

Dissemination of Folk Song Literacy in China's Northern Shaanxi Province

Erhang Zhang, Sarawut Choatchamrat*

College of Music, Mahasarakham University, Thailand.

Corresponding author: Sarawut Choatchamrat, E-mail: sarawut.ch@msu.ac.th

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: April 26, 2023

Accepted: July 26, 2023

Published: October 31, 2023

Volume: 11 Issue: 4

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: None

ABSTRACT

This article examines and discusses the musical and artistic characteristics of Shaanxi folk songs, as well as how they can be more effectively disseminated in today's rapidly changing social environment. This also provides some beneficial information for the dissemination and development of Shaanxi folk songs, allowing them to be disseminated and passed on more effectively. The study's objectives were to analyze the musical characteristics of northern Shaanxi Province's folk songs and to propose guidelines for the dissemination of folk song literacy in northern Shaanxi Province, China. The study investigates and analyzes how to better disseminate Shaanxi folk songs from various perspectives, including educational dissemination, media dissemination, and official institution dissemination, using qualitative research methods. The results of this study show that the folk songs of northern Shaanxi have a strong local flavor and a simple style that people appreciate. They have a distinct musical charm and range from small two-stanza styles to large multi-stanza styles. Guidelines for the dissemination of folk songs in northern Shaanxi Province, China, have been developed in order to introduce the world to the excellent folk songs of northern Shaanxi in a new language form as well as to various contemporary cultural activities and school education.

Key words: Dissemination, Chinese Folk Songs, Folk Songs Literacy, Northern Shaanxi Province, China

INTRODUCTION

Northern Shaanxi folk music is a unique and valuable part of Chinese culture. This ancient song has been transmitted for centuries on the Loess Plateau in northern Shaanxi and is considered one of the country's intangible cultural heritages. They have evolved over time and include many genres such as Xintianyou, Shanqu, Dengshanqu, Chuanjiahao, Dayangko, Hanchuanqu, Jiuqu, Duotai, Yulin Xiaoqu, Qingjiandao, Tree Xiaoqu, and more than 27,000 songs. Representative songs include "Dongfanghong", "Orchid", "Sanshilidian", "Catching the Soul of the Beast", etc. (Gibbs, 2013; Yantian & Karin, 2022; Yu et al., 2023; Zhu, 2023).

These folk songs have shaped different cultures over time. The folk songs have always been an important part of human civilization, and folk songs in northern Shaanxi are no exception. In the long-term production, life, and practice of people, there is a foreign style and local color that are transmitted by word of mouth and developed with the environment. These songs, which are non-commercial songs that combine folk art and stories, have their own culture, and maintain their customs and traditions, are considered "ancient songs". They have a strong local flavor, do not change the local language, and are an important part of the national

oral and intangible cultural heritage. Despite their importance, old songs are often forgotten in the preservation of cultural heritage (Chingchih, 2010; Zhang & Zhuang, 2020).

In order to preserve the best cultural traditions in China, northern Shaanxi folk songs were declared national cultural heritage in June 2008 and included in the second national cultural heritage group (http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2008-06/14/content_1016331.htm). Also, efforts to promote and preserve these songs for example, in 2015, the northern Shaanxi folk song "Orchid" won the "Golden Begonia Award" and "Golden Osmanthus Award" for good work at the "Golden Begonia Award" awards ceremony at the 3rd Asian Microfilm Festival. «The best music microfilm of our China (Hangzhou) International Microfilm Festival (Yu et al., 2023). In 2017, Yulin City, Yuyang District, began planning the construction of the Northern Shaanxi Folk Song Museum, which will be completed and opened in 2018. In November 2019, Yan'an Museum of Culture and Art Center (Yan'an Museum of Mass Art) was preserved by the Northern Shaanxi folk song project and included in the "National Intangible Cultural Heritage Representation Project Conservation List" (http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2019-12/01/content_5457358.htm).

Education and literacy play an important role in preserving and developing the importance of these songs. Introducing folk music to young people in schools and colleges as part of their cultural education is a powerful way to increase their understanding and appreciation of the #1 painting. Through education, students can learn about the cultural history and history of these songs, as well as their music and unique songs, enabling them to appreciate and understand the rich heritage of northern Shaanxi.

In addition, literary research can help identify and interpret the meanings and symbols of these songs, providing an understanding of the beliefs, values, and traditions of the people who created them. For example, studying the themes and patterns seen in "Orchid" or "Thirty Lidian" can help one understand the culture, religion, and daily life of people in northern Shaanxi and share the history and culture of the area. Consequently, promoting the importance of folk music in northern Shaanxi is important for the preservation and promotion of Chinese heritage. Education and literacy play an important role in the preservation, promotion, survival, and transmission of these folk songs to future generations. Therefore, the creation of museums, awards, and other initiatives to celebrate these songs should be encouraged, providing a good way to preserve and promote this beautiful heritage of the northern Shaanxi tribe.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Folk Culture of Northern Shanxi Region

Northern Shaanxi is an ancient transitional region with a rich cultural heritage. According to Ge et al. (2021), this area is a landscape composed of the foundation of an ancient site of Mesozoic bedrock covered with Cenozoic laterite and thick layers of loess, then cut by water flow and soil erosion. Northern Shaanxi legend, also known as Shaanxi folklore, is a general term for the culture of the region. This includes many blessings, such as Naoyangko, a product of the cultural exchange between north and south that took place in the Northern Song Dynasty (Kang, 2020; Kang, 2020).

Folk songs are also an important part of Shaanxi cultural life. These songs have a long history, far-reaching influence, wide content, and many forms that are often created in people's daily life and practice (Zhang et al., 2020). Folk songs belonging to many periods are called "loess songs" because they are an important part of the culture of each period. They are spread all over the world, not just north of Shaanxi. Dachang, also known as "Big Yangko", is a gathering and dance performance in the streets and the big square. The use of traditional instruments such as the hip drum and chest drum add to northern Shaanxi's heritage. The "Hometown of Waist Drums" is Ansai City, and those who use waist drums use the waist drum as an instrument (Wei et al., 2021). The chest drum, also known as the "flower drum", originated in southern Shanxi and was introduced to Yichuan during the Song Dynasty, where it was well received by party and government officials and visitors (Chen & Wang, 2021). In addition to these traditions, walking on stilts is also a popular performance at Chinese New Year, major festivals, and

fireworks displays. Additionally, temple fairs are a cultural event in ancient northern Shaanxi, people believe in God and practice the religion as their national religion. This led to the construction of different temples, large and small, and the virtuous temple culture gradually developed in many places (Wang & Wu, 2020; Ge et al., 2021).

To sum up, folk culture in northern Shaanxi is rich and diverse. The culture of the region, including the Yangko winding, folk songs, and the use of musical instruments such as the hip drum and chest drum, reflects the art of the Shaanxi people. These traditions are an important and important part of Shaanxi's cultural life and should be preserved and carried forward.

The Development History of Folk Songs in Northern Shaanxi

During the period from 1935 to 1965, folk music in northern Shaanxi experienced a flourishing era, marked by the production of numerous popular songs, including "Dongfanghong," "Sanshilidian," and "Yellow River Boatman's Song." In 1942, staff members from the Lu Xun Art Academy took the initiative to record folk songs in different locations, such as Mili, Jiaxian, Suide, and Fugu. These folk songs have played a pivotal role in shaping the culture and history of northern Shaanxi, as they have been passed down orally from one generation to the next. Their development has been influenced by various factors, including early settlement patterns, natural disasters, and regional traditions (Liu, 2018).

The Basic Characteristics of Folk Songs in Northern Shaanxi

Northern Shaanxi folk songs have regional characteristics. They have a rustic and atmospheric quality that is instantly recognizable. This style is characterized by a loud sound that elevates the sound to the upper part of the song world and a small key that unleashes majestic power. The words used in this song also have distinctive features, such as their simplicity, free rhythms, and bold, passionate expressions. The music is simple and pleasant, and the image is real as the water of the Yellow River flows endlessly, echoing in the mountains of the Loess Plateau. These characteristics make northern Shaanxi folk songs popular with the locals and well-liked by academics. Scholars believe that folk songs in northern Shaanxi are an important part of China's intangible cultural heritage (Howard, 2016; Zhang et al., 2022). These songs, handed down from generation to generation, provide insight into the lives, traditions, and beliefs of the people who call this land their home. The uniqueness of these songs inspired composers and composers to incorporate the songs of the northern Shaanxi people into their works, helping to preserve and mainstream this tradition (Xia, 2018). In summary, folk songs in northern Shaanxi have the characteristics of simple atmosphere, simple lyrics, free music, bold and weak, and good image song. They are an important part of China's cultural heritage and continue to inspire musicians and composers. This song is not only loved by the people of

northern Shaanxi but also appreciated and studied by those who value and preserve the culture.

Research Theory

Musicology

Musicology is the study of music-related phenomena and their laws through various theoretical disciplines, including music aesthetics, music history, music ethnography, music psychology, music pedagogy, music acoustics, rhythm, instrumentology, melodic, harmonic, counterpoint, tune theory, and performance aspects. (McPherson, 2016).

Ethnomusicology

Ethnomusicology, a theoretical discipline under musicology, is concerned with the traditional music of various countries and regions, including its development and patterns. This discipline relies on fieldwork as its primary method of obtaining research material. Ethnomusicology is closely related to ethnology and folklore and includes the investigation and study of the musical characteristics of different peoples, countries, and regions (Rice, 2013; Rice, 2014).

Music aesthetics

Music aesthetics is a theoretical discipline that studies the essence and inner regularity of music from the perspective of music art in general. It is closely related to general aesthetics, music technology theory, music history, music criticism, and other fields. The study of musical aesthetics can be conducted from different perspectives, including philosophical, psychological, broad sociological, and the aesthetic characteristics of musical works themselves (Supičić, 1975; Beard & Gloag, 2016).

Qualitative research

Qualitative research is concerned with the qualitative phenomena of quality and uses in-depth interviews and observations to collect data. It is exploratory in nature and characterized by non-numeric, descriptive, reasoning, and word-based approaches. The process of qualitative research involves selecting study sites and defining questions, concepts, and indicators; choosing a strategy to enter the study; selecting people and events to be observed; developing relationships with the participants; performing analysis and observation; and final analysis and interpretation (Guest et al., 2011; Kuckartz, 2013).

METHOD

Scope of Content and Study Site

Scope of content

Investigate and analyze the origin and musical characteristics of folk songs in northern Shaanxi. Suggest methods and recommendations for the preservation and dissemination literacy of folk songs in northern Shaanxi.

Study site

Shaanxi Covering an area of around 200,000 square kilometers, roughly the size of Senegal and Kyrgyzstan, Shaanxi is covered in large areas by the yellow loess silt that colors the Yellow River and with which the Chinese allegorically associate themselves. Considered the historical cradle of the Chinese civilization, Shaanxi is bordered by Inner Mongolia to the north, Shanxi to the east, Henan and Hubei to the southeast, Chongqing and Sichuan to the south, Gansu to the west, and Ningxia to the northwest, as shown in Figure 1. Its capital, Xi'an, was the historical starting point of the Silk Road, and it was around Xi'an that China's first imperial capital was based after China was first united under the Qin Dynasty 221-206 BCE. Shaanxi remained the political center of China until the end of the ninth century when the imperial court moved east. In 1556, Shaanxi was hit by an 8.0 magnitude earthquake killing over 830,000 people, still ranked as the deadliest earthquake in human history. The death toll was high because many of its citizens were living in caves which collapsed during the tremors. Its caves around Yan'an later became a Chinese Communist Party base during the 1930s and 1940s when the Nationalists forced the Communists on Long March which eventually led them to the remote northwest of the country (Shanxi Province, n.d.).

Research Tools

We collected our data using interviews, observations, and questionnaires.

Key Informants

The criteria for selecting informants are choose two experts in the art of Shaanxi folk songs, both of whom have contributed to the development of Shaanxi folk songs, and they were both born in the northern Shaanxi region of China, and both are experts in singing folk songs from northern Shaanxi.

- 1) Yang Juan, she is a famous singer from Jingbian County in northern Shaanxi Province. She graduated from the vocal department of the Xi'an Conservatory of Music and is now a soloist in Jingbian County Song and Dance Theatre. She is a member of the Shaanxi Provincial Shaanxi Folk Song Research Association, a member of the Shaanxi Folk Song Research Association of the China Music Association, and a member of the Shaanxi Musicians Association. She has won two awards at the 4th Northwest China Music Festival, two at the 3rd Shaanxi Folk Song Competition, and three at the 8th Shaanxi Music Awards. Through her interview, she learned about the history and development of Shaanxi folk songs, the music of Shaanxi folk songs, the stylistic characteristics of the singing voice, and the unique performance techniques.
- 2) Wang Ke, he is a young singer in northern Shaanxi, certified inheritor of the Shaanxi folk song Xintianyou. He graduated from Xi'an Conservatory of Music

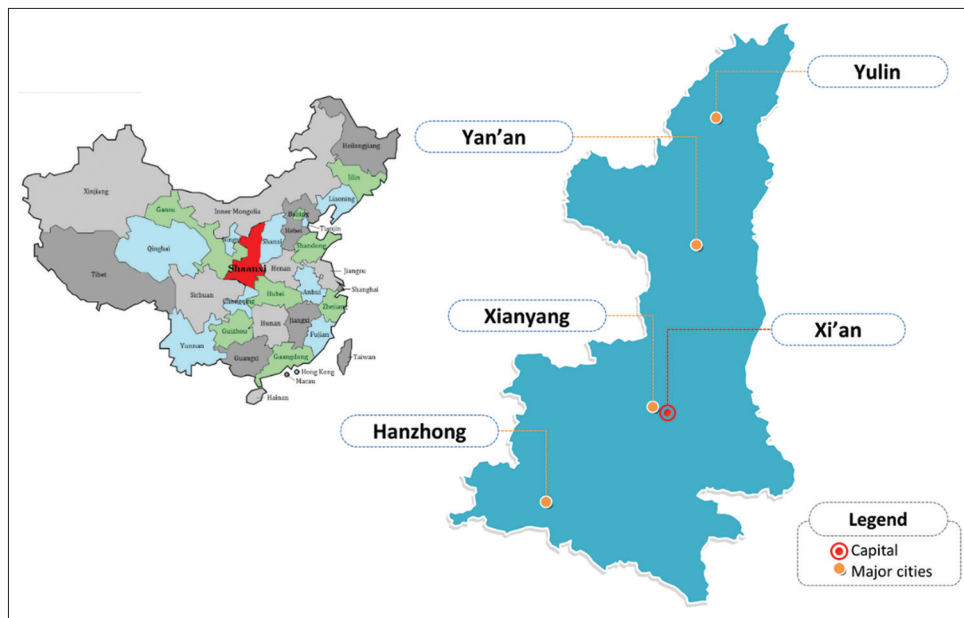


Figure 1. Map of shaanxi province, china

Source: Shanxi province (n.d.), Wowslides (2019)

and is a member of the Northern Shaanxi Folk Song Research Association. He has participated in hundreds of performances and has won awards such as First Prize in Jingbian District of Yulin City Shaanxi Folk Song Competition and 6th Shaanxi Music Award Shaanxi Folk Song Competition - Top Ten Shaanxi Folk Singers. He was chosen as an informant because he has conducted an in-depth study of northern Shaanxi folk songs and is experienced in performing and dedicated to the promotion and publicity of Shaanxi folk songs.

RESULTS

The Musical Characteristics of Folk Songs in Northern Shaanxi Province, China

Labor songs are folk songs composed and applied for labor and have the practical function of coordinating and guiding labor. In the process of labor, workers often shouted to unify their pace, adjust their breathing, and release the pressure of their body load. These shouts and cries were gradually embellished by the working people and developed into labor songs with rich lyrical content and complete tunes, reflecting the wisdom and strength of the working people and showing their optimistic and upward-looking spirit. Labor songs are a kind of oral improvisation directly related to production activities. The tune is relatively simple, the rhythm is strong and powerful, leading, and then closing, clear and unambiguous, and the content is based on the characteristics of labor. The most important details in this text are the melody, rhythm, and lyrics. The melody is rough and powerful, often in the form of leading, leading, and alternate leading. The rhythm is relatively fixed, and the sense of rhythm is strong. The lyrics are mostly improvised

and encouraging, while the congregation's lyrics are mostly powerful hooks.

Xintianyou is one of the most characteristic folk songs in northern Shaanxi. It is long and high-pitched, bold, and exuberant, with beautiful rhythm. It reflects themes of love, marriage, daily life, resistance to oppression and struggle for freedom, and its musical characteristics are as follows. The tune of Xintianyou is long and high, bold, and bold, with soft rhythm. The rhythm is mostly very free, the melody is bold and open, and it is heartfelt, which is directly related to the topography of the mountains and rivers in northern Shaanxi. The lyrics of Xintianyou are usually in two lines, the first line and the next line, which are basically improvised. They reflect love, marriage, resistance to oppression, and struggle for freedom. They sing about both the happiness of life and personal sorrow, both romantic and realistic, the pursuit of the beauty of life and the love of life.

The minor key is mostly narrative, with scene, character, storyline, and detail descriptions. Ditties are rich in content, fine and mixed, with a variety of topics and life. Lyrics are mostly divided into open. The melodic style of minor key is generally smooth, warm, soft, and lyrical. It is more variable than folk songs, with both jump-in and step-in techniques used. The rhythm is squarer and more standard, and the lyrics are usually in stanza form with variable sentences, five and seven words. Some lyrics are short, while others have 20 or 30 lines. The lyrics and songs are generally fixed and do not feature improvised arrangements.

The Dissemination of Folk Song Literacy in Northern Shaanxi Province, China

Shaanbei folk songs are traditional folk songs of northern Shaanxi Province, divided into three major categories: labor songs, letter songs, and ditties. These self-contained,

distinctive traditional folk songs reflect social conditions and people's daily lives in every aspect and sing the joys and sorrows of the people of northern Shaanxi. Moreover, when the social system underwent fundamental changes, the content and form of folk songs also changed. This change, reflected in the new content of social life and new characters, also gave new meaning to various genres.

Dissemination through education

- 1) To inherit the musical culture of folk songs in northern Shaanxi as the mission. Local folk music is created with the working people as the carriers and is mainly a form of music preferred by the working people. Through this, they express their experiences and feelings, their wishes, and their will, thus increasing the national color and local characteristics of folk music. Chinese culture has a long history. It has been a direct reflection of life and society since ancient poetry. In the development from ancient times to the present, folk songs, mainly "mountain songs, trumpets, and ditties", have been formed. Therefore, in the process of music teaching, we should focus closely on the teaching objectives of the curriculum, clarify the knowledge and skills and emotional and attitudinal values for students, stimulate their understanding of the rhythm of folk songs through the study of folk songs in northern Shaanxi, so that students can master the simple methods of folk songs in northern Shaanxi, and continue to promote China's folk music culture and cultivate students' sentiments. School education has both the natural advantage of transmitting and spreading the arts and the important responsibility of promoting excellent traditional culture. School vocal teaching not only improves students' vocal singing skills but also assumes the function of promoting excellent traditional music culture. Integrating local music learning programs, such as Shaanxi folk songs, into school education can enhance students' cultural identity and cultural confidence. Starting with education and the establishment of traditional musical aesthetic habits will allow Shaanxi folk songs to truly escape the plight of survival, disconnection, and preservation of Shaanxi folk songs."
- 2) Using folk songs from northern Shaanxi as teaching content. Music teaching in schools is mainly divided into appreciation and learning to sing. Teachers can teach folk songs in the classroom and integrate them into all aspects of music teaching so that students can master the singing skills of folk songs while appreciating traditional folk music. During the teaching process, teachers can explain the course content through regional characteristics, which are related to Shaanxi folk songs, and teachers should actively share them with students in the teaching process. Students should not only learn simple Shaanxi folk songs but also have a practical grasp of the historical origins of Shaanxi folk songs. By teaching mountain songs, students can develop a strong interest in and deepen their understanding of northern Shaanxi folk songs. Vigorously carry out diversified art activities

such as "Shaanxi folk songs in campus" and "folk songs appreciation", promote Shaanxi folk songs in campus and classrooms, provide students with theoretical lectures and appreciation demonstrations, enhance the experience and acceptance of Shaanxi folk songs, and help students understand the history of Shaanxi folk songs. The history of folk songs and improve students' cultural awareness and love of Shaanxi folk songs. Emphasize talent development and bring Shaanxi folk songs into the classroom, starting with children. We can also set up a "Shaanxi Folk Song" training center in schools to cultivate Shaanxi folk song singing talents and continue to accumulate and grow the Shaanxi folk song singing team. Shaanxi folk songs are an important part of national culture, an important carrier of folk music, and a "living fossil" of national music culture. It is important to protect and inherit the excellent traditional Chinese music culture, to hold on to the position of Chinese music culture, to inherit the genes of Chinese music culture, to enhance the self-awareness and confidence of music culture, to promote the spirit of Chinese music, and to spread the value of Chinese national music. School music education is the mainstay of national music culture inheritance and the top priority of contemporary school aesthetic education. Shaanxi folk songs have indispensable inheritance value in school music education, mainly in the transmission of national music culture, national music spirit, music culture, and aesthetics, as shown in Figure 2.

Dissemination through government agencies

- 1) Establishment of an official communication system for the spread of folk songs in northern Shaanxi, the government is always the leading link, and its role and power are the greatest. Correct policies and good guidance from the government will surely improve the role and power of Shaanxi folk songs. Correct policies and good guidance from the government will surely improve Shaanxi folk songs. In terms of labor security, relevant government departments should be able to solve the



Figure 2. Folk songs into school activities
Source: Zhang ErHang

living problems of many artists and singers and give them a relatively stable living environment. It is necessary to do a good job of top-level design and seek the strong support of local governments. From the education department to the culture and tourism department, a comprehensive framework for folk song protection and a heritage development system should be established. In addition, together with the relevant comrades in charge of the local culture and art departments, we should implement targeted protection and inheritance plans according to the characteristics and habits of local folk song culture. Throughout the process, the inheritance of folk song culture should always be the first element, and an ecological field and audience system for folk song performances should be actively created. The government can hold regular Shaanxi folk song competitions to provide a platform for singers and the masses who love Shaanxi folk songs. Package and promote the enthusiasm to learn and expand the influence of Shaanxi folk songs to the whole country; gather professional creators to adapt and create old Shaanxi folk songs; create new Shaanxi folk songs with accompaniment; promote new songs; and organize experts, scholars, and creators to collect, organize, and study folk songs.

- 2) Establish professional heritage exchange institutions. Government departments should set up official dissemination organizations, such as Shaanxi folk song protection organizations and Shaanxi folk song popularization and education organizations, as shown in Figure 3. These organizations should infect and inspire people with lively, vivacious, interesting, and positive folk songs. In order to enhance local cultural self-confidence and the sense of cultural identity and belonging to their hometowns and motherland, the dissemination organizations should advocate the concept of protecting and passing on folk songs according to people's age and choose appropriate methods of teaching and learning folk songs for different age groups. We should start with the melody and historical background of folk songs so that it is easy to understand, plant the seeds of musical and cultural confidence in people's hearts, and lay a solid foundation for the dissemination and inheritance of



Figure 3. The government has set up relevant protection agencies

Source: Zhang ErHang

folk songs in northern Shaanxi. As a result, the government still needs to vigorously promote the creation and spread of folk songs in northern Shaanxi, and the market for popular music and culture should play a bigger role in the growth and development of folk music arts. The government accelerates the reform of music and cultural institutions, allows private music and cultural communication units to become the main force of the folk music and culture market, introduces more relevant policies, encourages more private capital to participate, and creates a good market environment for the industrialization of folk music and art, which will be conducive to increasing the motivation and participation of the main body and forming a multi-level and widespread dissemination situation.

Dissemination through the media

Shaanbei folk songs are unique to the Loess Plateau region of northern Shaanxi, and their origin dates back to ancient ritual tunes and witch songs. It has roughly gone through three periods: traditional folk songs of northern Shaanxi, revolutionary folk songs of northern Shaanxi, and new folk songs of northern Shaanxi. During this process, traditional means of communication have played an immeasurable role in the transmission of Shaanxi folk songs. With the development and popularity of network digital technology and smart terminals, new media have brought great changes to information dissemination. The dissemination of Shaanxi folk songs has begun to show the characteristics of "multiple platforms, fast dissemination, wide range, and various ways", which brings unprecedented opportunities for the development of Shaanxi folk songs. New media are mainly digital media, represented by the Internet, mobile terminals, and television. According to the types of new media network connections, the types of new media applications can be roughly divided into new media on the Internet, new media on TV, and new media on cell phones.

- 1) Internet and new media communication Internet new media communication mode refers to the mode of using network technology to realize information dissemination, the most typical of which is the application of network TV, network radio, and network newspapers. Internet TV combines the advantages of multiple media and has superb interactivity, allowing viewers to choose their favorite programs regardless of time and space. Major video sites provide the most convenient and fast way for people to enjoy Shaanxi folk songs. Enter Shaanxi folk songs in the search bar of Tencent Video to find relevant videos. The videos are available in different lengths to meet diverse needs. In addition, all major video sites have opened pop-ups, so people can not only enjoy folk songs but also interact with them. Compared with the early days of the website, the information is now more comprehensive and abundant. Searching for Shaanxi folk songs in the search bar also allows the public to have a better experience by finding relevant content in the form of graphics and text. The integration and digital development of Shaanxi folk

songs have been achieved through the dissemination of video, sound, and images by the new online media, giving Shaanxi folk songs a modern feel in the process of dissemination. This new way of communication also realizes the two-way communication of Shaanxi folk songs and the multiple dissemination of information.

- 2) **New media communication on TV** The popularity of digital TV has improved the experience of watching TV programs, while the use of outdoor new media and mobile TV has broken the restrictions of time and place and made information delivery more intelligent. Shaanxi folk songs firmly grasp the new media communication platform, and the application of outdoor new media and mobile new media reflects the innovation of its communication means. Mobile TV is a device that uses on-board TV terminals to receive wireless signals and watch TV programs, which is used to alleviate passengers' boredom and fatigue and get their attention in a timely manner. Most of them are broadcast on buses in northern Shaanxi, including music videos, TV series, movie clips, and folk song clips in video form. This fragmented information transmission method adapts to the fast-paced lives of the public and meets their information needs. In addition, the passenger flow of buses spreads across all walks of life, so under specific conditions, mobile TV has the obvious advantage of efficiently transmitting Shaanxi folk songs and culture. The new outdoor media is widely disseminated. It can be installed in airports, subways, buses, and other places where people gather to fill the free time of people waiting for buses and attract people's attention. It expands the regional advantage of new media dissemination, thus expanding the dissemination area of Shaanxi folk songs and greatly improving the dissemination efficiency of Shaanxi folk songs.
- 3) **New Media Communication for Mobile Phones** The cell phone has become the medium and information receiver for the public to express their personalities. Cell phone radio, WeChat, live streaming APPs, short video APPs, and VLOGs have become the representative new media carriers of Shaanxi folk songs, and a new mode of communication development with cell phones as the medium has come into being. Mobile TV is a combination of cell phone and TV cell phone transmission platforms; cell phone live is the use of smart phones or APPs connected to the network to listen to the radio. The public can open the music audiovisual radio and search for Shaanxi folk songs, not only "Shaanxi folk songs," "folk songs list," "folk songs China original audio," and other folk songs music stations. The opening of the WeChat public number opens a new platform for the development of the dissemination of Shaanxi folk songs in the new medium of cell phones. This communication method is an extension and improvement of the traditional written communication method. Mobile users can browse a combination of video, audio, pictures, and text. For example, public numbers such as "Shaanxi Folk Song Selection" and "Shaanxi Folk Song" increase

the audio-visual effect for users and make the display more vivid, allowing people to understand Shaanxi folk songs through another convenient method. In recent years, the explosion of live streaming platforms and short videos has made the public the purveyors. In the live broadcast room, everyone is a folk singer, singing Shaanxi folk songs for the audience in the room and interacting with fans in a timely manner. The high interactivity of the live streaming platform allows folk songs to spread more and more widely and brings them closer and closer to the public, as shown in Figure 4.

Dissemination through communication, musical expression, and cultural activities

- 1) **Mass independent activities of folk songs in northern Shaanxi** in their spare time, the masses carry out the most frequent and free musical activities. For example, to enrich their spare time after retirement, many elderly people organize musical activities such as singing folk songs of northern Shaanxi in parks, squares, and community activity centers. These music activities carried out by the masses, with a wide range of participants and rich forms and contents, are the most common mass music activities.
- 2) **Music activities organized by folk song-related departments** Mass folk music activities organized by institutions such as cultural centers and cultural stations are also an important part of mass music. Since cultural departments such as cultural centers and cultural stations have relevant professionals and also provide certain material and spiritual support, the organized mass music activities will be richer and more professional, and the activities will be more colorful.
- 3) **Campus music activities** Shaanxi folk music and cultural activities in kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools are also important parts of mass music activities. Some schools will hold campus cultural arts festivals, organize campus Shaanxi folk song competitions and singing contests, set up Shaanxi folk music groups, and do other important forms of mass music activities that can make music more widespread.



Figure 4. Folk songs through the media
Source: Zhang ErHang

- 4) Commercial performances and social music activities. In addition to the above-mentioned forms of mass music and cultural activities, there is also a kind of social music activity for commercial purposes as shown in Figure 5. For example, cross-year music festivals, commercial performances, Shaanxi folk song concerts, and so on. Festivals and performances are important platforms for the promotion of ethnic folk art. In today's market economy as the main form of economy, to achieve self-inheritance and development, ethnic folk art must be market-oriented, serve the construction of industrial functions, find cultural market space, meet the needs of new audiences, and lay a solid foundation for a series of folk music cultures such as Shaanxi folk songs to spread more widely. The special performance of Shaanxi folk songs selected different types of folk songs and combined them with folk instruments, Western instruments, and the stage to improve the performance and appreciation of the stage art and the national and global tour performance. With the concept of fusion of western music and folk music, we combine global music language with national characteristics, integrate diverse cultural connotations, break the barriers of language and distance, and help the exchange and mutual appreciation of Shaanxi folk songs and other musical arts to promote better and faster dissemination of Shaanxi folk songs.

DISCUSSION

The studies discussed in the previous sections provide a better understanding of the structure and characteristics of northern Shaanxi folk music. The literature review for this study relies on a variety of sources, including academic journals, books, and online resources. In this study, which adopts the qualitative research method, data were collected through observation, interview, and online research. The results of the research show that the folk music in the north of Shaanxi is an important cultural heritage of our country and has its own characteristics and qualities, unlike other music genres. This study also demonstrates the importance of developing and preserving folk music culture in northern Shaanxi.

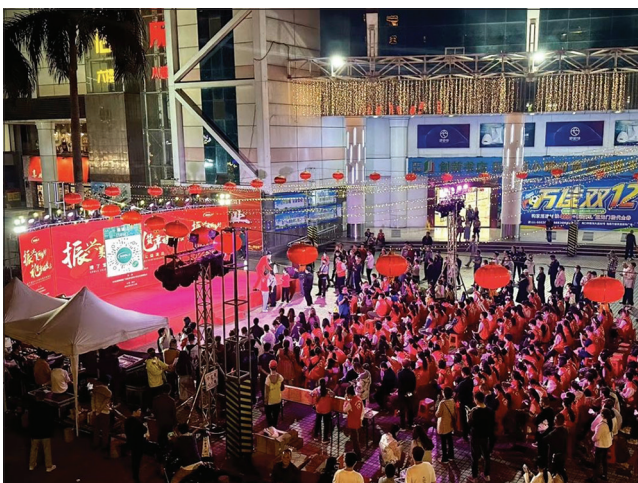


Figure 5. Folk songs through musical and cultural activities
Source: Zhang ErHang

The findings of the study are consistent with previous research showing the importance of folk music in the preservation of cultural heritage. According to Wang et al. (2019), folk music plays an important role in preserving the heritage of a community or country. This study also emphasizes the importance of state support and preservation of folk music. This is according to the theoretical principle that state intervention is crucial for cultural preservation (Xie & Li, 2015). This study also identified various ways in which northern Shaanxi folk music can be promoted and preserved, such as cultural exchange, online platforms, school curriculum programs and festivals. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that the dissemination of cultural heritage can be facilitated through various means, such as tourism, education, and reporting (Kim, 2015; Yang, 2018). However, the findings of this research may not be consistent with traditional notions about the purity of culture. This study shows that cultural heritage can be promoted and protected through modern tools such as online platforms and festivals that can transform cultural heritage. This may be inconsistent with the traditional view of preserving cultural heritage in its original form (Holtorf, 2007).

In conclusion, the development of innovations in research on northern Shaanxi folk music is essential for its preservation, promotion, and cultural vitality. Integrating technology, establishing digital archives, implementing experiential learning programs, fostering cultural exchange, and conducting impact assessments are key areas to explore. This study provides a better understanding of the structure and characteristics of northern Shaanxi folk music through observation, interview, and online research. The findings of this study are consistent with previous studies showing the importance of government support in preserving cultural heritage and promoting public music. The findings suggest ways in which northern Shaanxi folk music can be promoted and preserved, in line with previous research that has highlighted the importance of cultural support received in many ways. Future research may explore ways to preserve cultural heritage while promoting it in modern ways.

CONCLUSION

Music in northern Shaanxi has a unique style and strong local flavor. These songs are loved for their simplicity and rich content. It is considered one of the representatives of folk music with the most local characteristics in northern Shaanxi. The musical features of these folk songs are varied with various sounds and melodies. Some are bumpy, some are smooth and melodic, some are bold and outspoken, and some are soft and lyrical, expressing many thoughts, feelings, and moods. There are also many song formats, from small two-part files to large multi-part files; the most common of these are two-part and four-part files. The singing of the show is honest, exuberant, and the performance and lyrics of folk songs are ridiculous and euphemistic with good feelings. Folk songs in northern Shaanxi have a unique musical style.

In recent years, the publication and promotion of Shaanxi folk music has received more attention from the government.

With the development of today's media, communication and transportation, many ways and methods have been used to promote and spread these folk songs. The aim is to introduce the beautiful people of northern Shaanxi to the world in a new language through a variety of modern culture and school education. It is believed that by promoting these efforts, Shaanxi folk songs will spread more at home and abroad in the future. One way to promote this song is through cultural exchanges, such as inviting musicians from other countries to perform Shaanxi folk songs or sending Shaanxi musicians to perform abroad. Another way is through online platforms, for Shaanxi folk songs to engage with a wider audience without geographic restrictions. In addition, the inclusion of these songs in the school curriculum helps to convey their importance and cultural significance to young people. The government may also hold festivals to showcase Shaanxi folk songs to attract tourists and promote cultural exchange. As a result, the Shaanxi people of northern China are a unique and important legacy in this region. Advertising and promotion are important for the preservation and promotion of their culture. Through various methods and platforms, these folk songs can be spread and loved more at home and abroad.

REFERENCES

- Beard, D., & Gloag, K. (2016). *Musicology: the key concepts*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315647463>
- Chen, Y., & Wang, J. (2021). Research on the Spread and Development of Chest Drum Culture in Northern Shaanxi. *Journal of Changchun Normal University (Social Science Edition)*, 40(3), 107-112.
- Chingchih, L. (2010). *A critical history of new music in China*. The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press.
- Ge, J., Liu, H., Zhang, J., Chen, Y., & Gao, H. (2021). Analysis of geological characteristics and genesis of loess landform in northern Shaanxi. *Journal of Earth Science*, 32(1), 82-92.
- Ge, W., Li, Z., Zhang, J., & Zhao, Y. (2021). Review on research of Shaanxi folk culture. *Journal of Shaanxi Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 50(4), 136-143.
- Gibbs, L. S. (2013). *Song King: Tradition, Social Change, and the Contemporary Art of a Northern Shaanxi Folk-singer*. The Ohio State University.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2011). *Applied thematic analysis*. sage publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483384436>
- Holtorf, C. (2007). *Archaeology and cultural heritage in the age of tourism*. Routledge.
- Howard, K. (Ed.). (2016). *Music as intangible cultural heritage: Policy, ideology, and practice in the preservation of East Asian traditions*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315596723>
- Kang, Y. (2020). Shaanxi folk culture and its contemporary value. *Shandong Social Sciences*, 4, 94-98.
- Kang, Y. (2020). Study on the Development and Influence of Shaanxi Folklore in Chinese Folklore. *Journal of Shenyang University (Social Science Edition)*, 22(3), 16-22.
- Kim, J. H. (2015). The role of tourism in preserving cultural heritage: a case study of South Korea. *Journal of tourism and cultural change*, 13(2), 128-142.
- Kuckartz, U. (2013). Qualitative text analysis: A guide to methods, practice and using software. *Qualitative Text Analysis*, 1-192. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446288719>
- Liu, Y. (2018). On the Waist Drum Dance in Northern Shaanxi. *Journal of Nanyang Normal University*, 17(6), 85-87.
- McPherson, G. E. (Ed.). (2016). *Musical prodigies: Interpretations from psychology, education, musicology, and ethnomusicology*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199685851.001.0001>
- Rice, T. (2013). *Ethnomusicology: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Rice, T. (2014). Ethnomusicology in times of trouble. *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 46, 191-209.
- Shanxi Province. (n.d.). *Chinafolio*. <https://chinafolio.com/provinces/shanxi-province-2>
- Supićić, I. (1975). Contemporary aesthetics of music and musicology. *Acta Musicologica*, 47(2), 193-207.
- Wang, C., Li, Y., & Zhou, Y. (2019). The function of folk music in cultural heritage preservation: a case study of northern Shaanxi folk music. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 6(2), 63-76.
- Wang, Y., & Wu, Y. (2020). Analysis of the Culture of Northern Shaanxi Folk Temples. *Journal of Tianjin University of Science and Technology*, 34(1), 13-16.
- Wei, Y., Sun, J., & Gao, W. (2021). Study on the Protection and Development of the Waist Drum Art in Ansai. *Journal of Changchun Normal University (Social Science Edition)*, 40(4), 62-68.
- Wowslides. (2019). *Shaanxi map PowerPoint templates*. Free PowerPoint Template. <https://yourfreetemplates.com/shaanxi-map-powerpoint-templates>
- Xia, Y. (2018). The Expression of Traditional Culture Elements in Modern Chinese Music: A Case Study of Northern Shaanxi Folk Music. *Journal of Music and Dance*, 8(2), 22-34.
- Xie, C., & Li, J. (2015). Research on the government's responsibility in cultural heritage protection. *Journal of Chongqing Normal University (Natural Science Edition)*, 32(4), 108-111.
- Yang, X. (2018). Digital media, cultural heritage and tourism development. *Journal of China Tourism Research*, 14(4), 491-510.
- Yantian, H., & Karin, K. (2022). The Transmission Process of Shanxi Badatao in China [Doctoral dissertation], Mahasarakham University.
- Yu, J., Safarov, B., Yi, L., Buzrukova, M., & Janzakov, B. (2023). The Adaptive Evolution of Cultural Ecosystems along the Silk Road and Cultural Tourism Heritage: A Case Study of 22 Cultural Sites on the Chinese Section of the Silk Road World Heritage. *Sustainability*, 15(3), 2465. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15032465>
- Zhang, C., Zhang, Y., & Zhao, Y. (2020). Analysis of the Characteristics of Folk Songs in Northern Shaanxi. *Journal of Sichuan College of Education*, 36(2), 74-77.

- Zhang, X., & Zhuang, H. (2020). Language/Music Contacts and Exchanges: Nomadic Mongolian Music Transformations in Ordos Area in the Early Twentieth Century. *Handbook of the Changing World Language Map*, 2619-2633. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02438-3_198
- Zhang, X., Xiang, H., & Liu, R. (2022). Spatial pattern and influencing factors of intangible cultural heritage of music in Xiangxi, central China. *Heritage Science*, 10(1), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40494-022-00672-y>
- Zhu, L. (2023). How can traditional folk crafts be protected? Rethinking the “Productive Approach to Safeguarding” Traditional Intangible Cultural Heritage. <https://doi.org/10.59528/ms.jdssi2023.0606a4>