in the world. The diversification of music is the diversification of musical styles and expression forms in different regions and under different cultural backgrounds. Such diversity is not only reflected in the differences in musical style, melody, rhythm and lyrics, but also reflected in the different cultural and historical backgrounds.

Under the context of the diversified development of global political economy, music culture gradually tends to be diversified globally and supports the coexistence of various forms. Taking traditional Chinese music as an example, people of different ages have different habits of listening to music. Young people prefer to listen to folk music containing elements of pop music in their leisure time, while the elderly prefer to listen to the original traditional folk music. For this situation, only by further diversifying the development of traditional folk music can meet the people with different needs for folk music. Due to the differences in historical periods and the changes in life background, traditional music will inevitably be different and change in order to conform to the trend of The Times. However, what remains unchanged is the core folk song thought and the content of the music, but the performance mode and singing method of the music with the change of The Times. Since the reform and opening up, Chinese traditional folk music has developed more and more mature under the impact of various ideological trends. With the progress of the era of traditional music to the era of diversification, although the traditional music into the public view, but still will appear not popular phenomenon, but in the mature development situation, the diversification of traditional music has more known and spread, with the spirit of traditional folk music will be under the guidance of the trend of The Times have further development [3].

Not only traditional music is towards diversification, but also film and television music is also progressing towards the direction of diversification. The diversification of music culture is not just the "westernization of music art", but the inheritance, promotion and innovation of the development of Chinese music culture. This is the combination of western culture and Chinese culture, thinking, exploration and innovation. This innovation not only retains the unique characteristics of Chinese culture, but also introduces western culture, and breaks the estrangement between classical and modern, traditional and trendy, east and western. Researchers should examine the cultures of various countries with correct and scientific eyes, and integrate Chinese and Western cultures, so as to promote the development of music, film and television culture in various countries [4].

## 3. Chinese Folk Music in Films

Folk music is a song comes from the folk, speared among the folk and show the folk life. The art of Chinese folk music is a kind of music from which has the characteristic in the world. In thousands of years of civilization, the Chinese nation has created a large number of outstanding national music culture, it has formed a folk music system with profound connotation and rich content.

National music is the crystallization of wisdom and emotion of people of all nationalities, is the reflect of life and spirit of the people of all ethnic groups, with very distinctive national characteristics. Compared with popular music today, national music is more lyrical and narrative, the folk-custom flavor is thicker, diversity and original ecological characteristics are more obvious, the impact on modern film music is more far-reaching [5].

In recent years, as Chinese films gradually go abroad, the folk music in films has also begun to attract the attention of overseas audiences. Songs expressed in different regions, different nationalities and different languages, as well as folk music played by different instrumental music, ethnic instruments and other materials, are always a spiritual wealth that is difficult for film and television creation and are also a key element for Chinese films to attract audiences all over the world [6].

### 3.1. The Application of Chinese National Instrumental Music

Chinese traditional instrumental music can be roughly divided into two types, solo music and ensemble music. Solo music can be divided into bow string, plucked, wind, percussion, etc.; ensemble music can be divided into string rope, bamboo, wind, advocacy and percussion. The top ten traditional Chinese instruments are drum, sheng, Xun, qin, harp, flute, xiao, chime bell, erhu and pipa. Traditional Chinese Music instruments have strong expression, most of which are high and distinctive. Different musical instruments will create different musical styles, and the application of ethnic musical instruments in the film can render different atmosphere [7].

The Chinese film *House of Flying Daggers* makes perfect use of traditional Chinese music elements in the creation of background music. Film *House of Flying Daggers* director chose the songs by the pipa playhouse of *Flying Daggers*, using compact playing to foil the scene of the war, the song is the director in the film, let the film start can attract the attention of the audience, drive the audience into the mood of the film, for the subsequent plot. The instrument —— pipa, used in this song, has very Chinese characteristics. The rhythm played can be controlled by the changes of the player, which can be delicate and euphemistic, but also compact and powerful. It is properly used in the film *House of Flying Daggers* [8]. In the film *House of Flying Daggers*, with the pipa song opened the prelude, along with the plot This piece of music is the highlight of the whole film, Mainly using the pipa and erhu, the tune was created by Li Yannian of the Han Dynasty, The application of the song is so very appropriate, and coincides with the image of the heroine, " the north is good People, unique and independent ", " unique " praised her beauty," independent " to show it Dust removal and refined, not popular, this is the image of the little sister in the movie, she is proud Independent, sacrifice one's life, pure and unyielding, pipa music in the performance of a little sad, and at the same time Contains a unique charm, wonderful. The application of pipa makes the music and film plot clever Wonderful blend together to create the best viewing effect for the film [9].

The famous film director Zhang Yimou absorbed the essence of traditional culture and directly shot the film *House of Flying Daggers* in the name of the traditional pipa song *House of Flying Daggers*. In this film, the strong national score adds a lot of bright color to the film with the name of folk music. In recent years, the successful use of folk music elements in many films such as *Crouching Tiger*, *Hidden Dragon*, *Hero* and *A Letter from a Strange Woman* has also paid us attention to the revival of Chinese folk music in the film music world. And the new round of folk music elements in the use of film music boom, through the simple prominent characteristics of ethnic instruments or the new ethnic customs to complete the process of film music nationalization [10].

### 3.2. The Application of Chinese Folk Songs

Chinese folk song has a long history, in primitive societies, the ancestors began their singing in hunting, carrying, sacrifice, entertaining gods, rituals, courtship and other activities. Chinese folk songs were generally passed down by word of mouth, until the advent of the *Book of songs*. The *Book of Songs* is the earliest collection of folk songs in China. It collects the folk songs of the 15 vassal states in the northern Yellow River basin during the five hundred years from the Western Zhou Dynasty to the middle of Spring and Autumn Period (the 11th century BC to the 6th century BC).

This collection of poems uses the artistic method of realism, it really reflected the social life, class contradiction and the multifaceted life of the working people. Another collection of folk songs is in the Yangtze River basin, *Chu Ci*, appeared in the fourth century BC. It is a collection of lyrics compiled and processed by the great poet Qu Yuan. This collection began to use romantic expression techniques, full of ancient myths and legends, and full of imagination. By the period of the Han, Wei and Six Dynasties (206 BC ~ 420 AD), most of them were preserved in Yuefu, the Han folk songs of Yuefu are actually a collection of folk songs in the Huaihe River basin, the lower reaches of the Yangtze River and the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River. The characteristic of Yuefu folk songs is that not only the written parts are arranged, but also in terms of music, it was processed by Li Yannian, a famous musician of the Han Dynasty, and accompanied by silk and bamboo musical instruments, which was called phase harmony song. Until the founding of the People's Republic of China, Chinese folk songs entered a new era, not only novel themes, but also diverse music patterns, full of positive optimism.

With the development of Chinese folk songs, they are slowly being well used in movies. Folk songs can better reflect the life and local customs of the people in ethnic areas than language and have a stronger appeal. The first Chinese film to use folk music elements was *Storm on the Border*, which is a film based on the life of ethnic minorities. The film music composer Sheng Jialun combined the main content of the film, and absorbed certain factors of Xikang folk songs, thus creating the music *Homesick Song* in the film, which has the role of finishing point in the whole film. Thus, it can be seen that the biggest characteristic of folk songs is that they can vividly reflect the living conditions of ethnic minorities. Through the transmission of the film lens, and then add the collocation of folk songs with them, they are used in the film and introduced into the perspective of the public, so that people can resonate with them [11].

### 3.3. The Application of Chinese Opera

Different from folk songs and instrumental music, Chinese opera is very comprehensive, including the combination of music, literature, dance, art and other art forms, and formed a relatively complete opera art through the Han, Tang, Song and Jin dynasties. Chinese opera, Greek tragicomedy and Indian Sanskrit opera are also known as the world's three ancient drama cultures. Chinese opera is a flower garden with Peking Opera, Yue Opera, Huangmei Opera, Pingju Opera and Henan Opera as the core. Comprehensiveness, virtuality and program are the main artistic characteristics of Chinese opera. These characteristics, which gather the artistic essence of Chinese traditional culture, constitute a unique view of drama, and make Chinese opera shine with unique artistic brilliance on the stage of world opera culture.

The comprehensiveness of Chinese opera can significantly improve the quality of film and realize the innovation of film production, which is of great significance for the artistic creation of film. For example, the use of opera in *Sing-song Girl Red Peony* is very clever, and opera is skillfully used in some important shots in the film, which is also one of the important reasons why *Sing-song Girl Red Peony* was widely popular at that time. Through the opera to add the artistic color of the film, not only can attract the audience's attention, but also can further inherit and carry forward China's excellent opera art and culture. In the film *Farewell My Concubine*, opera is not only an important carrier for the whole film, but also throughout the film, so that the fate of the two protagonists can be closely linked, and then produce a series of up and down of the plot. The film describes the growth of two Peking Opera characters, from childhood to adulthood, and their life tragedy in the social environment at that time. In the musical structure of the film, the use of Peking Opera elements is very good. Whenever the melody of Peking Opera music rings, the fate of the leading characters begins to develop towards different tracks, but there is still a close relationship between the two people and Peking Opera. The film not only takes opera as the main context of the story, but also gives full play to the musical art of opera most vividly, which finally makes *Farewell My Concubine* a good work [12].

#### 4. Discussion

In the process of film production, music, as an important part, is the core interpretation of an excellent film work. Any classic film work, in addition to having the impressive film story development plot, but also should be set off by excellent movie music, can perfectly convey the central idea that the film wants to express, make the audience immersed in the film story scene, truly feel the atmosphere of the film art [11]. Under the development of music diversity, film music types also become diverse, Chinese folk music under the inheritance from generation to generation, in order to follow the trend of the times, also into a lot of new elements, in the use of the film also become diverse, whether *Crouching tiger, Hidden dragon* or modern film, many are integrated into the Chinese traditional folk music. However, it is not easy for the traditional music to continue to be better integrated into the film and be accepted and loved by the public. It not only requires the filmmakers to consider how the film plot can be integrated with the traditional music more appropriately, but also needs them to have a deep understanding of all aspects of the traditional music. For the current maturity and progress of film technology, the use of film music has also gradually become an open proposition, no longer being rigid. In the broader context of diverse music today, pop music, jazz music, rock music, electronic music and other forms of music have gradually entered the public eye, loved by the younger generation, and the audience is more like the younger generation, so filmmakers can combine pop music with traditional Chinese music, through adaptation and fusion and application in movies, this form is even more novel, will make the audience better accept, it can also arouse the audience's interest in the process of watching the film. And at the same time, Chinese film also gradually go abroad, many movies also got very good feedback, in the process of film production, can learn to absorb the western film excellent, valuable content, adhere to the inclusive ideas, take its essence, to the dross, and adhere to the characteristics of Chinese national music, constantly improve the level of film production [13].

There are two features in film music, the first is flexibility, with the rich experience of film music production, and the mature development of modern information technology, film music producers can flexibly adjust each music segment according to the needs of the film plot, to ensure the perfect fit of music and film. And can also use modern technology to process music, adapt music, improve the artistry of the film. The second is clarity. When the filmmaker selects the music segment suitable for the film, the music should cooperate with the director, the screenwriter writing the script and the plot of the film. Besides, the music segment should also perfectly interpret the psychological state and the plot development, so as to attract every audience [14].

#### 5. Discussion

With the continuous development and growth of the global film industry, Chinese films have gradually occupied a place in the world, and use of Chinese folk music in films has gradually been well known and loved by the public. In the process of film shooting and production, music plays a vital role, throughout the development of Chinese film, excellent film works can't be separated from the application of Chinese folk music. The two complement each other and promote each other. Music can not only enrich the content of the whole film, but also increase the artistic level of the film. After years of development, Chinese films have entered the present stage of development after experiencing difficulties, Chinese film music is largely deeply influenced by the traditional culture of the Chinese nation. Thousands of years of Chinese culture has endowed Chinese film music with strong vitality with its extensive and profound heritage. But compared with the western advanced film technology, Chinese film-making is still a little behind, the national style in the film should not always stay in the original state or remain unchanged, but should change with the appreciation level of the society and the audience, should be integrated with the times, so the Chinese film production should draw western film mature technology, at the same time more into Chinese national music with strong Chinese traditional culture elements, on this basis, add diversified musical elements, so not only can enhance

the artistic quality of Chinese film, but also can make the Chinese get better traditional music and inheritance, and let the audience feel the charm of folk music.

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