

## **Infiltration and Integration of Traditional Chinese Folk Music and Contemporary Pop Music**

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**Abstract:** This paper discusses the penetration and integration between traditional folk music and contemporary pop music, focusing on the impact of this integration on the protection and inheritance of traditional folk music and the development of music industry. Finally, it puts forward the strategy of the integration of traditional folk music and contemporary pop music. Through integration, traditional folk music radiates new brilliance in contemporary society and attracts the attention of more young people. This integration not only helps to protect and inherit traditional music, but also brings new business opportunities and development space for the music industry. Encouraging and supporting the integration of traditional folk music and pop music will help promote the diversity and innovation of music culture, and make traditional folk music better inherited and developed in contemporary society.

**Keywords:** Traditional Folk Music, Pop Music, Integration

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the context of globalization and digitalization, the interaction and integration between traditional folk music and contemporary pop music has become an important issue in the field of music (Li & Yang, 2023). As an important part of national culture, traditional folk music has a long history and rich cultural connotation. It is not only an artistic form of music, but also a carrier of history, recording the lives, beliefs, values and national characters of all ethnic groups in different historical periods (Wang, 2023). This kind of music form is closely linked with the national language, customs, beliefs and arts, and is an important symbol of national cultural identity. However, with the changes of the times and the advancement of globalization, contemporary pop music has had a far-reaching impact on traditional folk music. Contemporary pop music has greater advantages in communication. Through modern media and digital technology, it can quickly spread all over the world and attract a wide audience.

This advantage in communication makes it easier for many young people to contact pop music, while their interest in traditional folk music gradually decreases. At the same time, the creation and expression of contemporary pop music are more diversified and personalized, which

can better meet the aesthetic needs and personalized choices of young people. In contrast, the creation and expression of traditional folk music may be relatively fixed and conservative, which is difficult to meet the needs of young people (Chen, 2023). Nevertheless, traditional folk music still has new development opportunities. Many musicians and artists began to try to integrate the elements of traditional folk music with pop music to create distinctive music works. This integration not only contributes to the protection and inheritance of traditional folk music, but also attracts more young people to be interested in traditional folk music.

This process of integration is not only a process of innovation, but also a process of protecting and inheriting traditional national music. By combining traditional elements with modern music forms, we can create distinctive music works and provide new ideas and development space for the development of the music industry (Mao, 2023; Sha, 2023; Yao, 2023). Many musicians and artists began to try to integrate the elements of traditional folk music with pop music to create distinctive music works. This integration not only contributes to the protection and inheritance of traditional folk music, but also attracts more young people to have interest and recognition in traditional folk music (Dai, 2023). This process of integration is not only a process of innovation, but also a process of protecting and inheriting traditional national music. Musicians and artists combine the characteristics and essence of traditional folk music with the elements of pop music, which not only retains the charm of traditional folk music, but also injects new elements and vitality. This integration not only contributes to the protection and inheritance of traditional folk music, but also creates distinctive music works by combining traditional elements with modern music forms, attracting more young people's attention and love (Chen, 2023; Guoyu, 2022). Therefore, we should encourage this trend of integration, inject new vitality into traditional national music, and provide new ideas and development space for the development of music industry. Generally speaking, the interaction and integration of traditional folk music and contemporary pop music is a complex and diverse process. In the era of globalization and digitalization, we should pay more attention to the protection and inheritance of traditional folk music, and encourage innovation and experiment to promote the integration and development of traditional folk music and contemporary pop music. In this way, we can better promote the diversity and prosperity of music and art.

## 2. CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL FOLK MUSIC AND CONTEMPORARY POP MUSIC

### 2.1 Characteristics of Chinese Traditional Folk Music

Traditional folk music refers to music that has long been popular in a certain nationality or region and has the characteristics of that nationality or region. It usually includes folk songs, dances, instrumental music and other forms, reflecting the history, culture and lifestyle of a nation. Traditional Chinese folk music has many unique characteristics, which together constitute its unique artistic charm. First of all, locality is also an important feature of Chinese national music. China has a vast territory, diverse landforms and different climates, which leads to the unique regional characteristics of the music styles of different nationalities. This locality is first manifested in dialects. Different dialects have unique tones and rhythms, which have a profound impact on the style and charm of music. In addition, the personality characteristics of people of all ethnic groups are also an important factor in the formation of musical style (Zhang, 2021). For example, northerners are straightforward and straightforward, and their music style is open and broad. For example, songs of the brave man and other tracks fully reflect this heroic style; The southerners are delicate and gentle, and their music style is mainly soft and harmonious. For example, Wuxi scenery and other tracks show the soft and graceful beauty of Southern music. Secondly, one of the unique characteristics of national music is its diversity. Because the living environment, cultural traditions and personality characteristics of different nationalities are different, their understanding and expression of the same work are also different, which makes the same song present different styles and charm in the hands of different performers. This variability endows national music with richer connotation and expression. In addition, national music stands out with its outstanding improvisation, which makes each performer's interpretation and performance of the same music present unique features. Therefore, in the process of inheritance, improvisation has become a tradition, making every song integrated with personal style and creativity, which has brought continuous development power to national music (Yang, 2020). In addition to the above characteristics, the most popular songs are often vivid, vivid and catchy. These songs can be deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, widely sung, and become classics of national music. Finally, Gong, Shang, Jiao, Zheng and Yu are the basic characteristics of Chinese

national music. These five scales constitute the unique melody and tone of Chinese national music and highlight the unique charm of Chinese music culture.

## 2.2 Characteristics of Contemporary Pop Music

Contemporary pop music is a kind of music that is widely spread around the world and loved by young people. It focuses on pop songs, pays attention to the beautiful melody and the lively rhythm, and is often closely combined with commercial marketing and media communication. With the advancement of globalization, contemporary pop music gradually presents the characteristics of diversification, easy acceptance and dissemination, sociality and sense of the times. First of all, diversification has become an important symbol of contemporary pop music.

The music styles of different countries and regions are integrated with each other, resulting in many cross-border music works. This diversified feature meets the needs and preferences of different audience groups, enabling global audiences to share and enjoy diversified music culture (Feng, 2022). Secondly, contemporary pop music is easy to accept and spread. Its melody is simple and catchy, making it easier for the audience to remember and hum, thus increasing the spread of music. In addition, the lyrics of pop music are usually straightforward and easy to understand, without too much interpretation and thinking, so that the audience can quickly understand the theme and emotion of the song. This simple and straightforward expression makes pop music more easily accepted and loved by the public. The popularity of digital media and social networks provides more opportunities and platforms for the spread of pop music, making more personalized music works discovered and loved by the public (Xue, 2022). Finally, contemporary pop music has the characteristics of sociality and sense of the times. It is not only a kind of entertainment and recreation, but also an art form reflecting social hot spots and the spirit of the times. Through lyrics and melodies, pop music conveys people's concern for social issues, perception of life and thinking about the times. For example, some songs may explore issues such as social injustice, racial discrimination and gender discrimination, and arouse the audience's thinking and resonance. As another element of music, melody can also convey the emotion and atmosphere of the times and reflect the emotional state and values of the times.

### 3. INTEGRATION OF TRADITIONAL FOLK MUSIC AND CONTEMPORARY POP MUSIC

#### 3.1 Influence of Traditional Folk Music on Pop Music

There is a close and inseparable link between traditional folk music and pop music. They blend with each other and endow pop music with more rich and diverse musical forms and connotations. Traditional folk music not only provides basic musical elements for pop music, but also creates a deep foundation for it. It is an indispensable cornerstone of pop music (Li, 2022). First of all, traditional folk music presents a variety of forms, reflecting different national cultural characteristics. The forms of music are varied and colorful. Some traditional folk music shows slow and soothing music forms, while others show fierce and surging music forms. The rhythm of music has its own characteristics. The songs of traditional folk music cover a variety of emotional expressions, including courageous heroic epics, affectionate love stories, as well as secular scenes in daily life and stories of ordinary people. A variety of ethnic music types provide a wealth of arranging resources in the field of popular music today. Especially the song content and spiritual elements contained in traditional folk music have a profound impact on the shaping of contemporary pop music.

This deep cultural blending is considered to be an important artistic wealth of today's pop music (Huang, 2019). On the other hand, pop music is deeply influenced by western music in its creation process. Artists and creators usually seek music inspiration through rich life experience and diversified materials. At the same time, some pop music works have also been inspired and used for reference by traditional folk music, and this integration has become increasingly prominent in music creation. For example, "Kangding Love Song" and "Jasmine Flower" and other famous tracks fully demonstrate the characteristics of this integration. Based on the development of traditional folk music, more beautiful musical forms are constantly performed in and out. These works have become outstanding representatives of Chinese music and are known as classic works in Chinese music circle.

#### 3.2 Reaction of Contemporary Pop Music to Traditional Folk Music

There is a profound interaction and dependence between traditional folk music and pop music. The former lays a solid foundation for the latter, while the latter is a strong successor to the former. Pop music not only

continues the essence of national music, but also injects new vitality and innovation into it. By skillfully integrating the elements of traditional folk music into pop music, it not only enriches the form of pop music, but also allows the tradition of folk music to be continuously inherited and developed.

The interaction between the two has brought great changes to the music industry. First of all, traditional folk music has the potential of self evolution, and its form has been evolving. It can be integrated into the current characteristics and characteristics with the changes of the times, so it may also become a part of pop music in a certain social period, which is consistent with the current music trend. This nature of self adaptation and development makes traditional folk music have great potential and can continue to give a new look and sound to the music field (Qin, 2020). From another perspective, we can combine traditional folk music with modern pop music to create new music works. These works integrate traditional folk music elements with local characteristics into simple and understandable Chinese lyrics and melodies, so that more people can enjoy and understand these songs. This innovation not only endows the traditional national music with a new form of expression, but also has a far-reaching impact on the traditional national culture. Traditional folk music is infused with pop music and radiates more vivid musical vitality. With its open characteristics, pop music has opened up a broader channel of transmission and media for traditional folk music. Integrate traditional folk music into the commercial field, encourage music creation and sustainable development through commercial incentives, so as to promote the faster dissemination and acceptance of traditional folk music, and make traditional folk music have certain entertainment value. By integrating traditional folk music into the elements of pop music, it can make it more attractive, especially for the younger generation. This can help young people better understand traditional folk music and continue to inherit and promote it (Zhang, 2023).

#### 4. EXAMPLES OF THE INTEGRATION OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE FOLK MUSIC AND CONTEMPORARY POP MUSIC

##### 4.1 Kangding Love Song

Kangding Love Song" was a Tibetan folk song at first, and then gradually evolved into popular music. It combines many elements of traditional Tibetan music, such as unique trills, Adagio and slow rhythm changes,

making its melody beautiful and melodious. In terms of singing skills, the song also shows the characteristics of Tibetan music, and adopts traditional singing methods such as continuous singing and inter singing, which enhances the characteristics of its traditional music. Kangding Love song shows the distinctive characteristics of Chinese national music, and the feather mode melody of its pentatonic scale is very significant. There is obvious disharmony between the third chord and melody of Chinese and western music in this song.

Therefore, the flexible adjustment of chord structure has become the key means to achieve the harmony and unity of melody and accompaniment. In the pentatonic scale of China, the two key intervals of the basic elements are pure quartic and pure quintic, which are the elements of the chords of national music. Correspondingly, in western music, the third interval plays a decisive role in the composition of chords. In the first, third and fourth paragraphs of Kangding Love song, Jiang Dingxian mainly uses the empty pentatonic chord structure with the third tone omitted, while alternately using traditional chords to highlight the national timbre and make it more integrated with the pentatonic melody (Shi, 2017). In western traditional music, the big triad and the big and small seventh chords occupy a prominent position, especially the big and small seventh chords, which play a key role in shaping the tonality of a musical work. Even in the late Romantic period, there were frequent tonal changes in music, and various forms of Polyphony and compound tonality were constantly emerging, but the construction of the big and small seventh chords was still the main cornerstone to establish tonality.

Jiang Dingxian used unique harmonic processing in "Kangding Love Song", instead of using the big triad, he mainly used the small triad and the small seventh chord, highlighting the national style and weakening the traditional harmonic function. Bass lines emphasize tonal color rather than function. In the pentatonic national mode, the Gong chord is the only major triad, and the other scales form the minor triad. Jiang Dingxian skillfully integrates the Chinese and Western harmony principles (Wang, 2020). In Kangding Love song, Jiang Dingxian carefully arranged the chords to adapt to the melody characteristics of Chinese pentatonic mode. A large number of small triads and small Sevens are used, and only the big and small Sevens are used at the end, which skillfully integrates the principles of Chinese and Western harmony. This harmony arrangement retains the national characteristics and shows the composer's creativity and skills (Figure 1).



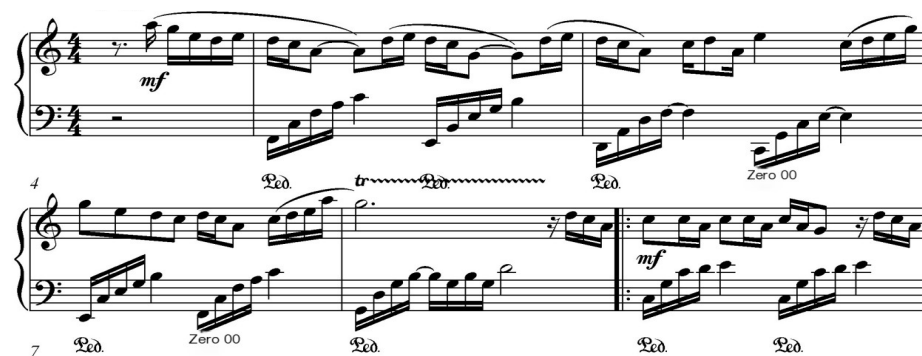
**Figure 1:** Example of the score of Kangding Love Song

#### 4.2 Blue and White Porcelain

"Blue and white porcelain", a song that combines traditional Chinese porcelain culture and modern popular elements, was composed by Jay Chou and filled in by Fang Wenshan. Since Jay Chou first performed it at the CCTV Spring Festival Gala in 2008, it has quickly won widespread praise across the country. With the style shown in its name, this song is fresh, free from vulgarity, and has a simple tenderness. Its lyrics and melody skillfully integrate the introverted and implicit Chinese classical aesthetics. It expresses the emotion of parting and waiting in a delicate and graceful way, as if tasting green olives, with a long aftertaste and endless aftertaste. The song "blue and white porcelain" shows the unique characteristics of Chinese style and becomes a model of pop songs. Its artistic features are reflected in the lyrics, melody and stage performance, especially the sentence "sky blue and other misty rain", which uses classical literature for reference to express the arduous process of making blue and white porcelain and reflects the traditional aesthetic concept (Fan & Huang, 2021). Combining traditional culture with modern music can create a unique artistic style, enrich emotional expression, and provide enlightenment for the development of Chinese pop music (Zhong, 2022). In Jay Chou's blue and white porcelain, he skillfully combines pop music with Peking opera singing, innovatively integrating traditional and modern elements. He used unique voice skills, such as the natural transition of light and heavy voice, to show his innovation in pop music singing. At the same time, he pays attention to emotional expression and conveys the profound meaning of the song through accurate pronunciation and true and false voice conversion. These elements together shape the unique artistic style of blue and white porcelain, making it a popular song model with national characteristics. In music interpretation, the connotation and emotional expression of songs are more important than simple skill display. Singers should integrate personal emotion, subjective understanding and aesthetic



tendency into singing to enhance the artistic appeal of songs. In terms of music score, the use of national musical instruments such as pipa, drum, bamboo flute and zither can create a classical nostalgic atmosphere, open the emotional dialogue of time and space, and give people a deep initial impression. The accompaniment of Western electroacoustic instruments and classical melodies are combined at the beginning to create the musical tension of ancient and modern fusion and display the unique aesthetics (Qu, 2022). This combination of classical and modern music elements creates a unique and harmonious feeling, connecting ancient and modern styles, and bringing the audience back to reality. In order to achieve the balance of music and enhance the diversity of sounds, the song will carefully select a combination of musical instruments, including bass drums and high pitched castanets, as well as traditional national instruments such as Pipa and bamboo flute, to show the diversity of music and enhance the audience's auditory experience. Such arrangement not only conveys emotions and stories, but also provides rich and profound auditory enjoyment (Figure 2).



**Figure 2:** Music score example of blue and white porcelain

#### 4.3 Jasmine Flower

Jasmine flower is a famous pop song composed by Liujiachang and liguyi. This song subtly integrates the melody of traditional national singing and Yunnan folk songs, and Western musical elements such as Western chords, drums and bass, showing the perfect integration of tradition and modernity. This track highlights the outstanding position of Chinese music culture in the field of pop music. Because of its wide spread, it has become one of the internationally famous songs (Kang, 2023). Jasmine Flower originated from the Qing Dynasty and is spread in the form of folk song tunes. The styles and tunes vary from region to region. This song is widely sung and has a strong mass base. It is an important part of Chinese culture. Inspired by life scenes and folk customs, the melody is beautiful and graceful, and the lyrics are affectionate and moving, expressing people's

yearning for a better life and their pursuit of love. Adapted into a variety of artistic forms, it is an important representative of culture. Because of its long history and unique charm, "Jasmine" has become one of the most well-known folk songs in modern China, and it is also the earliest known "Chinese melody" in the world. Among them, the most internationally famous version was collected by Mr. He Fang in 1942 and circulated in Jiangsu and Zhejiang. This version of jasmine uses the pentatonic mode commonly used in Chinese folk songs. The beat is two fourths of a beat, roughly one beat or half a beat for one word. Although the melody is progressive and changing, the jump is small. The singing method is very close to the rhythm of daily speech or recitation, making it easier to sing and remember. Therefore, it is catchy and easy for people to remember and sing (Figure 3). The symmetrical and neat structure of jasmine makes it easy to sing, especially its catchy characteristics. The song adopts a three paragraph structure, with four sentences in each paragraph, reflecting periodicity and regularity. The drawl technique shows the Chinese style and adheres to the spirit in the face of difficulties. It is not only a song, but also a call for the revival of excellent traditional culture, especially the promotion of Kunqu opera art. Encourage us to work together to inherit and develop excellent traditional culture.

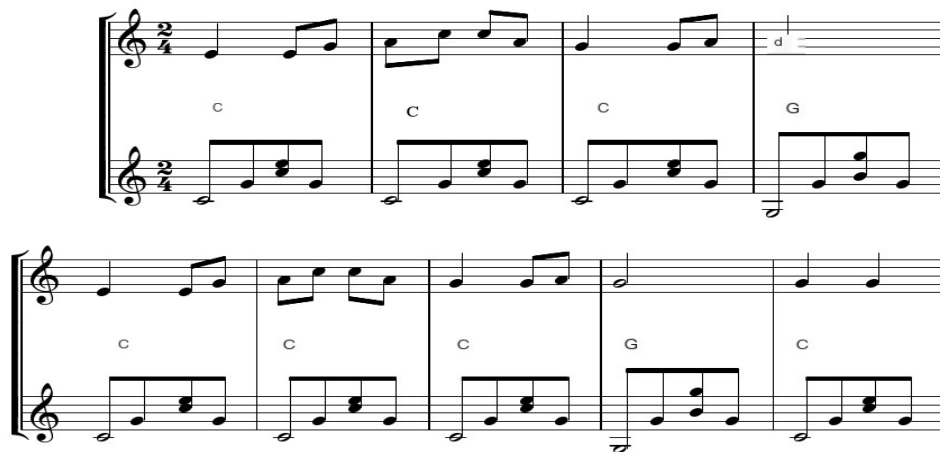


Figure 3: Music score example of jasmine flower

## 5. INTEGRATION STRATEGY OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE FOLK MUSIC AND CONTEMPORARY POP MUSIC

### 5.1 Selection of Characteristic Elements

The integration of traditional Chinese folk music and contemporary pop music requires careful selection of distinctive elements from traditional Chinese folk music. These elements can be unique melody, rhythm,

harmony or musical instrument timbre, which are the spiritual core of traditional Chinese national music and condense the cultural essence inherited from generation to generation. The ingenious combination of these characteristic elements with the melody and rhythm of contemporary pop music can produce refreshing musical effects. This integration not only highlights the uniqueness and charm of traditional Chinese folk music, but also perfectly combines with the modern sense of pop music, bringing a new music experience to the audience. In this way, traditional Chinese folk music can glow with new brilliance in contemporary society, but also inject rich cultural connotation into pop music and promote the innovation and development of music culture (Meng, 2023).

### 5.2 Using Modern Music Arrangement Skills

Through the use of advanced music software and music arrangement equipment, we can more flexibly handle and arrange the elements of traditional Chinese national music. On the basis of maintaining the characteristics and essence of traditional music, combining these elements with the arrangement of pop music can create more rich and hierarchical music works. In the process of music arrangement, the key is to retain the original flavor of traditional Chinese folk music and fully display its unique style and charm. At the same time, we should pay attention to the integration of new elements of modern music, such as electronic sound effects, synthesizer timbre, etc., in order to increase the modern sense and attraction of music works. This way of integration can meet the aesthetic needs of young audiences, while inheriting and carrying forward the cultural value of traditional Chinese folk music. Through modern arrangement techniques, we can further explore the integration potential of traditional Chinese folk music and contemporary pop music. This integration not only helps to promote the innovation and development of music culture, but also helps to cultivate a new generation of listeners' recognition and love of traditional Chinese folk music, and promote the inheritance and protection of music culture (Dai, 2022).

### 5.3 Learn from the Lyrics theme of Traditional Chinese Folk Music

The theme of lyrics of traditional Chinese folk music often carries the profound connotation of national culture and history. They are the unique expression of national spirit. The themes of these lyrics involve the history, beliefs, values and customs of the nation, and are an important part of national culture. Contemporary pop music can learn from these lyrics of

traditional Chinese folk music, draw inspiration from them, and combine the concerns of modern society to create music works with profound connotation and humanistic value. This integration not only helps to inherit and carry forward the traditional national culture, but also injects new elements and vitality into pop music. By using the lyrics of traditional Chinese folk music for reference, pop music creators can better understand the essence of national culture, and on this basis, combine the views and emotions of modern society to create music works with both a sense of the times and cultural heritage. Such works can better meet the young generation's pursuit of musical diversity and humanistic values, and also help cultivate their interest in and sense of identity with traditional national culture (Lin, 2021).

#### 5.4 Explore Diversified Singing Methods

Traditional Chinese folk music has a variety of singing methods, each with its own characteristics. For example, folk songs usually have high pitched, free melody and rhythm, while minor tunes are more soft and delicate. These unique singing methods are an important part of traditional Chinese folk music, and also their charm. Today's pop music can benefit from and integrate the singing style of these traditional Chinese folk music, and explore diversified singing styles. By using the aria and techniques of traditional Chinese folk music, combined with the melody and rhythm of pop music, we can create unique music works. This kind of integration can bring a new auditory experience to the audience, and enable them to have a deeper understanding and understanding of traditional Chinese folk music. In addition, learning from the singing methods of traditional Chinese folk music will also help to improve the performance level and artistic value of pop music. By learning and using traditional singing and skills, pop singers can better grasp the emotion and connotation of music and inject more vitality and appeal into their performances (Hu, 2020).

#### 5.5 Traditional and Modern Musical Instruments

The combination of traditional national musical instruments and modern popular musical instruments is a creative way of music integration. Traditional national musical instruments have unique timbre and playing skills, which can bring distinctive national characteristics and emotional connotation to music works. Modern popular musical instruments have more diversified timbres and rhythms, which can add modern and fashionable elements to music works. By combining traditional national

musical instruments with modern popular musical instruments, we can create a unique musical effect. This integration can give full play to the advantages of the two musical instruments, so that the music works not only have the charm of traditional Chinese folk music, but also have the dynamic and fashionable sense of modern pop music. In the process of integration, we need to pay attention to maintaining the unique timbre and playing skills of traditional national musical instruments, and skillfully combine with the timbre and rhythm of modern popular musical instruments. This combination requires the creator to have a keen sense of music and exquisite choreography skills to create music works with a sense of hierarchy and three-dimensional sense (Zhu, 2020).

## 6. CONCLUSION

The blend of traditional Chinese folk music and contemporary pop music is like a complicated picture scroll, showing a colorful scene. In the tide of globalization and modernization, the two are intertwined, learn from each other, and jointly interpret a new chapter of music. This blend not only protects and inherits traditional Chinese folk music, but also injects new vitality and creativity into contemporary pop music. We should cherish and respect the unique charm of various cultures, and actively promote cultural exchanges and integration to stimulate the infinite possibilities and vitality of world music.

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