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Thoughts on the Inheritance and Development of Chinese Traditional Music Empowered by Social Media

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Abstract: Chinese traditional music originates from folk culture and is a distinctive artistic form of our country's outstanding traditional culture, carrying the characteristics of national aesthetics and the cultural veins of regional folk customs. Traditional music in China has long been passed down through apprenticeship, university education and offline performances, with its dissemination limited to the professional circle and having few channels for public access. The low level of popularization directly leads to a shortage of young inheritors and weak innovation motivation in the industry, restricting the inheritance and modernization development of traditional music. The popularity of social media has changed the way domestic culture is disseminated, breaking the time and space and circle limitations of traditional music dissemination. Small-scale music forms such as operas and folk minor tunes have been able to reach the public through online platforms, effectively expanding the coverage of dissemination and promoting the integration of traditional music with the tourism and cultural industries, broadening the industrialization path of traditional culture. At the same time, the operational model of platform traffic orientation has generated negative dissemination issues. Some creators, in order to gain popularity and adapt to fragmented dissemination scenarios, randomly simplify and adapt traditional music classics, producing a large amount of homogenized and superficial content. This kind of secondary creation departs from the original artistic framework and cultural connotations of traditional music, weakening the historical depth and artistic value of the works, and is not conducive to the dynamic and original inheritance of traditional music. Based on the current dissemination situation of traditional music on social media, combined with existing research and industry reality, this paper analyzes the positive effects and existing problems of new media on the inheritance of traditional music. The research proposes optimization countermeasures from three dimensions: content innovation, ecological governance, and industry supervision, to improve the digital inheritance model of traditional music, help the industry achieve long-term development, and provide references for the related practices of traditional music dissemination on new media.

Keywords: Social Media; Traditional Music; Cultural Inheritance; Activate Innovation; Digital Communication.

1. Introduction

During the long process of folk development, traditional Chinese music has been continuously refined and accumulated rich musical resources. The various artistic forms that the general public comes into contact with, such as folk music performances, local operas, folk tunes, traditional singing and recitation, all fall within the category of traditional music. These musical arts are deeply rooted in people's lives and truly record the local customs and regional characteristics of different places. The musical works passed down from generation to generation carry the public's life memories and local cultural heritage, and are also important carriers for the current inheritance and promotion of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

However, due to the fixed dissemination form and limited display scenarios, traditional music is difficult to enter the public's field of vision. The public lacks convenient access channels, and it is difficult to establish stable cultural cognition and emotional identification, which also makes the spread range of traditional music in the folk sector difficult to expand [1].

The entertainment preferences of young people nowadays are very fragmented, and they mostly prefer short videos with shorter duration, strong interaction, and light rhythm. Traditional music has a slow rhythm and related musical theory knowledge is complex, making the entry and appreciation threshold relatively higher, and there is a significant deviation from the entertainment aesthetics of contemporary youth. This aesthetic mismatch has led to the continuous loss of young audiences for traditional music and the gradual reduction of the folk inheritance team. The lack of continuous participation from the young group has led to the continuous weakening of the industry's development vitality, and the old inheritance model has become difficult to adapt to the current cultural dissemination environment [2].

The comprehensive popularization of new media has completely changed the fixed dissemination pattern of traditional music. Ordinary netizens can participate in content creation, and the fragmented dissemination form has broken the restrictions of professional circles, allowing traditional music, which was originally niche, to have the opportunity to integrate into the daily life of the general public. At the same time, the domestic protection of intangible cultural heritage is steadily advancing, and cultural support policies for traditional culture are continuously implemented. Multiple favorable conditions have been superimposed, promoting traditional music to gradually enter the key stage of digital innovation development.

By reviewing the existing research results, it can be found that the academic community mostly focuses on the positive role of new media in the dissemination of traditional music, and the research perspective is relatively limited. Many studies ignore the various dissemination chaos brought about by the platform's traffic mechanism and the hidden harm these problems cause to the long-term development of the industry. In addition, the proposed optimization methods in the existing research are mostly scattered and do not form a complete system that can be implemented. Combining the actual dissemination situation of social media, this paper reorganizes

the advantages and disadvantages of traditional music's digital inheritance, explores the innovative development path adapted to the new media environment, and provides practical theoretical references and practical ideas for the revitalization and inheritance of traditional music that are in line with reality.

2. The Core Value of Social Media in Empowering the Inheritance of Traditional Chinese Music

2.1. Expand The Boundaries of Dissemination and Break Through the Limitations of Niche Communities

In the era of traditional media, the channels and display scenarios for traditional music were very fixed, mainly relying on offline special performances, local cultural activities, and in-depth reports by mainstream media for promotion [3]. The fixed dissemination model and audience group limited traditional music to the professional cultural field for a long time, making it difficult to reach the general public and always trapped in the predicament of niche dissemination.

Problems such as geographical isolation, single dissemination form, and high appreciation threshold continuously reduced the survival and dissemination space of traditional music. Most regional characteristic folk songs, niche operas, and unique instrumental music could only circulate within a small local area, without effective channels for external promotion. Many high-quality traditional music resources have seen a continuous decline in social influence, and some niche and endangered music categories even face the risk of complete disappearance.

Mainstream social media platforms such as Douyin, Bilibili, and Xiaohongshu all have fully covered intelligent push algorithms. These platforms eliminate the dissemination restrictions brought by age, region, and occupation, and the traditional music that was originally limited to professional stages and had a very small audience can now be disseminated to users in different online circles across the entire network, completely changing the passive situation of narrow dissemination range and small audience size of traditional music [4].

The simplicity and fragmentation of short videos align with the fast browsing habits of contemporary netizens. Most traditional music pieces are long in length and have complex structures, which are not suitable for online dissemination scenarios. Creators can extract the excellent segments of the pieces, optimize the content structure, and make up for the shortcomings of traditional music dissemination. Relying on the rapid viral expansion advantage of platform algorithms, the dissemination efficiency, coverage range, and audience depth of traditional music far exceed the offline dissemination models.

New media has changed the way the public receives content, and audiences no longer passively accept cultural content. Ordinary users can participate in dissemination through likes, comments, reposts, and secondary creation, allowing professional high-quality content and folk original content to form a good complement. This participation dissemination model effectively improves the problem of aging audiences of traditional music, continuously attracts young people to pay attention to traditional music, and reserves sufficient new-generation strength for the long-term inheritance of the industry [5].

2.2. Innovative Presentation Forms, Adapted to The Contemporary Public's Aesthetic Preferences

After thousands of years of artistic accumulation and technique iteration, traditional music has developed standard performance techniques and standardized stage presentation forms, possessing extremely high artistic professionalism and aesthetic value. The traditional music performance forms are becoming increasingly rigid and difficult to appreciate, which has become more and more prominent in the modern entertainment market. Such art forms are difficult to meet the relaxed and entertaining viewing needs of young people, which is also the core reason for the continuous loss of young audiences.

Social media comes with basic functions such as editing, mixing, and image optimization, which significantly lowers the technical threshold for traditional music's secondary creation [6]. Ordinary music enthusiasts can adapt, restructure, and innovate the interpretation of traditional pieces without the need for professional equipment and operation teams. The flexible creative mode breaks the spatial limitations and performance conventions of traditional stages, enriching the expression forms of traditional music and providing sufficient development space for artistic innovation.

After years of platform development and industry exploration, traditional music has formed a mature innovation model in the new media environment. The current mainstream innovation forms include folk music covers of pop songs, classical segments of opera combined with traditional Chinese culture scenes, and modern arrangements of traditional folk music melodies, etc. The lightweight adaptation weakens the age-old and serious sense of traditional music and enhances the visual quality and dissemination vitality, better meeting the online entertainment preferences of young people, and being more easily accepted and loved by the public [7].

High-quality new media adaptations always adhere to the core connotation of traditional art.

2.3. Activate Industrial Momentum and Consolidate the Foundation for Inheritance and Development

The marketization development level of the traditional music industry in China is relatively low. The income channels for practitioners are limited and their income is unstable. The overall development momentum of the industry is insufficient, and the phenomenon of talent loss is very common, which directly affects the healthy cycle and long-term development of the industry.

At present, most traditional music practitioners remain in their positions and mainly rely on their own love for art and professional sentiment for support. The industry has not established a complete talent guarantee system and diversified profit models. Relying solely on sentiment for development is not stable and it is difficult to support the long-term stable operation of the industry. The overall development foundation is relatively weak [8].

The digital dissemination and traffic monetization model built by new media have opened up new paths for the professional operation and industrial upgrading of traditional music. Practitioners have broken away from the single profit

limitation of offline performances and offline teaching, and can increase income through various methods such as online teaching, online performances, cultural and creative co-branding, copyright authorization, and live streaming operation, effectively optimizing the overall income structure of the industry.

The online traffic of traditional music has a strong industrial driving effect and can promote the coordinated development of upstream and downstream industries such as ethnic instrument manufacturing, folk culture design, cultural tourism performances, and intangible cultural heritage study tours. It forms a complete industrial ecosystem. The continuous release of industry value compensates for the shortcomings of traditional music being heavy on art and light on market, and transforms the industry from a single public welfare protection model to a market-oriented and professional sustainable development model [9]. The continuously improved industrial ecosystem continuously attracts young talents to enter the industry, effectively alleviates the dilemma of talent shortage in the industry, and lays a solid foundation for the dynamic inheritance of traditional music through industry and talent.

3. The Current Predicaments in the Transmission and Development of Traditional Music in the Context of Social Media

3.1. The Dissemination of Content Has Become Superficial, and the Cultural Essence is Constantly Being Lost

The new media content industry is highly competitive, and most self-media accounts focus on generating traffic as their core operational goal. This utilitarian approach to operation has led to a continuous decrease in high-quality traditional music content with substance and depth within the platform. The shallow and entertainment-oriented, fragmented content has gradually taken the dominant position, directly resulting in a continuous decline in the overall content quality of the platform.

Short videos pursue fast-paced and highly attractive dissemination characteristics, which have changed the content production logic of the platform [10]. Netizens mostly quickly scroll through the videos, rarely immersing themselves in the works, and can only obtain basic audio-visual experiences, hardly being able to deeply perceive the artistic value and folk cultural connotations of traditional music.

The trend of shallow entertainment-oriented dissemination has continuously spread across various platforms. The public's understanding of traditional music remains limited to elements of Chinese style and popular melodies, unable to form a comprehensive and systematic cultural cognition. This superficial dissemination method continuously consumes the core cultural value and inheritance foundation of traditional music, reduces the artistic recognition of the works, and is not conducive to the long-term protection and dynamic inheritance of traditional music.

3.2. The Content of Creation Becomes Homogenized, and the Diversified Development is Restricted

The threshold for online creation is low and the openness is high, leading to a large number of non-professional creators flooding into the traditional music creation field. The output of platform works has been increasing year by year, but the quality of the content varies greatly. Copying trends, template application, direct copying, and other frequently occur, seriously disrupting the online dissemination ecology of traditional music.

Most amateur creators have not received systematic aesthetic training and creative cultivation, and are unable to independently produce high-quality and profound artistic works [11]. Many people, in order to stabilize traffic and the number of fans, directly copy popular works, apply fixed editing templates, and replicate classic performance segments. The platform's repetitive content is rampant, and truly original and innovative masterpieces are extremely scarce.

The platform's traffic allocation algorithm has obvious deviations, further widening the gap in industry development. Popular folk music and classic operas have seized the vast majority of platform traffic resources due to their large audience base. The exposure space for niche folk songs, unpopular instruments, and endangered local operas is continuously compressed, and their survival and development face huge pressure. The industry is difficult to form a diversified and balanced development pattern.

The overall atmosphere of online creation at present is superficial, and the industry's originality motivation is insufficient, with a severe shortage of high-quality content. The platform's content is mostly remakes and simple adaptations, with a single and fixed creative form lacking novelty [12]. This situation not only easily causes public aesthetic fatigue and squeezes the survival space of niche music genres, but also cannot fully present the rich and diverse artistic system of traditional music, hindering the high-quality and diversified development of the industry.

4. The Optimized Path for Enabling the High-Quality Development of Traditional Music Through Social Media

4.1. Deepen The Content's Essence, Balance the Relationship Between Innovation and Inheritance

In the digital communication environment, high-quality and profound content is the core support for the long-term dissemination and continuous inheritance of traditional music. The innovation of traditional music in the new media domain should not blindly cater to traffic and randomly deconstruct classic works [13]. All creations must be based on the essence of intangible cultural heritage inheritance, rooted in traditional cultural soil, and adhere to the basic bottom line of artistic inheritance.

When creators adapt and carry out secondary creation of musical pieces, they need to strictly abide by traditional performance norms, completely retain the original style, technique characteristics and cultural connotations of the musical pieces, and hold onto the artistic core of traditional music. People can carry out reasonable innovations based on modern popular aesthetic preferences and the characteristics of online dissemination, so that the traditional artistic heritage and modern dissemination forms can better integrate [14].

The entire industry needs to abandon the utilitarian creative thinking of pursuing traffic alone, get rid of the impetuous

creative mindset, and eliminate the superficial and entertainment-oriented extensive creative mode. Creators should not only perform simply, but can also polish the content from multiple angles such as tracing the historical origin of the musical pieces, interpreting the folk culture connotations, popularizing the performance techniques, and appreciating classic works [15]. They can fully explore the artistic value and cultural depth of traditional music.

Multidimensional and profound content output can help the public establish a complete understanding of traditional music and correct the cognitive deviations caused by shallow dissemination. The online dissemination of traditional music can shift from simple traffic exposure to having depth and sustainability in the form of dynamic inheritance, and effectively improve the quality of dissemination and inheritance value [16].

4.2. Supporting Original and Niche Music, Enriching the Music Dissemination Ecosystem

A diverse and balanced content ecosystem is an important foundation for the high-quality and sustainable development of traditional music. In the face of serious homogenization of industry content, uneven distribution of traffic, and insufficient originality motivation, we can simultaneously exert efforts in optimizing content supply and adjusting traffic rules to improve the overall dissemination ecology of the industry.

As the core content distribution channel, the platform needs to actively optimize algorithms and traffic allocation mechanisms, break the monopoly of popular content on traffic. The platform can reserve more exposure positions for high-quality niche original content, and launch support projects for intangible cultural heritage music, focusing on assisting niche folk music, endangered folk songs, local operas, and unpopular instrumental music, to ensure the continuous dissemination and stable survival of various traditional music resources.

The platform can collaborate with intangible cultural heritage research institutions and industry experts to build an original incentive and work system. Through traffic support, financial rewards, talent training, account incubation, etc.，it encourages creators to explore local characteristic music resources and create differentiated original masterpieces [17]. At the industry level, it is necessary to continuously cultivate original talents, build regular communication and incubation platforms, steadily improve the professional creative ability of practitioners, and help creators build exclusive artistic characteristic IPs.

The industry needs to eliminate the impetuous atmosphere of following trends and blindly chasing traffic, and create a favorable atmosphere that respects originality and encourages diverse creation. High-quality original works and niche characteristic content can enrich the dissemination ecology, form a virtuous industry competition environment, activate the innovative vitality of traditional music, and promote the balanced and comprehensive development of the industry.

4.3. Improve the Regulatory System and Purify the Industry's Communication Environment

A clean and standardized network environment is an important guarantee for the high-quality development of traditional music digitization. The chaos in the industry cannot be completely eradicated by a single entity. Network platforms, industry associations, and regulatory authorities need to collaborate and cooperate to form a joint governance force, and comprehensively regulate the development of the industry [18].

Network platforms need to take on the main responsibility of supervision actively, refine the review standards for traditional music content, and establish professional review teams. The team should precisely identify and eliminate low-quality performances, malicious adaptations, infringement uploads, and false performances, etc., to control the quality of content from the source and prevent the spread and diffusion of harmful content.

Industry associations need to play a leading role in the industry and impose behavioral constraints. Based on the artistic characteristics of traditional music and the requirements for inheriting intangible cultural heritage, they need to improve industry self-discipline rules. The association should clearly define the boundaries between reasonable artistic innovation and malicious deconstruction and adaptation, clarify the bottom lines for creation and dissemination, regulate the creative and dissemination behaviors of the entire industry, and guide the industry towards a healthy development [19].

Regulatory authorities need to strengthen institutional constraints and enforcement efforts, improve digital copyright protection and infringement accountability mechanisms, and refine penalty standards. Relevant departments should severely crack down on infringement behaviors such as piracy and tampering, and effectively protect the legitimate rights and interests of original creators [20]. The multi-party collaborative governance model can effectively rectify industry chaos, purify the network environment, establish a standardized system adapted to the development laws of traditional music, avoid various drawbacks of digital dissemination, and help traditional music achieve long-term dynamic inheritance.

5. Conclusion

Social media has both advantages and disadvantages in the contemporary inheritance of traditional music. New media has broken the time and space limitations and circle barriers of traditional music, expanded the dissemination channels, updated the artistic expression forms, and promoted the coordinated development of related industries. These advantages have compensated for the shortcomings of the traditional inheritance model, such as a small audience, a shortage of talents, and insufficient market vitality. They have provided a new development path for the revitalization and inheritance of traditional music.

The network ecology dominated by traffic has inherent flaws, such as shallow content, repetitive creation, and disorderly dissemination. These issues continuously consume the artistic texture and cultural heritage of traditional music, restricting the diversified and high-quality development of the industry. This article proposes optimization countermeasures from three levels: content construction, ecological optimization, and industry supervision. These measures can effectively rectify industry, improve the digital inheritance system, and have strong practical reference significance.

This research has certain limitations. The research mainly focuses on macro overall analysis and does not conduct detailed discussions on the differentiated dissemination

characteristics of different music genres such as folk songs, operas, instrumental music, and rap. It also lacks audience research and empirical support with quantitative data. The research precision needs to be improved. Future research can focus on small-scale music genres and specialized dissemination platforms for special investigations. Through quantitative data analysis, the dissemination effects can be analyzed, and personalized inheritance plans for different scenarios and music genres can be refined. This will further improve the research system for the digital and dynamic inheritance of traditional music.

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