

Research on Cultural Elements in Salar Music of Qinghai Province Under the Perspective of Belt and Road

Yujuan Wu

College of Music, Mahasarakham University, Thailand

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

RECEIVED: 19-Aug-22

REVISED: 15-Oct-22

ACCEPTED: 27-Oct-22

PUBLISHED: 15-Nov-22

*Corresponding Author

Yujuan Wu

E-mail: 852288066@qq.com

Citation: Yujuan Wu (2022). Research on Cultural Elements in Salar Music of Qinghai Province Under the Perspective of Belt and Road. *Horizon J. Hum. Soc. Sci. Res.* 4 (2), 241–246. <https://doi.org/10.37534/bp.jhssr.2022.v4.n2.id1184.p241>



ABSTRACT

The Chinese nation has 5000 years of history and culture, carrying the historical development of various periods and has a broad and profound Chinese culture. As a part of the traditional culture of the Chinese nation, the intangible cultural heritage is the key to improving the national cultural soft power and plays a decisive role in future cultural communication. The construction of 'Belt and Road' has provided a lot of opportunities for national development, and countries along the 'Belt and Road' have benefited a lot from it. National culture, as an important element, reflects the cultural level of a country. The study and protection of history and culture have shown the brilliant process of national development. In Xunhua and Hualong counties of Qinghai Province, long-honoured Salars gather, who inherit the traditional culture through oral transmission. Salar folk songs are one of the national intangible cultural heritages. They combine the elements of Tibetan, Han, Mongolian, and religious music. Salar music is diverse, rich in content, and unique, forming a unique charming culture. This article studies the display of cultural heritage elements in Salar music of Qinghai Province through the intangible cultural heritage perspective of 'Belt and Road'.

Keywords: 'Belt and Road', combine, cultural elements, intangible heritage, Salar music

Introduction

With the deepening of world globalization, the exchanges between countries have become increasingly close, and the cultural exchanges provide higher possibilities for carrying forward the excellent national culture. Under the perspective of 'Belt and Road' intangible cultural heritage, the study of cultural heritage is of great significance. As far as the Salars in Qinghai Province are concerned, their musical elements are a major element of the intangible cultural heritage. Salar is a nation with a small number in Western China. Although the number is small, it has a long history and culture. Rich and colourful folk music is one of its main characteristics and has high research value.

The Development of Salar Music in Qinghai Province

The History of Salar Music

The Salar nationality is one of the ethnic minorities in China, which has a long history and culture and has formed a unique excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation through the precipitation of the long history. In the diversified development of world ethnic music culture and diversified ethnic music, people also pay more attention to the research on folk music. In the process of diversified ethnic music development, human communication and exchange are one of the important ways of cultural integration.

The Salar have also experienced a great migration, moved from one place to another, where they lived in major changes, settled in Qinghai Province, a unique art of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, which is of great significance to the study of ethnic minority culture in Qinghai Province, resulting in the change of music culture. The settlement sites of the Salar people are near the mountains and rivers. Influenced by the regions, cultural development and communication are also in the same area, which also produce cultural changes. Migration affects not only people's living environment, but also religious beliefs and customs. Therefore, the Hui people are of great significance for the development of the Salar people. In the long history of China (Chen, 2021), the Salar and other ethnic groups in Qinghai Province lived in harmony and prospered together, creating a splendid national culture for China. The Salar song is striking with its unique musical melody. The change of melody makes Salar music changeable, which is loved by a large number of people and makes many singers addicted to it.

Diversified Salar Folk Songs

Folk music and religious music are the main two parts of Salar music, with various forms such as Salar, Salar feast, music, flowers, labour songs, and nursery songs. Because the Salar do not have their own words, their culture is preserved by oral inheritance, the national characteristics of the Salar. Chinese is a common language of their communication, which is of great significance to the development and prosperity of their culture. Combined with the cultural background of multiple ethnic groups, the Salar culture is more colourful, and the Salar folk songs also show a diversified trend.

'Salar' means the songs of the Salar people, the famous 'Brazilian Ancient Skating', 'Salai Brazil', and so on, and the songs are popular in different regions. The rhythm of this song is cheerful, the melody is unique, and the sentences are relatively short, with usually four or six sentences. The rhythm is cheerful and deep, the two styles form a sharp contrast, which is one of the mainstreams of Salar music. Another example is 'Salar youth', also known as 'Salar flower', which is a popular folk song, which is very popular among the Salar people. The national and Tibetan folk songs are the inspiration source of 'Salar youth', which absorb the essence of various parts. There are two forms: solo and duet, and the lyrics cover the characteristics of the Salar language. In addition, it also has a distinctive characteristic, which is generally a love song, which pays great attention to the object and occasion, so as to avoid unpleasant things.

So 'Salar boy' is also known as 'wild music', because it is sung in the mountains in the wild.

To Study the Significance of Cultural Elements in Salar Music in Qinghai Province

Overview of Salar Music Research in Qinghai Province

In China, each nation has its unique development process, and the resulting literature and art are numerous, although minority music except Han music research collection and arrangement is relatively less, but it does not mean that minority music research is meaningless, on the contrary, for the minority music research instead, it can promote the development of folk music in our country and make the folk music diverse (Li, 2021). Among the folk songs of Salar nationality in Qinghai Province, melody, tone scale, and music style are their main musical characteristics. Moreover, the national art and literature with unique regional characteristics of Salar nationality plays an important role in the historical and cultural development of China and even the world and has high aesthetic value. Salar people are pure and simple, with rich thoughts and emotions, and the pursuit of beauty, and the resulting literature and art have a large number of high research value.

For example, 'Du Renzana' is a song adapted from Mongolian folk songs. Ethnic songs, produced in people's lives, are very popular and close to life. With the development of the modern economy and society, the development of folk music has reached a new height, the modernization of science and technology makes folk music spread to further places, making more people hear folk music. This is an unprecedented development opportunity for the study of various ethnic music and the inheritance and protection of national culture. Excellent traditional culture is worthy of respect and being inherited by everyone (Han, 2019). Therefore, in the diversified music culture, it is necessary to strengthen the promotion of folk music culture and better integrate it into the development process of modern society.

The Development of The Salar Ethnic Culture

The Salar lack their own language, so the historical documents are very few, and the existing documents are basically synteny materials, which are of great research value. Salar has its own changing laws and characteristics, and its pronunciation, intonation, and grammar make

outstanding contributions to the study of geolinguistics (Rong, 2020). Corresponding to Salar culture is the diversification of music and the diversification of culture. The causes of this phenomenon include internal and external causes. The internal reason is obvious in the change and development of the national culture, and the external reason is the influence of other ethnic groups, which are imperceptibly affected in the process of contact with other ethnic groups. Through continuous innovation and development, the culture has produced conflict and collision, but also produced assimilation and integration. Through the analysis and research of this change, we can have a deeper understanding of the Salar culture. Various kinds and forms of Salar music involve all aspects and fields, which embodies the aesthetic connotation of national culture in the beautiful Salar music, and accumulates the precipitation of history and the art of music (Stone, 2021).

With the rapid development of tourism, more and more attention is paid to the protection of cultural heritage, and various countries have thus increased the inheritance and protection of cultural heritage. In the process of rapid development, people know that the rich and colourful national culture can bring great benefits to the country and even the world. The music culture of the Salar group is one of the intangible cultural heritages, which is listed as the object of protection by the state and has high research value and significance. Of course, in addition to the intangible cultural heritage, there is also material cultural heritage, such as the mosques built by the Salar people, which has a very high artistic level. The residences of the Salar people are different from other ethnic groups, mainly showing a very distinctive square appearance. As an intangible cultural heritage, Salar music also drives the development of other related industries, of course, the most prominent one is tourism. The unique Salar music will undoubtedly attract a large number of tourists, to feel the music and the enthusiasm of the Salar people so that the tourists can experience the different local customs. The distinctive sheepskin raft, fence building, temple construction technology, etc. are the typical representatives of the Salar ethnic group, promoting the development of the related tourism market.

'Belt and Road' Intangible Cultural Heritage Horizon Research Strategy

'Belt and Road' Intangible Cultural Heritage Horizon

As we all know, 'One Belt' refers to the Silk Road, while 'One Road' refers to the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road,

passing through both land and sea. It is a multilateral development strategy, which promotes China's modernization and drives the development of China and even the world. The exchange of national culture in countries cannot be separated from the 'Belt and Road'. As the initiator and advocate of the 'Belt and Road', we should set an example, improve cultural soft power, and promote the development of national culture, especially by paying more attention to the excellent traditional culture. As an excellent traditional national culture, the intangible cultural heritage can move from the local to the world. It has a very high historical research value and humanistic research significance, and the connotation of the local culture is vividly spread. Under the perspective of 'Belt and Road' intangible cultural heritage, the development of national culture has a good environment, making it possible for places to move to the world. Of course, in the process of transmitting culture, we should not only spread the superficial cultural phenomena, but also pay attention to the internal attributes of culture (Xu, 2021).

In recent years, there are numerous national cultures transmitted through the perspective of intangible cultural heritage. A successful communication culture requires innovative utilization and creative inheritance. Take the Desasar music culture in Qinghai Province as an example. After a long history, the Salar culture form is relatively stable and has been spread and continued without its own words. Different from other cultures, the Salar music culture did not disappear subsequently, but got a new development opportunity, and was successfully positioned as an intangible cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage is the cultural form formed by people in spiritual aspects, and it is the condensation of culture for a period of time. Under the construction of the 'Belt and Road', it provides opportunities for the national cultural industry, of course, which includes not only opportunities but also challenges. Salar music is the only music of its own nation, and very few people really know it except its own people. With the progress of the 'Belt and Road' intangible cultural heritage horizon, people also show their attention to ethnic minorities, which is a process of cultural exchange that has both advantages and disadvantages, and should be viewed rationally. Intangible cultural heritage also needs a certain material carrier, and only the empty cultural concept is difficult to accept. Therefore, when it comes to Salar music, musical instruments are a good carrier. Unique musical instruments are always refreshing, whether they will be played or not, which also carries Salar music culture, which has its high cultural value.

Ethnic Cultural Heritage Cultural Situation Under the Vision of 'Belt and Road' Intangible Cultural Heritage

The ultimate goal of building the 'Belt and Road' is to achieve a community with a shared future for mankind. This is a great practice. It has strengthened cooperation and ties between countries and enabled countries along the road to achieving win-win cooperation. In its long history, the dissemination and protection of culture have been given great attention. Advocating the construction of the 'Belt and Road' has strengthened cooperation and exploration in all the regions along the route, thus creating a good platform, which is the strategic demand of China's long-term development. The protection of national culture is undoubtedly also the protection of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation, which is a witness to the national development history of thousands of years. This strategy can better promote the dissemination and protection of national culture.

Over the years, the Chinese nation has maintained a united, friendly, and harmonious ethnic relationship. The development of national culture in such an environment has made the Chinese nation more confident and has gradually moved it from the country to the world. The national culture under the perspective of 'Belt and Road' intangible cultural heritage is very important, and the development of the country and the development of national culture complement each other. Benign cultural exchange is the premise of the development of national culture, which brings not only the development of their respective cultures but also the integration of economic development, which is a trend and a strategy. Regional economic integration has brought the research of national culture to a new height, transforming it from the commonplace of cultural exchange to an ideological resonance (Zhu, 2021). The study of national culture under the perspective of 'Belt and Road' intangible cultural heritage is a complementary and win-win situation, which affects not only the culture between countries and nations but also, more importantly, the international ethnic culture.

The Protection Problem of Cultural Heritage Elements

The Development Status of Cultural Heritage Elements

In the study of ethnic minority music culture, cultural elements are its core content, and the research value

of cultural elements is self-evident. Since the beginning, the development of ethnic minorities has played great significance in the historical development of the country, and the emergence of each cultural phenomenon reflects the state of social and historical development at that time. Although in the process of economic and cultural development, the emergence of cultural elements does not match its economy and the intangible cultural heritage is paid little attention to in the case of backward economic level. However, even under such circumstances, the cultural heritage elements have been preserved and inherited and re-creation is their development direction.

Take minority music as an example. Although in the modern creation process, some composers will use minority music in it, there are many problems. Some consider it a dismantling and destruction of folk music, a disaster for composers who used it improperly. In addition, such use may lead some listeners without knowing the truth to misunderstand folk music, and even produce unpleasant experiences to resist folk music. All these are the problems that may be encountered in inheriting and developing cultural elements. The continuation of ethnic minority music has a long way to go. Of course, in the development process of ethnic minority music, there have also been many excellent classic works produced, which are worth of savouring by everyone. This shows the influence of society, customs, and history on the development of a nation and is a precious wealth accumulated for a hundred years.

Problems Faced by the Chinese Heritage Elements of Salar Music in Qinghai Province

As a multi-ethnic country, there are various ethnic cultures and the development of folk music in various forms. Against such a background, the development of folk music is extremely challenging but also full of vitality. In the development of Salar music, problems have also emerged endlessly.

First of all, what we should face is the living environment of folk music. In the process of modernization, many places have established high-rise buildings in many places, and the original living environment has been destroyed. A single form of a building is not attractive to people, which is also the reason why the country should establish the protection of intangible cultural heritage, which is the spiritual inheritance.

Secondly, with the change in people's way of production and lifestyle, many folk customs have changed, and the

original unique music has also disappeared. In addition, a large number of people leave their hometown for work leaving no one to inherit traditional music, hence the development of folk music is difficult. Of course, people's aesthetic concept is also a factor. Modern entertainment products are far more attractive to young people than traditional culture. For example, nowadays, few people wear Salar clothes, even among the native people, most of them eye modern clothes. This is a blend of culture, but it is also a decline of traditional culture. There is a big gap between the life of older generation and the present life, but the progress of the times will never go back to the past.

The rapid development of the tourism industry has indeed brought great economic benefits to the local area, but there are also some negative problems. Large-scale developments and utilization are undoubtedly a great disaster for the local environment. With the arrival of a large number of tourists, traditional folk customs have also been impacted and collided. One-sided attention to the market will also lead to the loss of intangible cultural heritage.

Finally, people lack in-depth research on music. Although many music researchers have made great research achievements in ethnic minority music, these achievements are also very small compared to the extensive and profound music culture of ethnic minorities. In addition to recorded music, there is certainly a lack of research in music. Of course, the lack of education in folk music is also a big problem for people to solve.

In short, the development of folk music has a long way to go, which cannot be done overnight. By studying the cultural elements in the Salar music of Qinghai Province under the perspective of 'Belt and Road' intangible cultural heritage, people can see many existing problems of intangible cultural heritage. Salar music has strong vitality and is enduring. This is an example, a further understanding of the national culture, inheriting the excellent traditional culture is a long-term strategic development goal. The promotion of 'Belt and Road' is a good platform for the development of intangible cultural heritage, and we should seize this opportunity to go international.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank the editors and reviewers of Horizon JHSSR Journal for providing the opportunity to publish in their scholarly journal.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article. This article is the sole work of the author and has not been presented or published elsewhere.

References

- Chen, L. (2021). The literature value of Shaanxi folk songs in music colleges under the background of 'Belt and Road'. *Contemporary Music*, 3, 175–177. https://kns.cnki.net/kcms/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CJFD&dbname=CJFDLAST2021&filename=DDMU202103061&uniplatform=NZKPT&v=fZfAiV7c8QGv4-Svi3l6aQl8DEhSJK0-UKv69PmRshdHdX_C9ej80boABeVmir
- Han, Y. (2019). Overview of the protection of the intangible cultural heritage of ethnic medicine under the perspective of regionalization. *Chinese Ethnic Folk Medicine*, 28(06), 36–41.
- Li, S. (2021). The cultural responsibility and communication of folk music under the background of 'Belt and Road'. *Tomorrow Fashion*, 9, 187–188.
- Rong, R. (2020). Research on the cultural communication characteristics of local classical opera on television. *Journal of Hubei Second Normal University*, 37(12), 104–108.
- Stone, D. (2021). Analysis of northwest regional folk music in the context of 'Belt and Road'. *Art Review*, (11), 79–82.
- Xu, R. (2021). Research on the cultural adaptation of Huizhou folk music under the background of culture 'Going Global'. *Journal of Anhui Radio and Television University*, 1, 52–56. DOI: [10.19371/j.cnki.issn1008-6021.2021.01.011](https://doi.org/10.19371/j.cnki.issn1008-6021.2021.01.011).
- Zhu, Z. (2021). Study on the international promotion of Chinese National Opera under the background of 'Belt and Road'. *Contemporary Music*, 7, 176–178. https://kns.cnki.net/kcms/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CJFD&dbname=CJFDLAST2021&filename=DDMU202107061&uniplatform=NZKPT&v=fZfAiV7c8QHzUd_rBzj_dSe1ztmotRdxXTHlax92-qEwulOahw7BgvvCMNdb7qj

Biographical Statement of Author(s)

Wu Yujuan is a sophomore with a PhD in philosophy of Music from Mahasarakham. She holds a bachelor's degree in Musicology from Qinghai normal University in China and a master's degree in Musicology from Northwest normal University in China.



She is interested in music education in colleges and universities and loves music culture of ethnic minorities.

Dr. Wu Yujuan
Conservatory of Music
Mahasarakham University
Thailand
E-mail: 852288066@qq.com

She currently works as an associate professor at Qinghai normal University in China.