

Research on the Embodiment of Nationality in Shi Guangnan's Artistic Works

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Abstract: *Shi Guangnan's utilization of ethnic musical materials has reached a level of mastery. In his musical creations, the shadow of ethnic music can be captured everywhere, whether it is the melodious tunes of Han music or the unique style of ethnic minority songs; whether it is the gentle and delicate charm of Jiangnan or the passionate and unrestrained rhythm of Xinjiang, all fully demonstrate Shi Guangnan's remarkable ability in exploring and integrating ethnic music. This is also one of the important reasons why Shi Guangnan's artistic works are still widely celebrated in contemporary times.*

Keywords: Shi Guangnan, Artistic works, Nationality.

1. INTRODUCTION

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, domestic production gradually recovered, and the cultural field also embarked on a journey of restoration and development. At that time, modern Western music had already spread in China and undergone a certain stage of development. Against this backdrop, Chinese musicians began to reflect deeply, increasingly realizing the urgency and importance of developing local ethnic music. As a result, a new wave of music creation emerged, using Western composition techniques as a means and ethnic music as the core. Mr. Shi Guangnan was a pioneer and outstanding figure in this wave. He delved into the folk, extensively collecting the essence of folk music from all over the country, and adapting and creating with exquisite skills. His works not only retain the simple charm and unique style of ethnic music but also incorporate the rich expressiveness of Western music, forming masterpieces with beautiful melodies, lively rhythms, catchy tunes, and strong ethnic characteristics. These works have been widely circulated across the country and are deeply loved by the public. It is particularly noteworthy that Mr. Shi Guangnan's ingenious use and unique interpretation of ethnic music melodies and rhythms have become a distinctive hallmark and special paradigm of his music creation, injecting new vitality and inspiration into the development and innovation of Chinese ethnic music.

2. ETHNIC CHARACTERISTICS EXHIBITED BY RHYTHMIC PATTERNS

Rhythm, derived from the characteristics of rhythm and speed in the local language system of each ethnic group, serves as the foundation for folk dance or folk song creation. The ethnic characteristics, especially the rhythmic features, expressed in Shi Guangnan's music have grown out of historical contexts and are fully reflected in the process of music creation.

Thirty years after the founding of the People's Republic of China, with societal changes, China stood on the eve of reform and opening up, and the social atmosphere and public mood exhibited an unprecedented new atmosphere. At this time, Shi Guangnan, with his enthusiasm for the times, keenly perceived that the powerful and inspiring rhythm of northern gongs and drums, as well as the joyful melodies flowing in the Uyghur folk tunes and the vigorous vitality exuded in the dance and song rhythms, could perfectly embody and express the joy and passion of the people across the country as they welcomed a new life. Therefore, he incorporated such rhythms into the creation of art songs, and thus Uyghur-style art songs became a new musical symbol in China.

The rhythm of the filler sections in bars 34-37 of "Drinking Song" is a typical northern gong and drum rhythm that runs throughout the entire song. This rhythm places the accent on the off-beat, yet the long notes on the off-beat give the impression that the accent is coming later, maintaining a high-energy atmosphere throughout the song and enhancing its vitality.

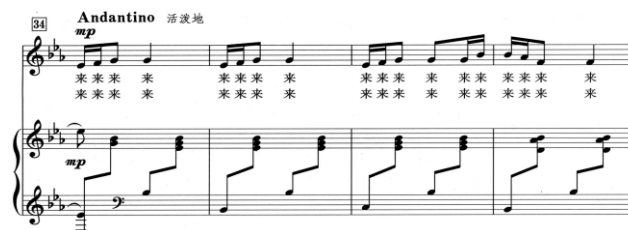


Figure 1: "Drinking Song" from bar 34 to bar 37

At the same time, Shi Guangnan incorporated the musical characteristics of Chinese opera swing in the vocal part of this song, in order to make the emotions of the song more expressive. When singing the words "chang" and "shang" in the 51st and 56th sections, the singer's emotions are higher, exaggerating the drag and using the swing to express the excited and enthusiastic scene of people drinking together.



Figure 2: "Drinking Song" Bar 50-57

Shi Guangnan's art song "Play the Hand Drum and Sing" is composed using the typical rhythm of the Xinjiang Uyghur hand drum. The strong and weak rhythmic patterns in the song mimic the percussive sensation of the hand drum, and the frequent use of syncopation, slurs, and repetitive rhythmic patterns in the melody reflects the flexible percussive techniques and dance rhythms of the hand drum, further enhancing the dynamic and energetic rhythm. The prelude, spanning from the first to the seventh measure, prominently showcases the musical style of the Uyghur people. This rhythmic design imparts a strong dance quality to the song, and through the interaction between "melody-rhythm", it exhibits the unique charm of Xinjiang Uyghur music. It is also considered a masterpiece of Shi Guangnan's ethnic creation.



Figure 3: "Play the Tambourine and Sing a Song" Bar 1-9

In addition to utilizing his unique rhythmic characteristics and ethnic minority cultural elements to create music works with ethnic characteristics, Shi Guangnan also employs the timbre and various musical features of ethnic minority instruments to highlight the characteristics of ethnic music.

Just like "Mashrap", a combination of Uyghur dance and entertainment. It is a large-scale comprehensive art form integrating songs, dances, and musical instruments, with singing and dancing as the main focus. There are dance movements from the head, shoulders, waist, arms to the toes, with the basic characteristic of holding the chest and waist upright. The main work is the traditional large-scale classical music "Twelve Muqam", which uses dozens of musical instruments such as stringed instruments, wind instruments, and percussion instruments. The Uyghur folk music style, which combines song, poetry, instrumental performance, and dance, is also one of the national intangible cultural heritages.

Uyghur songs are divided into three sections and appear in segments: each section consists of four melodies and several variations, featuring narrative songs, as well as various forms of expression such as chorus, recitation, and solo singing. The lyrics of these songs exhibit a wide range of rhyming patterns. The rhythmic patterns of Uyghur folk songs in the Twelve Muqam are complex and varied, yet they enhance the rhythmic quality of Uyghur music. Shi Guangnan emphasizes the use of this rhythm to increase rhythmic quality through his works. Because the Uyghur language does not have the four-tone system of the Han language, the strong sound of the language is in the last syllable, forming a sub-rhythm in music. The types of rhythms in the Twelve Muqam are divided into general rhythms and compound rhythms. Especially, the compound rhythm is $3+4/8$ beats, which has a dance-like feel and narrative characteristics presented in a fragmented form, forming a flexible and vibrant musical piece. Therefore, Shi Guangnan seamlessly integrates melodies and modes that highlight specific ethnic and local characteristics with lyrics, giving both a familiar and unique feeling. This is an important style in Shi Guangnan's artistic song creation, such as the Dai-style "Phoenix-tail bamboo under the moonlight" and the Xinjiang Uyghur-style "Playing the Hand Drum and Singing".

The musical work "Phoenix-tail bamboo under the moonlight," which is based on the folk music of the Dai ethnic group in Yunnan, embodies the relevant characteristics of Yunnan's ethnic minority folk songs. In the prelude of the song, the tone of the Yunnan wind instrument, the Ba Wu, is used to imitate the hazy feeling of moonlight and the swaying appearance of the bamboo, attempting to depict the perfect body movements of a Dai girl. The entire song utilizes the most comfortable range of the Ba Wu, combined with the tone of a mezzo-soprano, to better express deep emotions. The main melody is primarily in the D-gong mode of the Chinese pentatonic scale, and the song tempo is relatively slow.

The main tone levels extracted from the two phrases at the beginning of the work are mainly fa, mi, and si, and the melody is mostly downward, which can be seen as a characteristic of Shi Guangnan's creation of Dai music works. He uses graceful and circuitous melodic lines to depict the undulating and rippling atmosphere of the scenery. In this work, Shi Guangnan repeatedly used the main melody or high and low octaves, highlighting a strong thematic theme. Finally, the vocal drag style creation mode of using long notes at the end of the sentence is also adopted, mostly ending with commercial and symbolic notes. The continuous feeling of breath reflects the powerful singing quality of Shi Guangnan's music works and highlights the vocal characteristics of the accompaniment.

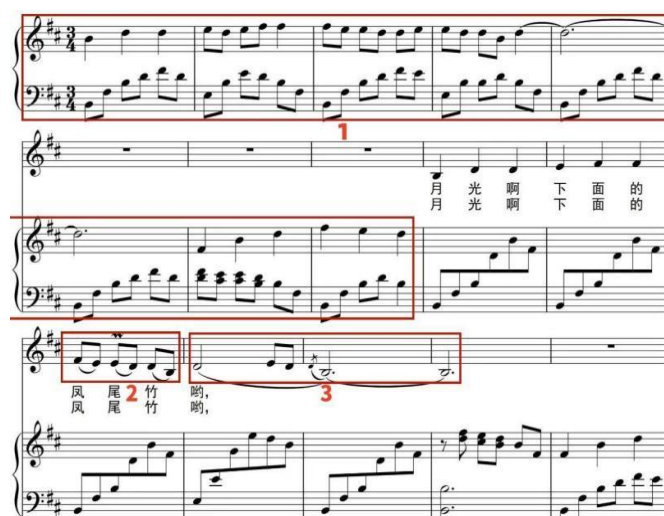


Figure 4: "Phoenix-tail bamboo under the moonlight" Bar 1-15

Shi Guangnan used progressive melodies, Uyghur language, and Muqam colors to create the art song "Turpan's Grapes Are Ripe". In sections 14-15, the theme of the song is to repeat the melody using a scale. At the same time,

the style of this melody is similar to that of Uyghur folk songs, and the gradually rising melody creates a lively atmosphere.



Figure 5: "The Grapes in Turpan Are Ripe" - Stanzas 14-23

3. SHIH'S TONE PATTERN (SHIH'S TONE)

Modernity refers to a certain characteristic that was not used by anyone before Shi Guangnan, but was adopted by many people after his use. It is a creative feature created by Shi Guangnan and accepted by everyone. This can be illustrated through a comparison of musical fragments.

Shi Guangnan synthesized the tones of southern and northern China, forming a broad ethnic characteristic. This broad ethnic characteristic embodies the universality of Chinese music. In some of Shi Guangnan's songs, we cannot directly match the musical characteristics of a specific ethnic group or region, but we can feel the distinct melodic features with Chinese characteristics. Or these songs have the charm of folk music from a certain region in the south, while also having the feel of folk music from a certain region in the north, or traces of certain ethnic minority music. These musical elements are not independent, but are fused together. They bring together the elements of southern and northern folk music, while also incorporating the essence of folk music from various ethnic groups, digesting and absorbing it to make it Shi Guangnan's own musical language. This is the result of the composer's long-term artistic practice and accumulation, as well as continuous influence in the environment of Chinese folk music. Works such as "If You Want to Know Me," "Toast Song," and "On the Field of Hope" are representative of this creative style. This style type, from the selection of scales, harmonies, and rhythms, to the arrangement of melodies and tones in songs, and to the development of themes, expresses the characteristics of Chinese folk music from different levels, making people feel fresh and secure. The melodic pattern of Shi Guangnan's art songs occupies an important part in the entire creative process. It is also known as the "Shi's Pattern," which is a unique tonal combination relationship in art songs, giving stability to the creation of musical works while also containing the possibility of flexible changes.

Shi Guangnan's "Shi's Mode" can be divided into a single-tone structure and a multi-ethnic characteristic tone structure. The single-tone structure refers to the composer's creation without considering harmonic functions when writing songs, which differs from the norms of traditional European composition theory. In musical passages or phrases, melodies are composed around specially designated notes, with each passage using a different central note, allowing people to feel both unity and diversity. For example, "On the Field of Hope" is composed using northern folk songs, gong and drum rhythms, and the Chinese Zheng tone. In the prelude section (bars 1-6), bars 1-2 constitute a passage centered around F, bars 3-4 around D, and bars 5-6 around Bb. These three passages are independent and have no harmonic connection, but when combined, they create a harmonious feeling.



Figure 6: Prelude 1-6 bars of "On the Field of Hope"

In the prelude section (1-8) of "Zhu Jiuge", the first and second bars feature D as the central note, while the fifth and sixth bars feature C as the central note. This tonal approach is very common in the folk music of Zhejiang region in southern China, and its rhythm and melody bear great resemblance to the Jiangnan folk song "Jasmine"



Figure 7: The prelude of "Drinking Song" from bars 1-8



Figure 8: Prelude 1-7 bars of "Jasmine"

In addition to the monotonous tonal structure, another surrounding tonal structure is the arched melodic shape that appears in phrases. In Shi Guangnan's music, these two tonal structures appear in combination. The combination of dual tones and melodic colors makes his art songs diverse and varied. Especially the arched melodic structure, which gives a sense of dynamic fluctuation and delicate softness. For example, in the prelude of "The Grapes of Turpan Are Ripe," the first 8 bars are arranged in the order of Uyghur dance-style scale melodies, starting with a slight pause at the central note D, then moving to the high note F, and then starting again from the low range, passing through the D and F of the scale, and returning to the lower A note. The 6th to 8th bars present two distinct arched melodic structures, forming a surrounding tonal structure, with the melodies being composed of small arched structures. In the 9th to 12th bars, Shi Guangnan combines the Uyghur hand drum rhythm pattern from Xinjiang with the syncopated rhythm pattern of Uyghur dance, making the Uyghur musical structure more unique and diversified.

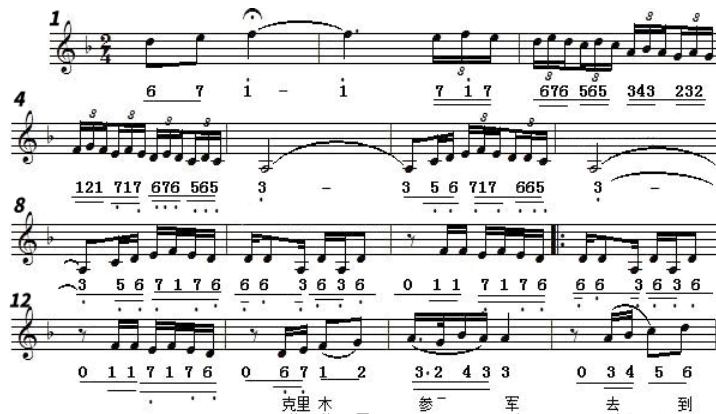


Figure 9: Sections 1-12 of "The Grapes in Turpan Are Ripe"

In the "Drinking Song", the 9th to 14th measures employ the tone of Xinjiang folk songs. The 17th to 23rd measures utilize the intimate and euphemistic tone of Jiangnan folk songs. Additionally, its tonality is based on the pentatonic melody style of China's seven-tone scale, with the overall melody combining arched and wavy melodic lines.



Figure 10: "Drinking Song" Measures 9-23

In the song, the 50th to 59th bars utilize the rough and unrestrained characteristic tones of Xizang folk songs. At the same time, there are no strict regulations on the rhythm of this phrase, which also gives singers room to freely express themselves.



Figure 11

In terms of combining lyrics and music, Shi Guangnan not only utilized the rhythm of Northeastern gongs and drums, but also incorporated the rhythm pattern of Xinjiang hand drums in "Drinking Song". Additionally, he added a large number of traditional opera techniques, giving the entire song a broad national style that "integrates the north and the south". This reflects the celebration of the Chinese people and embodies the characteristics of China's multi-ethnic era. From the perspective of the song's melody, the harmony function of the major key is relatively obvious, but the rhythm, tone, and melody parts exhibit typical Eastern characteristics that are not Westernized.

4. CONCLUSION

In the field of music creation, Shi Guangnan demonstrated extraordinary originality and remarkable wisdom in the application of ethnic music. His creative philosophy and practice have opened up a valuable reference path for future generations of music creators. "Based on national traditions, integrating the charm of various ethnic and local folk music, transforming it into his own musical language, and creatively applying it to creative practice," this concise summary aptly outlines the core characteristics and spiritual essence of Shi Guangnan's music creation. He delved deeply into the fertile soil of the folk, extensively drawing on the musical materials passed down by the Chinese nation. From melodious folk songs, simple tunes to lively dance music, everything became a source of inspiration for his creation. At the same time, he was not satisfied with simply imitating and reproducing traditional music. Instead, he used modern creative techniques as a tool to deeply explore and skillfully reconstruct these materials. He cleverly fused traditional musical elements with modern musical language, making his works retain the unique charm and profound heritage of ethnic music while also radiating the breath and vitality of the times.

Shi Guangnan's creation has always adhered to a national standpoint, highlighting a strong ethnic creative personality. His works, whether it is the construction of melodies, the arrangement of rhythms, the use of harmonies, or the selection of orchestration, are deeply rooted in the soil of ethnic music, while also demonstrating his exquisite mastery of modern musical techniques. This creative philosophy based on folk music and ethnicity not only enriches the connotation and forms of expression of Chinese music, but also lays a solid foundation for Chinese music to go global and showcase its ethnic charm.

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