



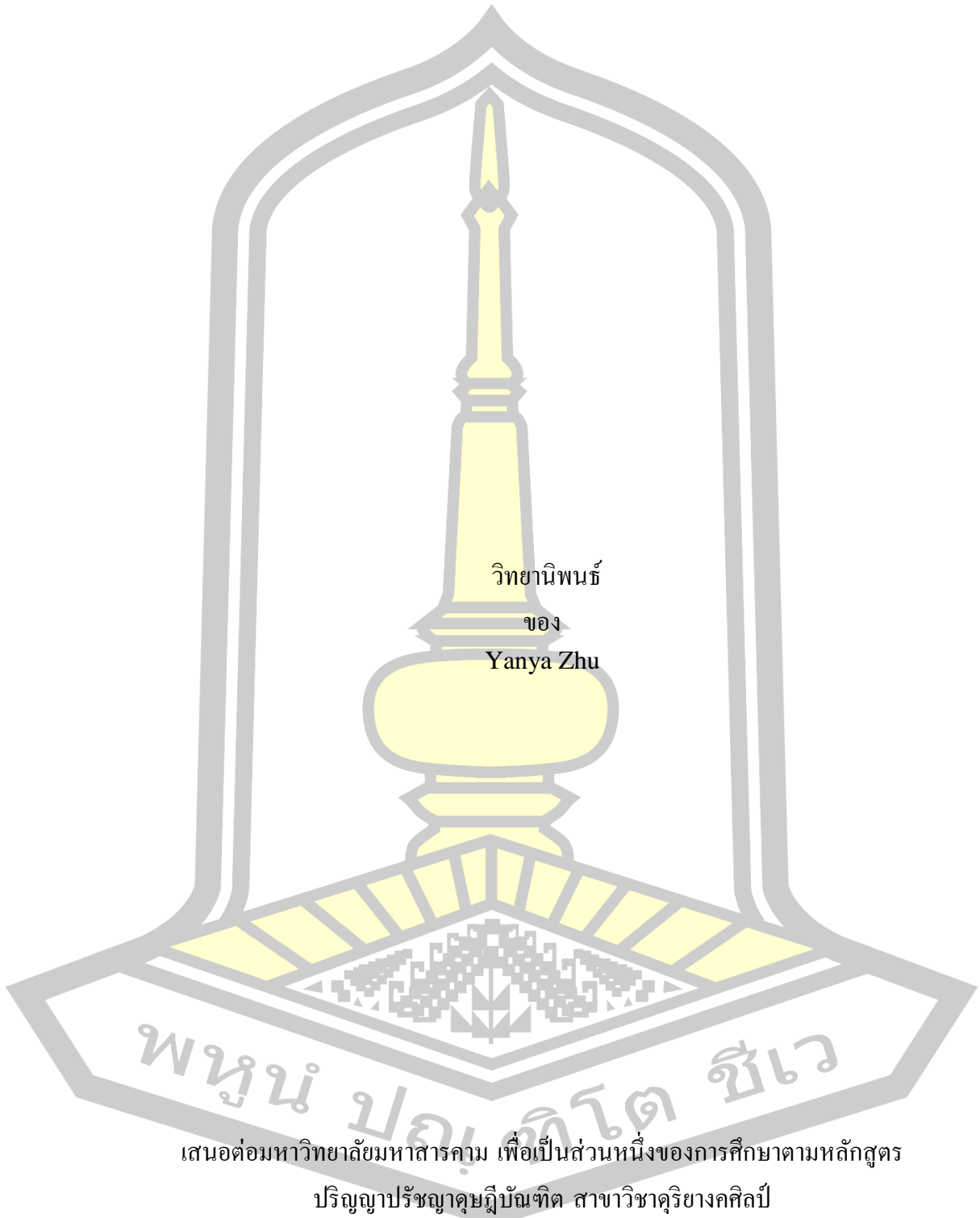
The Study of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese Folk Music in Contemporary Music

Yanya Zhu

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music
March 2025

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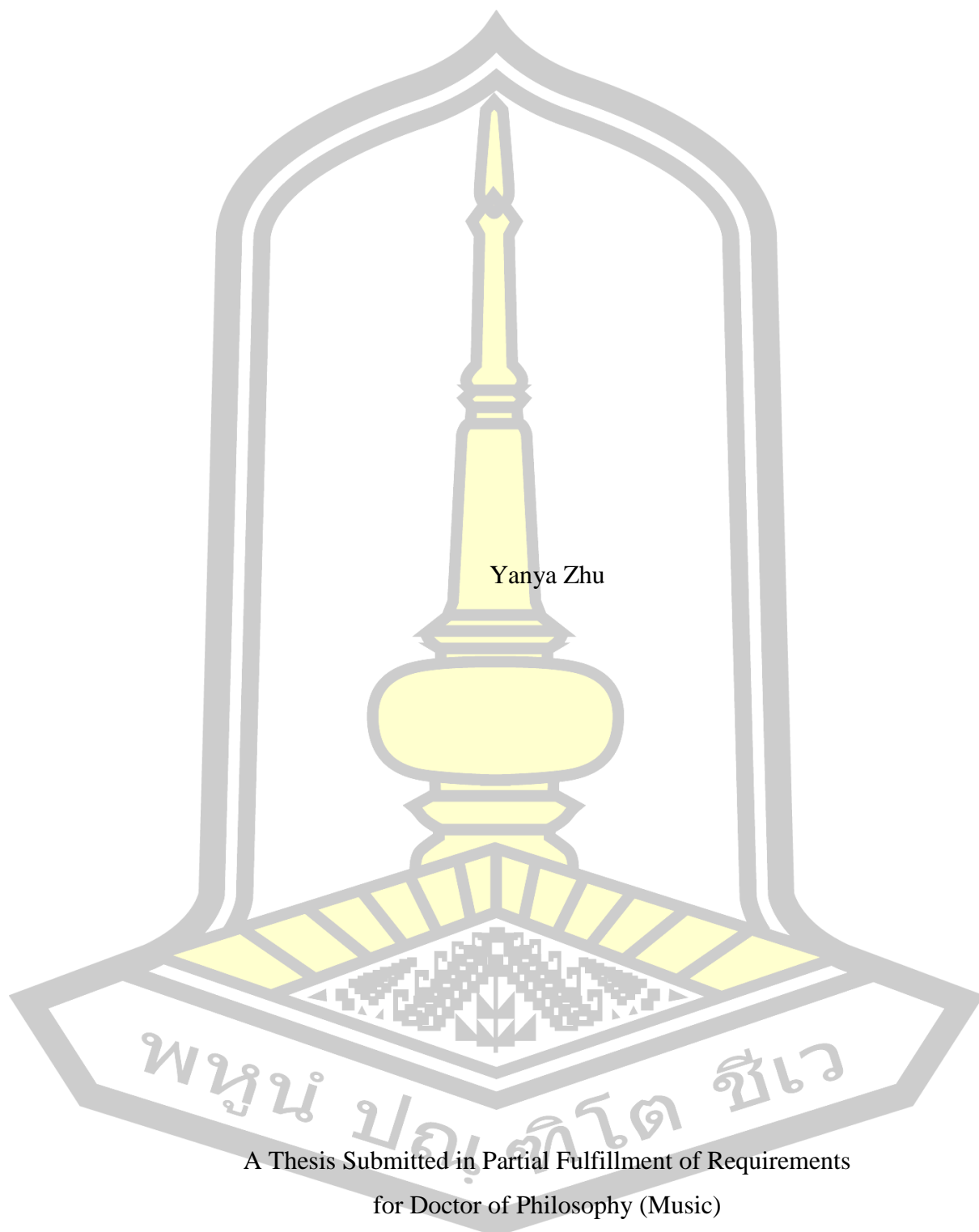
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The examining committee has unanimously approved this Thesis, submitted by Ms. Yanya Zhu , as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Music at Mahasarakham University

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ABSTRACT

Huayin Laoqiang is a traditional form of Chinese folk music and vocal performance that originated in the Huayin region of Shaanxi Province. The objectives of this research were to: 1) Investigate the current status of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese folk music in contemporary music. 2) Analyze the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese folk music with contemporary music. This research employed qualitative research methods, using interviews and observation forms as research tools. Data were collected on-site through interviews with three key informants, followed by classification and analysis of the gathered information. The findings reveal that:

1. Huayin Laoqiang's current status originates from Huayin City. It features a rugged vocal style and unique musical instruments like the yueqin and percussion. The Zhang family's inheritance has allowed the art form to evolve while preserving its abilities. Despite facing challenges in engaging younger generations, Huayin Laoqiang continues to perform at prestigious stages and is included in academic curricula. It is a testament to how historical cultural forms can adapt and thrive in contemporary settings.

2. The fusion of Huayin Laoqiang, a traditional folk opera from Shaanxi Province, with contemporary music styles like rock and electronica preserves Huayin Laoqiang's essence while revitalizing it for modern audiences. The analysis of five Huayin Laoqiang pieces highlights how traditional music can adapt to contemporary trends while retaining its core identity. The collaboration between traditional Huayin Laoqiang artists and modern musicians presents an exciting pathway for the future of folk music, enabling ancient art forms to resonate with younger generations.

Keyword : Huayin Laoqiang, Chinese folk music, contemporary music, fusion, cultural preservation, ethnomusicology

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Yanya Zhu

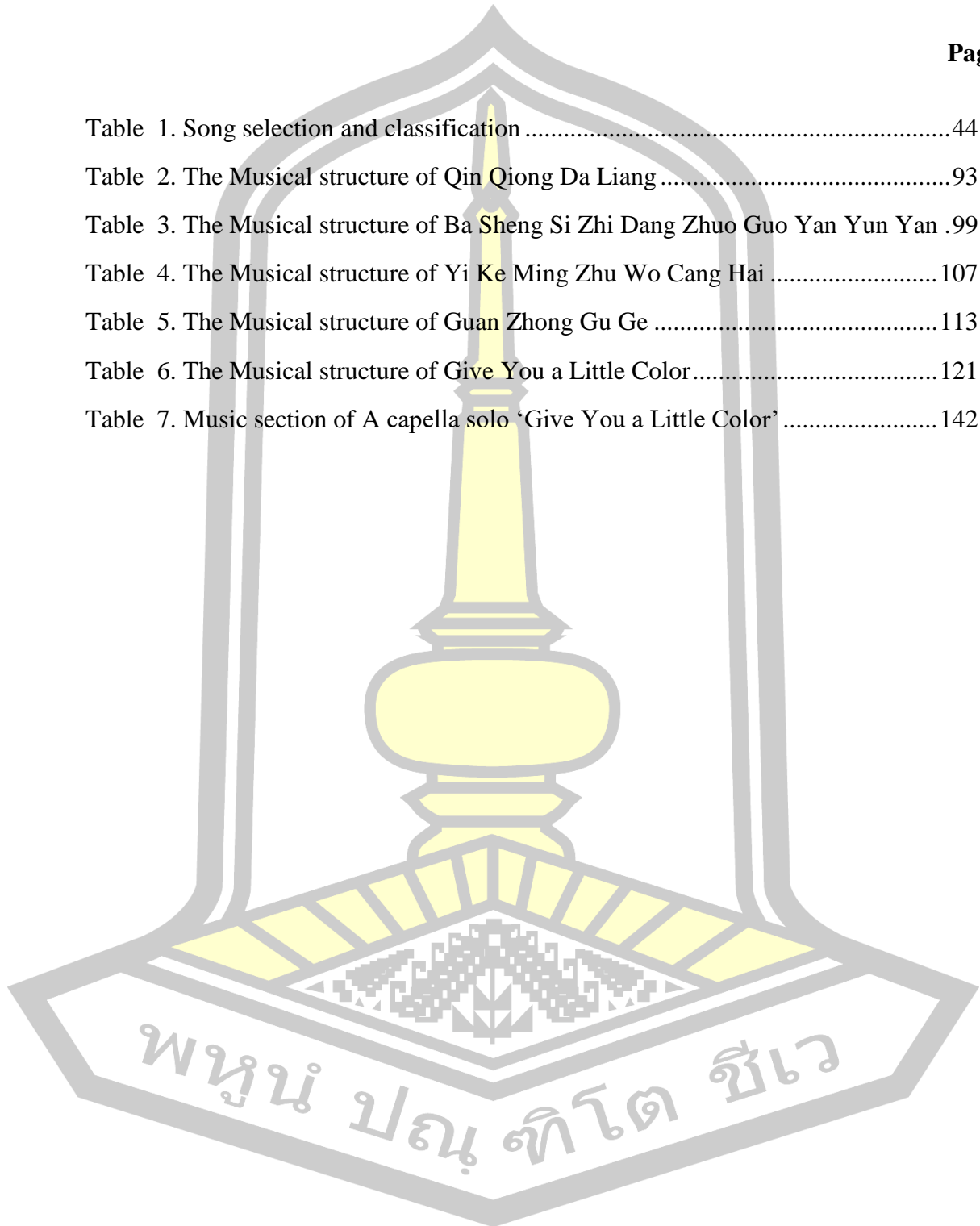
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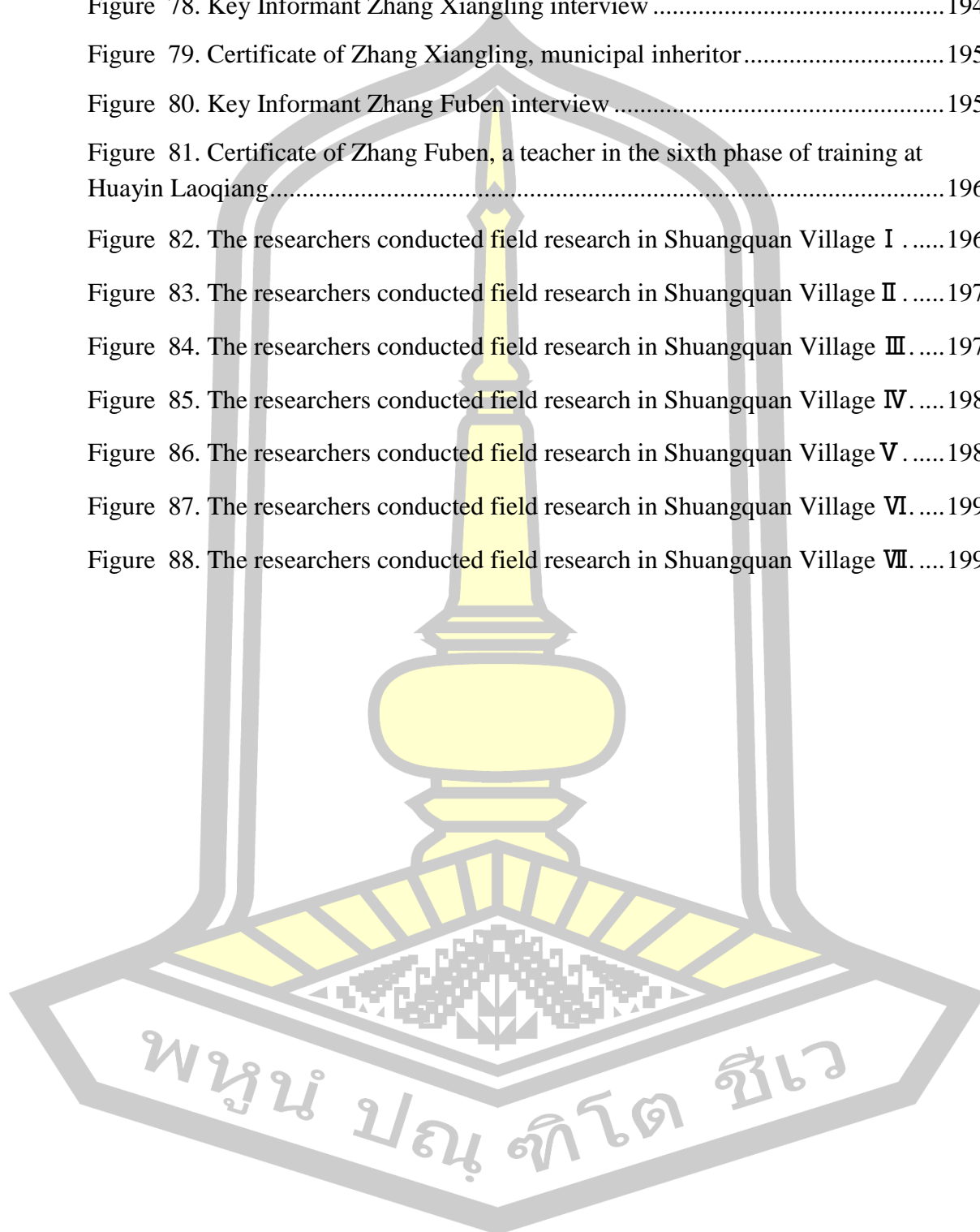
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

1. Research background

Within the broad spectrum of China's folk music traditions, Huayin Laoqiang stands out as a distinctive and historically rich art form. This genre not only serves as a mode of artistic expression but also functions as a cultural record, reflecting societal changes and historical developments (Liu Yujia, 2018). Originating from the Shaanxi region, Huayin Laoqiang was traditionally performed as an accompaniment to shadow puppetry in local communities. For centuries, it remained relatively unknown outside these local contexts. However, recent transformations in performance style have sparked broader recognition and interest in academic circles and urban centers such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong (Sun Jie, 2010). These shifts have brought Huayin Laoqiang from a localized tradition into a more national spotlight.

As a folk music genre with over 2,000 years of history, Huayin Laoqiang has shown resilience and adaptability in the face of modern pressures. However, its unique performance style and traditional vocal techniques have historically made it difficult to gain widespread acceptance. A breakthrough came with Tan Weiwei's modern adaptations, which introduced elements of contemporary pop music into Huayin Laoqiang, capturing the attention of a younger, more diverse audience (Ji Xuxuan, 2021). This blend of traditional folk music with modern elements highlights the opportunities and challenges Huayin Laoqiang faces as it transitions into a more globalized cultural landscape.

Huayin Laoqiang traces its origins to Shuangquan Village in Weiyu Township, part of the culturally rich Weinan region in Shaanxi. The music developed alongside the lives of villagers, particularly laborers and boatmen, who used the powerful, rhythmic chants of Laoqiang to alleviate the hardships of manual labor. These vocal expressions, characterized by robust, resonant tones and rhythmic accompaniment with clappers and benches, create a powerful sense of communal identity and resilience. In shadow puppetry performances, these melodies served as a narrative tool, enhancing the visual storytelling with their emotional depth and energy

(Zhang Zhongqing, 2019). Thus, Huayin Laoqiang was not just entertainment but an integral part of the region's cultural fabric.

Despite its deep-rooted history, Huayin Laoqiang experienced periods of decline, particularly as modernization reshaped Chinese society. The tradition's transmission was confined to male members of the Zhang family, limiting its reach and contributing to its obscurity. A resurgence in interest occurred following the popularization of theatrical and cinematic works like "White Deer Plain" and "To Live" by Zhang Yimou, which featured elements of Huayin Laoqiang (Wei Qing, 2017). Most notably, Tan Weiwei's hit song "Give You a Little Color," infused with Laoqiang's distinctive vocal style, reintroduced the genre to mainstream audiences and sparked renewed interest in its preservation and transformation.

Although significant research has been conducted on the historical development and musical characteristics of Huayin Laoqiang, its ongoing transformation and fusion with contemporary music remain underexplored. This study aims to address this gap by applying Alan Merriam's ethnomusicology framework to analyze the genre's evolution within modern Chinese society. By examining the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang with contemporary music, this research will provide new insights into the dynamics of cultural preservation, the impact of globalization on local traditions, and the future of Chinese folk music (Cheng Zhe et al., 2018). This investigation will contribute not only to the academic discourse on ethnomusicology but also to broader discussions about cultural heritage and artistic innovation in a rapidly changing world.

2. Research objectives

2.1 To investigate the current status of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese folk music in contemporary music.

2.2 To analyze the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese folk music with contemporary music.

3. Research Questions

3.1 What is the current status of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese folk music in the context of contemporary music?

3.2 How has the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang with contemporary music influenced its performance style and audience reception?

4. Research benefits

4.1 This research will contribute to the understanding of how traditional Chinese folk music like Huayin Laoqiang adapts and evolves within contemporary music settings, offering insights into cultural preservation.

4.2 It will provide valuable information for musicians and cultural scholars about the processes and challenges involved in fusing traditional and modern music genres, potentially influencing future artistic collaborations.

4.3 The study will inform policymakers and cultural heritage institutions on effective strategies for promoting and preserving traditional music in modern contexts, ensuring its continued relevance in a globalized world.

5. Research definitions

5.1 Huayin Laoqiang refers to a traditional form of Chinese folk music and vocal performance that originated in the Huayin region of Shaanxi Province. It is recognized as one of the oldest and most vigorous forms of Chinese opera, often called the "ancestor of Chinese opera." This art form combines powerful vocal expressions with rhythmic instrumental accompaniment, creating a unique and dramatic style.

5.2 The current status refers to the historical development, chronological evolution, and transformation of Huayin Laoqiang, a traditional Chinese folk music genre, within contemporary music. It involves referring to its historical origins, its progression through various periods, and the factors contributing to its integration into modern musical landscapes.

5.3 The fusion of Huayin Laoqiang refers to a traditional Chinese folk music genre with contemporary music, highlighting its integration into modern musical forms while retaining its cultural essence through a descriptive analysis of five representative Huayin Laoqiang pieces. These pieces are examined across five musical aspects: structure, rhythm, melody, lyrics, and singing characteristics.

5.4 Contemporary music usually refers to music written and performed in the current or recent decades, with definitions varying from context to context. In a broad sense, it encompasses a variety of styles and incorporates elements of pop, rock, jazz, electronic, and experimental music; in classical music, it refers to works written since the mid-20th century, and often includes elements of avant-garde techniques, atonality, and electronica; in popular music, it describes current popular trends, such as contemporary R&B or contemporary pop; and in ethnic and fusion music, it can refer to a traditional music modernisation, such as combining traditional Chinese music with modern elements.

5.5 The modal system of traditional Chinese music is primarily based on pentatonic and heptatonic scales, forming the foundation of various regional and stylistic traditions. The pentatonic system consists of five core tones—Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi, and Yu each evoking distinct emotional qualities, similar to Western modal concepts. The heptatonic system expands this framework with additional tones (Bian Gong and Bian Zhi), allowing for greater melodic flexibility. Different regional folk traditions, such as Jiangnan Silk and Bamboo, Shaanbei folk songs, Cantonese music, and Peking Opera, exhibit unique modal preferences. Additionally, Buddhist and Daoist ritual music employ specific modes to enhance their spiritual atmosphere. These modal systems continue to influence contemporary Chinese music, bridging tradition and modern innovation.

6. Conceptual Framework

This research explores the historical development of Huayin Laoqiang and analyzes its fusion with contemporary music to understand the transformative impact of this integration on traditional and modern musical landscapes. By applying theories from anthropology, ethnomusicology, Chinese Music Theory, western music theory and communication theory, it seeks to uncover the intricate processes that underpin the preservation, adaptation, and innovation of Huayin Laoqiang in contemporary music.

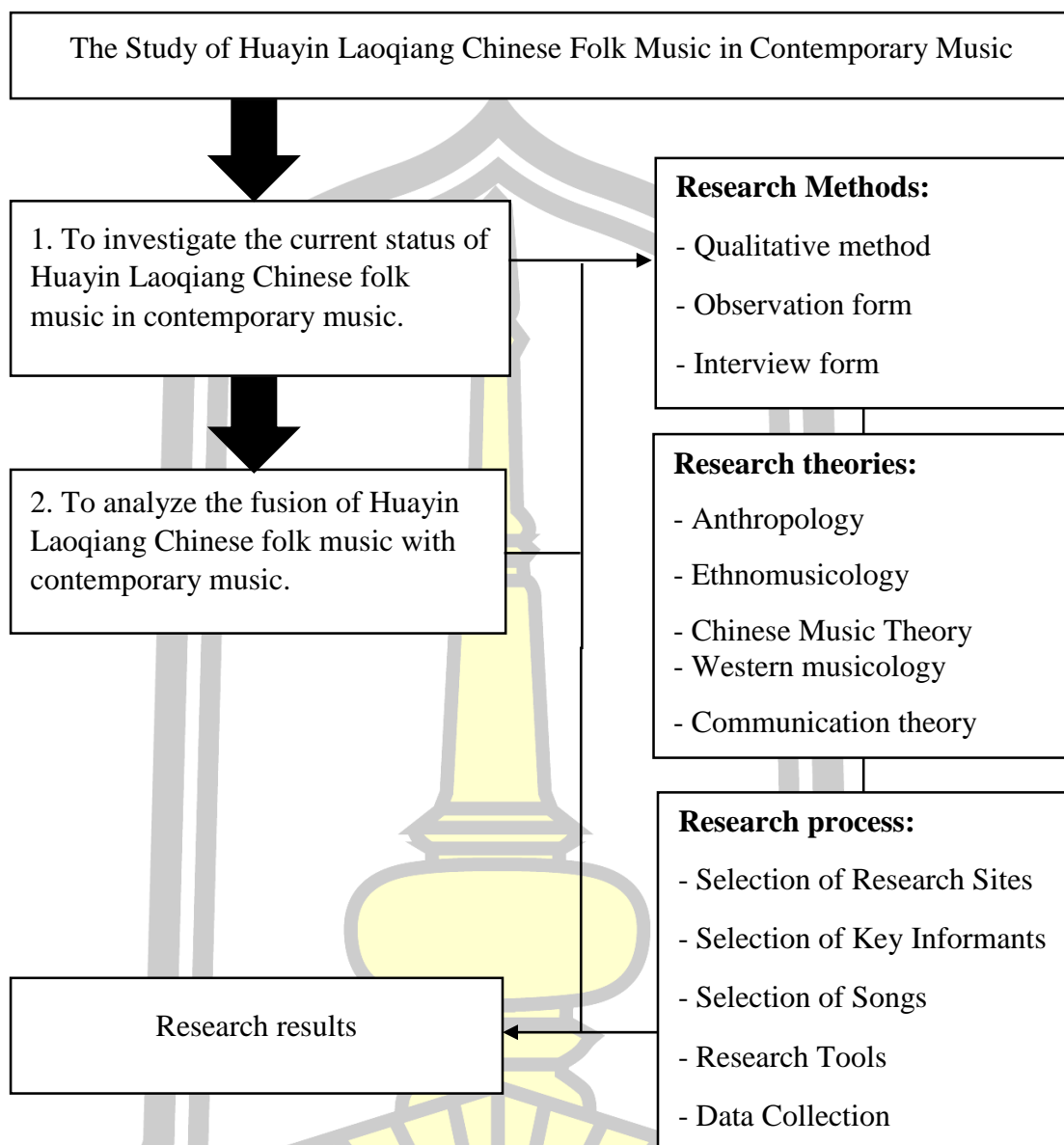


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

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CHAPTER II

Literature review

In this chapter, the researcher has reviewed all the existing literature on the Huayin Laoqiang folk music culture and obtained significant information. The researcher reviewed them according to the themes and objectives:

1. General knowledge of Shaanxi Province and Huayin City
2. General knowledge of Chinese folk music
3. General knowledge of Huayin Laoqiang in China
4. Historical Development of Huayin Laoqiang in China
5. Theories used
6. Related research

1. General Knowledge of Shaanxi Province and Huayin City

1.1 Location of Shaanxi Province, China

Shaanxi Province, abbreviated as "Shaan" or "Qin", is a provincial administrative region of the People's Republic of China, known as its capital city, Xi'an City. It is located in the center of inland China, in the middle reaches of the Yellow River, bordered by Shanxi and Henan Provinces to the east, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and Gansu Province to the west, Sichuan Province, Chongqing Municipality and Hubei Province to the south, and Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region to the north. Shaanxi's geographic coordinates lie between $105^{\circ}29'$ and $111^{\circ}15'$ east longitude and $31^{\circ}42'$ and $39^{\circ}35'$ north latitude, with a total area of 205,624.3 square kilometers. As of November 2022, Shaanxi Province has 10 prefecture-level cities (including the sub-provincial city of Xi'an), 31 municipal districts, 7 county-level cities, and 69 counties. As of the end of 2022, the province's resident population was approximately 39.56 million (Shaanxi Provincial Local Codification Committee, 1996).

As one of the important birthplaces of the Chinese nation and culture, Shaanxi Province is rich in history and culture and is known as the representative of the "Three

Qin Cultures." It has been the capital city of more than ten dynasties, including the Western Zhou, Qin, Han, Sui, and Tang, and has witnessed important chapters of Chinese history. Shaanxi is also the location of China's latitude and longitude reference point, the Earth's origin, and the Beijing time national timing center. Topographically, Shaanxi is characterized by a high north-south, low center pattern consisting of plateaus, mountains, plains, and basins, of which the Loess Plateau accounts for 40% of the province's land area. The province spans two major water systems, the Yellow River and the Yangtze River, and climatically spans three climatic zones, with a mesothermal monsoon climate along the Great Wall in northern Shaanxi, a warm-temperate monsoon climate in Guanzhong and most of north Shaanxi, and a north subtropical monsoon climate in southern Shaanxi. Major scenic spots and attractions in Shaanxi Province include the Mausoleum of the Yellow Emperor, the Terracotta Warriors and Horses, Mount Hua, the ruins of the Weiyang Palace, the ruins of the Daming Palace, the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, the Small Wild Goose Pagoda, the Xi'an City Wall, the Xi'an Bell and Drum Towers, the Tang Dynasty Never Sleeping City, the Tang Dynasty Hibiscus Garden, and many others, which serve as not only a tourist attraction, but also as a window to deeper insights into China's ancient civilization and history. Together, these cultural sites and natural landscapes in Shaanxi Province form a colorful and varied historical and cultural picture scroll, attracting tourists and scholars from all over the world (Shaanxi Provincial Local Codification Committee, 1996).

Shaanxi's cultural heritage is embodied not only in its many monuments but also in its rich intangible cultural heritage, such as opera, folk music, dance, and traditional handicrafts. Especially in the art of opera, such as Huayin Laoqiang, it has become an important part of Shaanxi's traditional culture with its unique performance style and deep historical background. In addition, shadow puppetry and Shaanxi opera are also important cultural heritages in Shaanxi, reflecting the way of life and spiritual pursuit of Shaanxi people.



Figure 2. Map of research sites in Shaanxi Province

Source: Chinafolio (n.d.), Travel China Guide (n.d.)

1.2 Social Overview of Shaanxi Province

Shaanxi Province is located in the northwest of China and is one of the provinces with a deep and important history and culture. This region faces unique challenges and opportunities in terms of economic development. As one of the birthplaces of ancient Chinese civilization, Shaanxi has always played an important role in history, but in the process of modernization, its economic development has been relatively slow, especially in terms of industrialization and urbanization. Shaanxi's economic structure has long been dominated by agriculture, and despite its rich historical heritage and cultural resources, the level of industrialization and the process of urbanization are relatively backward, which to a certain extent limits the overall development of its economy (Shaanxi Provincial Local Codification Committee, 1996). In recent years, Shaanxi Province's urban structure and development pattern have also reflected some imbalances. Within the province, the number of cities is relatively small, and they are generally small in size. Except for

Xi'an, the provincial capital, which is a large city, other cities are relatively small in terms of population size and economic strength, which has led to the phenomenon of uneven development among cities. In addition, the limitations of city size also affect Shaanxi Province's ability to attract investment and talent, weakening functional complementarities among cities and synergistic development of the regional economy.

Shaanxi Province has long been regarded as a cultural center in China, as well as an important base for energy and heavy industry. However, similar to Jiangxi Province, Shaanxi Province also faces a lack of policy support and is considered a "policy depression". At the same time, as a province with deep historical and cultural heritage, Shaanxi has taken a series of measures to protect the ecological environment and promote sustainable development, such as strengthening the protection of cultural heritage and promoting the concept of green development. While these measures have promoted economic and social development, they have also brought new challenges, such as how to balance the relationship between historical preservation and modern development and how to realize economic transformation and industrial upgrading while protecting the environment. Despite these challenges, Shaanxi Province still shows great potential for development, especially in areas such as cultural tourism, high technology, and energy development. With increased government and social attention and investment in these issues, Shaanxi Province is gradually overcoming these obstacles and achieving more balanced and sustainable development. (Cheng Zhe et al, 2018)

1.3 Cultural profile of Shaanxi Province

Shaanxi Province, as a major town of Chinese history and culture, has a profound cultural heritage and rich cultural resources. It is not only an important birthplace of the Chinese nation, but also the capital city of many dynasties, leaving behind numerous historical relics and cultural treasures, such as the world-renowned Terracotta Warriors and Horses, the spectacular Huashan Mountain, and the historic Xi'an City Wall. Shaanxi's cultural characteristics are also reflected in its unique intangible cultural heritage, such as Qinqiang, Shaanxi folk songs and Huayin Laoqiang with profound local characteristics, etc. These traditional art forms not only show the charm of local culture, but also become an important carrier for the

inheritance and promotion of traditional culture. With the development of the times, Shaanxi Province has actively developed modern cultural industries, such as in the fields of movies, music and modern art, while protecting and inheriting traditional culture, forming a cultural pattern in which tradition and modernity coexist and promote each other. In addition, Shaanxi has also made remarkable achievements in the fields of cultural education and scientific research, with numerous academic institutions and research institutes conducting in-depth studies and explorations in this field. Overall, Shaanxi's culture is characterized by a combination of historical depth and modern vitality, and is not only an important part of Chinese culture, but also occupies an important position in the national and global cultural map.

1.4 Natural resources of Shaanxi Province

1.4.1 Mineral resources

Shaanxi Province has a wide variety of mineral resources and abundant reserves, and is one of China's major provinces with mineral resources. The main mineral resources include:

Coal: Shaanxi Province has some of the best coal reserves in the country, mainly distributed in the Shenmu and Fugu areas of Yulin City. It is high-quality anthracite and is one of the country's important energy bases.

Oil and natural gas: The Yanchang oilfield in Yan'an City and the Jingbian area of Yulin City are the main oil and natural gas producing areas in Shaanxi Province. The Shaanxi oilfield is one of the oldest oilfields in China, and the natural gas reserves are also very considerable.

Metal minerals: Shaanxi Province also has abundant metal mineral resources, including copper, lead, zinc, magnesium, etc., which are mainly concentrated in the Qinling Mountains in the south.

1.4.2 Energy resources

Shaanxi Province is an important energy production base in China. In addition to coal, oil and natural gas, Shaanxi Province has also made progress in the development of new energy sources in recent years, such as the development and utilisation of solar and wind energy. In particular, Yulin and Yan'an have abundant solar energy resources, and wind energy resources also have certain development potential.

1.4.3 Biological resources

Shaanxi Province has a wide variety of biological resources, especially abundant plant and animal resources:

Plant resources: The Qinling Mountains are China's 'natural botanical garden' and are home to a variety of rare plants, including the Huashan pine and Taibai redwood. In addition, Shaanxi is also rich in traditional Chinese medicinal herbs, with Danshen, Huangqi and Dangshen playing an important role in the domestic and international markets.

Animal resources: The Qinling Mountains are also an important wildlife habitat in China, where rare animals such as the giant panda, golden monkey and takin live and breed. The biodiversity of the Qinling Mountains is of great significance to ecological conservation in Shaanxi and even the whole country.

1.4.4 Water resources

Shaanxi Province is relatively rich in water resources, but the distribution is uneven. The Wei River is Shaanxi's 'mother river', running through the Guanzhong Plain and nourishing agriculture and people's lives on both sides. Other important rivers include the Han River and Jing River. The Han River basin in southern Shaanxi is abundant in water resources, while the northern Loess Plateau is relatively arid and relatively short of water resources. In recent years, Shaanxi Province has gradually improved the use and distribution of water resources through water conservancy projects and water-saving bars.

1.4.5 Land resources

Shaanxi Province's land resources are diverse:

Arable land: The Guanzhong Plain is Shaanxi Province's main grain-producing area, with fertile soil suitable for growing grain crops such as wheat and corn. The Weihe River basin and its tributaries have a well-developed agricultural irrigation system, making Shaanxi an important grain-producing area in China.

Forested land: The Qinling Mountains and southern Shaanxi are rich in forest resources and have extensive forested areas. In recent years, Shaanxi Province

has increased its efforts in ecological protection, and has improved its forest coverage rate through policies such as returning farmland to forest.

Grassland: The Loess Plateau in northern Shaanxi and the Mu Us Sandy Land area are home to extensive natural grasslands. Although relatively arid, they are suitable for grazing and the development of animal husbandry.

1.4.6 Tourist resources

Shaanxi Province has unique natural landscape resources, especially the natural landforms of the Qinling Mountains, Daba Mountains and Loess Plateau, which form magnificent natural landscapes. Famous mountains and rivers such as Mount Hua and Mount Taibai, as well as tourist resources combining nature and culture such as Hukou Waterfall and the Mausoleum of the Yellow Emperor, attract a large number of tourists.

1.5 General knowledge of Huayin City

Huayin is located in the east of Guanzhong Plain, at the intersection of Shaanxi, Shanxi and Henan provinces, with the Qinling Mountains to the south and the Weishui River to the north, about 120 kilometers away from the ancient capital of Xi'an. Known as "the main road of the three Qin provinces and the eight provinces", Huayin is located in an important position along the New Eurasian Continental Bridge. With a total area of 817 square kilometers and a large population, the terrain gradually decreases from the south to the north, and the mountains and rivers are so beautiful that since ancient times, it has been known as "less mountainous and more beautiful than Guanzhong". Huayin has a history of more than 2,300 years, having been established as a county during the Spring and Autumn Period and as a prefecture during the Warring States Period, and was changed from a county to a city in December 1900 with the approval of the State Council (Huayin Local Records Compilation Committee, 1995).

In ancient times, Huayin was once the land of the state of Zheng, and was called Ningqin in the Qin Dynasty and Yongzhou in the Wei Dynasty. It is located in the shadow of Mount Hua, bordered by the world's military stronghold of Longing Pass to the east, Huaxian County to the west, and the Wei and Luo Rivers to the north, with the Yellow River converging there. From Huayin, you can take a boat to Shanxi in the east and Xi'an in the west, located in the center of China's great east-west

corridor, is an important hub of waterway traffic. The territory is characterized by long rivers, mostly flat terrain and fertile soil, and is rich in wheat, cotton, vegetables, fruits and bamboo utensils. Mount Hua, as a mountain symbolizing the Chinese nation, is the first of the Five Mountains, famous both at home and abroad, attracting pilgrimages and sacrifices from emperors, generals, merchants and scholars of all ages. Ancient emperors made extremely solemn pilgrimages to Mount Hua four times a year, each time with songs, dances and grand ceremonies. These rich rituals brought new forms, contents, varieties and repertoires to Huayin's artistic activities, and also provided a broad space and a strong economic base for the application and development of local artistic varieties. With its unique geographical location and rich cultural heritage, Huayin has nurtured hardworking and simple people, laying a solid foundation for the creation and development of the Laoqiang(Huayin Local Records Compilation Committee, 1995).

In summary, through research on the geographical location, climatic characteristics, natural resources, society, culture, economy, etc. of Shaanxi Province and Huaqing City, we have gained a more comprehensive understanding of Shaanxi Province and Huaqing City. It is also on this land that Chinese folk music has contributed an integral part of Chinese music culture with its unique performance styles and diverse music forms.

2. General knowledge of Chinese folk music

2.1 The origins of Chinese folk music

The origins of Chinese folk music can be traced back to the production and living practices of ancient Chinese society. It originated from the daily lives of ordinary people and is closely related to social activities such as labour, festivals, religious ceremonies, weddings and funerals. In the early days, Chinese folk music was mainly spread through oral transmission, and gradually evolved into a rich and diverse range of music forms in different geographical, ethnic and cultural contexts. The natural environment, customs and language differences in various regions have also contributed to the diversity of folk music, which has formed the characteristics of Chinese folk music's diversity and locality (Wu Guodong, 2023).

The authentic sound of ancient Chinese folk music is largely lost to history, as only the lyrics have been preserved in ancient literary texts. Musical scores are absent because much of this music was traditionally passed down orally. Even though notation systems like gongche pu existed, they were rarely used by the working class. It was not until the late 19th century that folklorists began to document some folk songs using gongche pu. Following the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, systematic efforts to collect, record, and publish folk songs became widespread. During this period, the Chinese working class gained newfound respect, which marked a turning point for Chinese folk music. This led to the creation of numerous musical works reflecting the lives and aspirations of the people in the new era.

2.2 Types of Chinese folk music

Chinese folk music is extremely diverse and can be broadly categorised into the following main types: folk songs, opera music, narrative songs and instrumental music. Folk songs include labour songs, mountain songs, ballads, etc., which are forms of music that the working people improvise and pass on from mouth to mouth in their production and lives, and have distinctive regional characteristics. Opera music is an important part of theatrical performances, such as shadow plays and local operas, which combine artistic elements such as singing, instrumental performance, dance and acting to convey stories and morals. Spoken-word music includes drum lyrics, storytelling, and allegro, which are mainly oral narratives performed in the form of verse or prose. Instrumental music mainly refers to the music forms of various folk instruments, such as suona, erhu, and pipa, which are played in solo or ensemble. These genres not only reflect the cultural characteristics of various regions and ethnic groups, but also showcase the richness and diversity of Chinese folk music (Huang Ruoran, 2020).

2.3 The role of Chinese folk music

Folk music are deeply intertwined with the everyday lives of people, permeating various stages of life and becoming an integral part of their cultural experience. Beyond providing entertainment, folk music serve important practical roles in social life, such as in education and cultural transmission. They also function

as tools for communication, passing down collective knowledge and values through generations. These multifaceted roles highlight the enduring significance of folk music in shaping both individual and communal identities (Yang & M. K, 2011).

In summary, By reviewing the origin, types and role of Chinese folk music, we have a clearer understanding of folk music. Chinese folk music refers to the forms of music created collectively and handed down by various ethnic groups in China through oral transmission in the course of their long-term production, life and cultural activities. It is rooted in the daily life of popular groups and covers a diversity of musical styles from different regions, ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds. Its main features include non-specialisation, oral transmission, regionality, improvisation and collectivity, and it is usually based on the themes of labour, life, festivals, religion and folklore activities. In addition, as intangible cultural heritage, folk music carries local culture and ethnic traditions, and has the value of cultural identity and inheritance. Huayin Laoqiang is one such folk opera music with local characteristics.

3. General knowledge of Huayin Laoqiang in China

3.1 The origins of Huayin Laoqiang

Huayin Laoqiang is a traditional folk opera music from the Huayin area of Shaanxi Province in China. It has a history of more than 2,000 years and is known for its unique performance form and strong musical style. Huayin Laoqiang is often used to express folk stories and historical legends from the Shaanxi region. It was originally combined with shadow puppetry and has gradually developed into an independent performing art form.

3.1.1 Definition of Laoqiang

Laoqiang belongs to the genre of Chinese folk music and opera, and is a type of shadow play. The opera singer is a shadow play in the background, and the opera singer running to the front to shout and sing is Laoqiang. There are two theories about the origin of the name Laoqiang: one is that compared with other popular local operas, it is older, especially the music, which seems archaic and tragic, calm and unrestrained, a remnant of ancient times, hence the name Laoqiang; the second is that it was transmitted from Spoken-word music from Laohekou in Hubei Province to Shaanxi Province and evolved there, so it was named Laoqiang after the first

character of Laohekou (Shi Na, 2014). Laoqiang is broadly defined as a traditional form of folk music, often combined with local operas and folk singing, emphasising the improvisation and local characteristics of the performance. Laoqiang can incorporate a variety of local folk art forms, and the specific performance style and content vary from region to region.

It can be seen that Huayin Laoqiang is a local variant of Laoqiang, specifically referring to the folk opera music of the Huayin region of Shaanxi Province.

3.1.2 Definition of shadow puppetry

Shadow Puppets, also known as "shadow play" or "lamp shadow play", is a form of folk theater that uses silhouettes of figures made of animal skins or cardboard to perform stories. During the performance, artists sit behind a white curtain and manipulate the shadow figures while narrating the story to popular local tunes, accompanied by percussion and stringed instruments, creating a rich local flavor. Shadow puppetry is widely popular in the vast territory of China, and different styles of shadow puppetry have been formed due to the different vocal cadences sung in different regions. Shadow puppetry is a folk art form with a long history in China, which is commonly called "donkey shadow" by the old Beijingers. According to historical records, shadow play originated in the Western Han Dynasty, flourished in the Tang Dynasty, flourished in the Qing Dynasty, and spread to West Asia and Europe during the Yuan Dynasty, with a long history. The shadow play of Gansu Longdong in northwestern China, especially in Pingliang and Qingyang counties, is mainly distributed, especially in the triangle near Shaanxi and Ningxia (Liang Zhigang, 2007).

The performance techniques and singing skills of shadow theater are the key to judging the level of a troupe. These skills are usually mastered through the master's heartfelt teaching as well as long-term hard learning and practicing. During the performance, the artists not only have to manipulate the shadow figures, but also have to take care of the instrumental accompaniment, the speech and the singing at the same time. Some masters can even manipulate seven or eight shadow figures at the same time. The martial arts scenes are intense and full of dynamics, while the music and singing of the literary scenes are beautiful, stirring or lingering, full of joy

and sorrow, and fascinating. Shadow theater can stage all kinds of ships, horses and palanquins, strange monsters and demons, and perform magical scenes such as flying to the sky and hiding in the ground, stealth and transformation, spitting smoke and fire, and splitting mountains and overturning the sea. With unique shadow techniques and sound and light effects, shadow play is unique in showing the fantasy scenes of large-scale mythological dramas, which is called the crown of all plays. The uniqueness of this art form lies in its skillful combination of narrative, music, performance and visual art, creating an art world that is both real and fantastical. Every movement of shadow play is full of expressive power, whether it is a delicate emotional communication or a grand battle scene, all of which can be vividly shown through the change of shadows.

Among the colorful dramatic arts in China, shadow play occupies an irreplaceable position with its unique charm and profound cultural connotation. It is not only a tool for entertaining the public, but also an important carrier for inheriting and displaying Chinese traditional culture. Through the shadow theater, the audience can have a glimpse of the life outlook, beliefs and values of the ancient Chinese society, and experience a kind of cultural exchange across time and space. Therefore, shadow play is not only a treasure of Chinese folk art, but also an important part of the world's cultural heritage, which is worthy of our in-depth study, inheritance and promotion.

3.2 The performance form of Huayin Laoqiang

The Huayin Laoqiang is an extremely ancient form of opera performance in Shaanxi Province, which has been passed down in the Huayin area for a long time, forming two different styles of opera: the Laoqiang and the Shiqiang. The method of performance is largely similar to that in other parts of the country, where a stage is first set up, lighting equipment is hung, and then the actors perform using bamboo sticks to manipulate character puppets made of leather. Huayin Laoqiang makes extensive use of pentatonic scales, creating melodies that are simple yet full of charm and easy to sing. The use of this mode of tonality gives the music a strong folk color and regional characteristics. This form of opera, which has been passed down for thousands of years, has been listed as one of the first national intangible cultural heritage protection programs in China (Sun Jie, 2017).

Huayin Laoqiang is performed in the unique form of shadow puppetry. In the opera, usually only one person acts as the lead singer and is responsible for playing various roles such as sheng, mei, jing, dan, and chou. Other performers can also be added to take charge of the harmonies (Zhang Dan, 2008). The lead singer sings while holding a yueqin, while the other members are responsible for operating the shadow puppets and performing on stage. In addition to the yueqin, the accompanying instruments for Huayin Laoqiang can also include banhu, bangzi, gongs, and drums, depending on the needs of the drama. Although the lead singer needs to play several roles and play instruments at the same time, the performers can skillfully switch between roles, singing, and playing, which also fully demonstrates their understanding of the instruments. The melodies played by these ancient and primitive instruments are powerful and far-reaching, providing a strong background for the singing of the Laoqiang. The Huayin Laoqiang has a unique artistic charm, which demonstrates the momentum of "one person singing all over the stage", and with the power of the instrumental performance, it profoundly interprets stories of conquest, sacrifice and defeat. Under the performance of Laoqiang, the audience seems to be able to hear the slightly hoarse, heavy and deep voice, which is not only the conveyance of sound, but also the transmission of emotion and history. In the songs of the Laoqiang, the audience can feel the bravado of the victorious heroes, the resilience and generosity of the defeated heroes, as well as the unique coldness and bleakness of the Shaanxi people. Listening to Laoqiang is like an archaeology of an ancient battlefield, hearing the clash of ancient weapons and the neighing of war horses. It opens one's heart as if it can hold the whole mountains and rivers, inspiring a spirit of bravado and fearlessness. This is the unique charm of Huayin Laoqiang, which is not only a performing art, but also a kind of cultural heritage and emotional expression.

In summary, Huayin Laoqiang can be traced back to the Ming and Qing dynasties and was formed in the Huayin area of Shaanxi Province. It is a form of folk music with local characteristics that is often regarded as an important part of local opera. As a form of local opera, it is closely related to local folk customs, beliefs and lifestyles, and reflects the unique emotions and stories of the region through high-pitched and passionate melodies and vivid lyrics. Huayin Laoqiang mostly uses a pentatonic scale and combines folk legends, which have gradually developed through

oral transmission. In terms of performance, Huayin Laoqiang is usually accompanied by the yueqin, a traditional musical instrument, and often incorporates elements of improvised singing, making each performance unique and fully expressing the individuality of the singer and the freedom of musical expression.

4. Historical Development of Huayin Laoqiang in China

4.1 The Huayin Laoqiang performance format of the yesteryear

In the past, Huayin Laoqiang was typically presented in the form of shadow puppetry. The instruments commonly used during performances included the moon guitar, war drum, hand drum, cloud gong, banhu, bangzi, bell, small gong, and large gong. To explore Huayin Laoqiang before its transformation in performance style, it is essential to examine aspects such as the division of labor, classification of roles, and performance conditions.

Division of Labour: Huayin Laoqiang shadow puppet performances were notably efficient, requiring just five performers; hence, they were often called "five busy men." Each performer needed to master multiple skills, including playing, pulling, plucking, and singing. The roles were divided as follows: front hand, qi hand, rear slot, banhu player, and sitting role.

Front Hand: This role usually sat on the left side of the stage and controlled the entire play, managing the singing, speaking, and roles of sheng, chou, jing, and dan. They also handled various percussion instruments like the drum board, war drum, cloud gong, tang drum, side drum, and hand gong, acting as the conductor. During the spoken parts, the front hand would put down the moon guitar and pick up a small gong sword with one hand and a drumstick with the other, simultaneously playing and directing the metal instruments. This role was the busiest and most crucial, typically held by a highly-skilled, versatile performer.

Qian Hand: Also known as the "stick hand" or "door guard," this role sat at the center of the illuminated screen, responsible for manipulating the intricate movements of characters, horses, and scenery with bamboo sticks. Occasionally, they also assisted with spoken parts. This role was vital in shadow puppetry and second only to the lead singer.

Rear Slot: Also called the backstage hand, this role sat behind the qian hand, using one hand to play the Bangzi and the other to strike a bowl (bell). They also managed the hook gong, large gong, horse gong, and half of the rattle, supporting the lead singer. During performances, the rear slot played the hook, rattle, and horse gong, cheering during fight scenes and leading in chorus singing.

Banhu Player: Also known as the "huqin hand," this role, sitting to the left of the rear slot, was primarily responsible for playing the interludes of the singing parts. In addition to playing the huqin, two-stringed fiddle, and banhu, they also handled the scissors, horse trumpet, bugle, and half of the rattle. During performances, they cheered, whistled, and supported singing.

Sitting Role: Also called the "assisting hand" or "assistant qian hand," this role typically sat on the left side of the stage, mainly responsible for setting up the shadow puppet characters and assisting the qian hand with manipulation. They also played the wooden clapper and trumpet; they played the erhu when idle.

In Huayin Laoqiang shadow puppetry, each performer needed to master multiple skills, unlike shadow puppetry in other regions, where the lead singer and qian hand were usually in separate roles. In Huayin Laoqiang, the lead singer and qian hand were often performed by the same person, a unique aspect of Huayin Laoqiang. The ancient saying, "One mouth recounts a thousand years of history, two hands dance with a million soldiers," vividly describes the unique charm of shadow puppetry. This performing art, mastered solely in Huayin Laoqiang shadow puppetry, truly lives up to its reputation.



Figure 3. Huayin Laoqiang's previous performance style

Source: Baidu data, retrieved from the website (2024)

4.1.1 Classification of Roles:

Huayin Laoqiang's roles are divided into sheng (male), dan (female), jing (painted face), and chou (clown). However, in traditional Huayin Laoqiang shadow puppet performances, these roles were all performed by a single individual. When the performer sang the Laosheng (old man) role, the voice could be rougher; for the dan role, the voice needed to be high-pitched and soft; for the jing role, the voice was broad and robust; and for the chou role, the voice combined wide and narrow tones, often incorporating local dialects to create a humorous effect. The performer changed roles according to the requirements of each classification. Therefore, the main singer in traditional Huayin Laoqiang shadow puppetry had to possess comprehensive skills.

4.1.2 Performance Conditions:

In the past, Huayin Laoqiang was typically performed at weddings, birthday banquets, or funerals, with the repertoire changing according to the occasion. At funerals, plays such as "Liu Bei's Great Revenge," which emphasizes filial piety, were performed, while at celebratory events like weddings, plays such as "Luo Tong Sweeps the North" were featured, including love duets suitable for weddings. On birthday occasions, "The Eight Immortals Celebrate Longevity" was performed, and "Investiture of the Gods" was commonly staged during temple fairs. During these red (celebratory) and white (funereal) events, Huayin Laoqiang performers worked very hard.

Huayin Laoqiang artist Zhang Ximin said a simple stage had to be set up before a performance. The initial conditions were very harsh, requiring only eighteen rafters, four long ropes, a few large tables, and a curtain to start the performance. During the performance, the stage would often shake. Typically, a funeral performance would begin with a "soul-calling play," which acted as a prelude to the primary performance and varied according to the play, often performed impromptu. This was followed by the "main play," which usually lasted three to four hours. Depending on the audience's reaction, additional plays might be performed, often selected excerpts like "Three Kingdoms," "Borrowing Zhao Yun," "The Three Heroes Slay Lü Bu," and Tang Dynasty stories such as "Luo Tong Sweeps the North" and "Luo Cheng Conquers the South."

Performances were continuous, without breaks, often ending late at night. Traditional Huayin Laoqiang shadow puppetry survived as local folk art in this state. However, because the performers were reluctant to "keep up with the times," they adhered strictly to traditional shadow puppet performance methods. At one performance, the artists realized that despite their enthusiastic efforts on stage, there were only two spectators in the audience, one of whom was a supervisor. This reality was a significant blow to the Huayin Laoqiang artists, prompting them to recognize that without reforming the traditional performance methods, this art form could face the risk of extinction.



Figure 4. Huayin Laoqiang performed behind the shadow puppets.

Source: Baidu data, retrieved from the website (2024)

To ensure the preservation of the ancient art form of Huayin Laoqiang shadow puppetry, significant reforms were eventually introduced in its traditional performance methods, transitioning the performers from "behind the scenes" to "in front of the stage." This transformation from shadow puppetry to live performances by the artists did not happen overnight but went through several critical stages.

In the early years of the People's Republic of China, Huayin Laoqiang continued to perform as shadow puppetry. At the end of 1949, Zhang Quansheng and Zhang Ximin's father led the establishment of the Huayin County Laoqiang Shadow Puppet Reform Society. This expanded the troupe, incorporating traditional and

modern singing styles, and performed using shadow and wooden puppetry. This broke the bounds of family-based performances in terms of organizational structure, personnel composition, and the types of plays performed.

In 1958, Si Shitou and Lü Zisheng of the Huayin Mengyuan Brigade's art troupe created the modern Laoqiang play "Deep Ploughing," performed on stage for the first time by the troupe. It participated in the Weinan Regional Folk Art Festival and won the "Performance Award." In 1959, the Huayin County professional theatre troupe invited Laoqiang artists like Zhang Quansheng and Ren Langyu to adapt the traditional Laoqiang play "Borrowing Zhao Yun." They reformed the music and singing styles, integrated civil and martial scenes, and incorporated Qin Opera vocal techniques while maintaining the original style. They focused on modifying the original slow and flowing tunes, combining the brass instrument techniques of Qin Opera and Meihu, and adding instruments like the erhu, flute, and cello. This enriched the musical palette, making the singing more vibrant, complete, and melodious. They also differentiated roles into laosheng (old man), hongsheng (red-faced man), and jing (painted face) and conducted stage rehearsals, achieving success. In 1960, this play participated in the Shaanxi Province's New Stage Drama Festival and won the "Drama Award." Subsequently, they also staged the traditional Laoqiang play "The Battle of Panhe," which retained some shadow puppet movements and absorbed performance elements from other genres, enhancing its artistic quality.

4.2 The Development of Chinese Folk Music Huayin Laoqiang

The formation and development of Huayin Laoqiang is closely linked to the deep humanistic heritage of the Huayin region. Like Chinese opera, the formation of Laoqiang went through a long process. It is said that the area around Shuangquan Village was once the site of the Western Han Dynasty's capital grain silo, where grain from all over the world was concentrated and transported to Chang'an via the Weihe River by boats against the current, which led to the prosperity of the labor horns. These boatmen's horns and porter's horns were later integrated into the Huayin Laoqiang, forming the unique "Lapo tune". The so-called "Lapo" is actually a form of "one leader and many people", that is, at the climax of the drama, the leader of the singers shouts loudly, and then all the actors follow the chorus, creating an exciting and majestic atmosphere, which not only strengthens the drama, but also pushes the

mood of the performance to a continuous climax. Lapo shows the intensity of the soldier's fight and the boatman's call to pull the fiber. From this, it can be seen that Huayin Laoqiang's unique performing art form and singing music were formed by absorbing various artistic elements (Wu Wei, 2018).

From the end of the Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China, Huayin Laoqiang entered a period of prosperity and became one of the favorite art forms of the familiar people in the Sanqin land. After the founding of New China in 1949, for various reasons, the Laoqiang art group was disbanded, the theater boxes were seized, the performances were interrupted, and the art of Huayin Laoqiang gradually declined. Since the reform and opening up in the 1980s, the cultural department of Huayin City has carried out a series of collecting and organizing work on Huayin Laoqiang and made detailed records of its history and music. However, influenced by the social environment and online media, the inheritance of Huayin Laoqiang art has faced a fault line and has not yet been fully revived (Zhang Zhongqing, 2019).

4.3 The Huayin Laoqiang Performance Format of the New Era

Huayin Laoqiang has continued to develop and adapt to the times. From the original 'Five Busy People' to the later one-person singing and acting performances. As live performers replaced the shadows in the shadow play, the division of roles was no longer limited to the traditional front hand, money hand, back groove, and banhu players. Now, all stage actors can sing according to the needs of the plot, and the distribution of singing parts has also increased, but the form of accompaniment with one person leading the singing and the others joining in has been retained. The focus is on the yueqin, but unconventional instruments such as the hand gong, Suona, and even wooden stools and broken pots can be brought into the performance as needed.

Huayin Laoqiang, in the new era, usually has two performance forms: stage performance and shadow play. On stage, a group of elderly men from Shaanxi wield heavy, worn-out wooden stools and leap onto the stage. They sing, play, and perform with consummate skill, and their rough, powerful voices and bold performances deeply impress the audience. Their voices' raw energy and passion seem to release all pent-up emotions. The performers play the yueqin, beat the bench, ring the gongs, and manipulate the shadow puppets, breathing rustic spirit into the singing. They use

homemade benches, strings, and lyrics passed down for hundreds of years and perform while sitting on the bench or the ground. Any set roles or performance states do not bind this unique and charming Laoqiang art and are purely focused on authenticity. Laoqiang artists have brought this ancient art form to a broader audience with passion and sincerity. They have preserved an art form and passed on a spirit. This spirit has been rejuvenated in the new era and is attracting more and more audiences. Laoqiang has demonstrated its unique charm on large domestic stages and international artistic exchanges.

Despite these reforms, the influence of Laoqiang remained limited. The first significant breakthrough came in 1993 with Zhang Yimou's film "To Live," where the director featured the singing of renowned Laoqiang artist Wang Zhenzhong as the vocal dub for Ge You. Although the performance still used shadow puppetry, it captivated the audience. In 1995, the film "Peach Blossom Red" also included Laoqiang's dubbing, attracting more people to the art form and increasing its recognition.



Figure 5. Huayin Laoqiang performer Wang Zhenzhong in a still from the movie 'To Live.'

Source: Baidu data, retrieved from the website (2024)

To protect and pass down this art form, Dang Anhua, the director of Huayin Cultural Centre, deeply contemplated the performance methods of Laoqiang. He believed that an original, authentic theatrical art like Huayin Laoqiang should not be left to decline but should be actively preserved and transmitted. He suggested removing the shadow puppets and having live performers on stage. In the initial attempt, he arranged for six people, with those performing the action scenes on stage and the main singer in the background. However, this approach did not succeed during a performance at the provincial cultural hall. Many veteran artists could not accept this transformation, feeling it completely overturned the inherent artistic form of Huayin Laoqiang. Nonetheless, some were willing to appreciate and experiment with this new performance method.

In 2003, under Dang Anhua's planning, Laoqiang artists staged a performance called "Ancient Charm and Rural Interest." This performance separated the shadow puppetry from the music, introducing female characters holding spindles, depicting daily life, and incorporating elements such as striking wood with smoking pipes, reflecting everyday life. It also included a segment of shadow puppetry without the curtain, revealing the behind-the-scenes magic of shadow puppetry to the audience and offering a fresh and enlightening experience.

The true flourishing of Huayin Laoqiang occurred during the second major reform from 2004 to 2005. This transformation shifted Huayin Laoqiang to a live performance format with all artists performing on stage. After winning awards at a performance in Weinan, the troupe gained more performance opportunities, significantly increasing the art form's recognition. From then on, Huayin Laoqiang featured shadow puppetry and live performances, expanding its influence throughout Shaanxi Province.

Additionally, the success of the stage adaptation of Chen Zhongshi's novel "Bai Lu Yuan" played a crucial role in transforming the performance style of Huayin Laoqiang. The play highlighted the rural characteristics of Shaanxi, preserving its authentic performance style and completely replacing the traditional Beijing Opera style with the Shaanxi dialect. The performance incorporated Qin Opera and Huayin Laoqiang segments, performed by folk artists to enhance the characters' emotions and psychological states. The Laoqiang segments were performed live on stage by artists

dressed in black and blue homespun clothes, each playing an instrument while singing in a robust voice, creating a powerful and captivating performance that resonated throughout the theatre. This raw, authentic performance was brought to the stage of urban grand theatres, receiving an enthusiastic response from the audience. The new format showcased the charm of Laoqiang, marking a new chapter in its history. Despite the simplicity of the performances, consisting of just one singer, a few string instruments, and some percussion, the impact was profound, leaving a lasting impression on the audience.

The reason for bringing Laoqiang to the stage was its inherent vitality. The farmers who performed showed no trace of acting but embodied the raw energy of their everyday lives. Through the success of "Bai Lu Yuan," the reform of Laoqiang was widely acknowledged, gaining nationwide fame. From May to July 2006, "Bai Lu Yuan" was performed 29 times in Beijing, each show sold out. In mid-July of the same year, the play had several performances in Xi'an, drawing full houses.



Figure 6. Huayin Laoqiang performers in the movie Bai Lu Yuan

Source: Baidu data, retrieved from the website (2024)

In 2007, Huayin Laoqiang was listed as one of the first national intangible cultural heritage items. In 2008, the Huayin Laoqiang Art Troupe performed in Hong Kong to great acclaim. This once lesser-known art form has been breaking out of its seclusion and is now making a significant impact, entering the public consciousness with an unstoppable momentum. However, due to the monolithic nature of the

Laoqiang heritage and its long history, as well as the fact that research on Huayin Laoqiang has been conducted mainly through fieldwork and overview descriptions, many of the plays have left traces of their history with the passage of time (Wei Qing, 2017).

4.4 Huayin Laoqian in the contemporary era

Huayin Laoqiang has undergone significant transformation and adaptation over the years, now typically presented in two different formats: live stage performances and shadow puppet shows. Media outlets have rebranded Huayin Laoqiang with phrases like "new wine in old bottles" and "rock music on the yellow earth," reflecting its evolving identity. In the 2007 Spring Festival, the Shaanxi Huayin Laoqiang Art Troupe brought this thousand-year-old art form to the stage of China Central Television (CCTV), showcasing the passion, richness, and grandeur of the yellow earth to a national audience. Amidst the diverse performances of many renowned operatic artists, Huayin Laoqiang stood out with its simple, majestic, and powerful style, captivating both the live audience and viewers at home. That same year, they also participated in CCTV's Spring Festival Opera Gala and the Chinese Federation of Literary and Art Circles' "Spring of Hundred Flowers" Gala, earning enthusiastic applause and cheers, becoming a highlight of the CCTV celebrations.

On March 1, 2007, Huayin Laoqiang graced the National Centre for the Performing Arts stage, attracting attention from American and Italian spectators. Recommended by the Chinese Academy of Arts, these foreign guests traveled to Shaanxi to witness Huayin Laoqiang firsthand. Subsequently, the troupe was invited to perform in the United States and Italy, where their performances received praise from international artists. This loosely organized group of farmer performers was temporarily named the Huayin Laoqiang Art Troupe. Dang Anhua, a cultural center cadre overseeing public cultural activities and the troupe's director, led them through 106 performances, including 69 commercial shows.

In 2008, Daniel Casares, a master of flamenco guitar from Spain, and the Huayin Laoqiang Art Troupe from Shaanxi, China, performed multiple times during the "Songs of the Expo: Shanghai World Music Week." These two vastly different musical groups took turns on stage at the Shanghai Concert Hall—one showcasing the elegance and exuberance typical of Spaniards and the other displaying northern

Shaanxi farmers' raw, unpolished energy. Both styles won the audience's fervent applause. Many older audience members hummed, clapped, and cheered passionately, even moving to the rhythm in their seats, climaxing the atmosphere. Everyone was immersed in the joy that the music brought.

This modern presentation of Huayin Laoqiang has revitalized it in contemporary society, gaining more fans and recognition. In the future, Laoqiang will continue to showcase its unique charm on more stages, conveying the profound emotions and spirit of the yellow earth. Through continuous innovation and adaptation to modern societal changes, Huayin Laoqiang will continue to play an essential role in cultural heritage and development, allowing more people to experience the unique allure of this ancient art form.

On April 13, 2009, the Xi'an Conservatory of Music concert hall was filled to capacity for an exceptional performance by the Huayin Laoqiang Art Troupe, celebrating the conservatory's 60th anniversary with an authentic Huayin Laoqiang concert. Under the influence of this raw and genuine art form, the conservatory's typically "academic" style was infused with a sense of authenticity and naturalness.

In 2016, the CCTV Spring Festival Gala featured a collaboration between the veteran Huayin Laoqiang artist Zhang Ximin and a popular singer, who reinterpreted Huayin Laoqiang with contemporary pop music. It was extremely well received by the audience.



Figure 7. Huayin Laoqiang's performance at the 2016 Chinese New Year Gala

Source: Baidu data, retrieved from the website (2024)

In summary, as society continues to evolve, Huayin Laoqiang's timeless appeal will likely endure, offering a valuable counterbalance to the ever-increasing complexities of modern life. Its ability to evoke powerful emotions through simple, honest performances ensures that it will continue to captivate and inspire, providing a crucial link between past and present, tradition and innovation.

5. Theories used

5.1 Anthropology

Anthropology is the scientific study of human beings and their diverse cultures. Human societies develop distinct social, political, economic, and religious systems in different environments, and anthropologists examine both the similarities and differences among these cultural systems through comparative analysis. This approach helps to uncover deeper insights into the nature of human existence. Anthropology is traditionally divided into four main subfields: cultural anthropology, physical (or biological) anthropology, archaeology, and linguistic anthropology. Key research methodologies in the field include a holistic perspective, cultural relativism, and cross-cultural comparison (Merriam, 1965).

From the perspective of music anthropology, Huayin Laoqiang is a culture. Music anthropology is the study of music from a human perspective, attempting to discover the humanistic factors hidden behind the music. Therefore, from the perspective of music anthropology, Huayin Laoqiang folk music not only includes the unique melodic characteristics, rhythmic beats, and tonal characteristics of the Huayin region of Shaanxi, but also the entire culture's production, lifestyle, and social values. Therefore, through the field research methods of music anthropology, we explore the humanistic characteristics and cultural factors behind Huayin Laoqiang, and examine the creative background and cultural environment of Huayin Laoqiang at the time. Through the study of music anthropology, we can not only examine Huayin Laoqiang, but also gain a deeper understanding of it.

5.2 Ethnomusicology

Ethnomusicology is the study of music within the cultural and social contexts of the people who create and experience it, focusing on how it shapes and influences listener behavior. This field employs a range of theoretical and methodological

approaches that emphasize not only the sound itself but also the cultural, social, material, cognitive, and biological dimensions of musical behavior. A core aspect of ethnomusicology is musical ethnography, which involves the firsthand, immersive study of music-making, or "musicking," as a participatory act. The origins of ethnomusicology can be traced to 19th-century folklorists in Europe and the U.S. who began collecting and analyzing traditional music. The term "ethnomusicology" was introduced by Jaap Kunst, derived from Greek roots, and the discipline is frequently described as the anthropology or ethnography of music, or musical anthropology (Seeger Anthony, 1983).

The study of folk music is an important part of music theory, and its unique function can be highlighted by combining it with other disciplines such as music performance. It is essential to incorporate music research techniques into music-related theories. In theoretical research, the focus of music research has shifted from the confines of music alone to the study of folk artists, individuals in folk society, the human environment, social psychology, etc., and the research perspective and concepts have also changed. Based on this argument, we conducted a field survey of Huayin Laoqiang, including investigations into history, geographical location, religious beliefs, ethnic languages, etc. The aim of this research is to describe the current situation and laws of music development in the Huayin area of Shaanxi Province, so as to complete the understanding of the development of human music culture. This paper adopts the research methods of musicology. The researcher collected some relevant local videos and audios of Huayin Laoqiang, and conducted scientific and standardized notations through musical notation. In-depth research was also conducted on the musical characteristics of Huayin Laoqiang (music structure, melody characteristics, rhythm and beat, lyrics characteristics, and singing characteristics).

5.3 Chinese music theory

Elements of Traditional Chinese Melody describes the scales, modes, rhythms, beats and tempos in traditional Chinese melodies, as well as overall melodic expression techniques and methods of melodic organisation and development with Chinese characteristics (Zhao Dongmei,2012). The paper will explore how scales and modes in traditional Chinese music can be used to analyse music. Together, these

theoretical frameworks deepen our understanding and appreciation of the significance of music in human culture. From the academic depth of musicology to the cultural exploration of ethnomusicology to the technical means of understanding important components of traditional Chinese music, the synthesis of these theories not only enriches our understanding of the role of music in shaping the musical aesthetics of humankind, the artistic expression of national cultures, and the contexts of cultural identities and societies, but also provides profound Huayin Laoqiang the multifaceted nature of Chinese folk music. insights. This comprehensive approach reveals the role of music as an important channel of cultural exchange throughout history and among civilisations, as well as its unique role in the expression of human emotions and ideas.

5.4 Western musicology

Music analysis is an essential tool for deconstructing the complex layers of musical compositions. By examining components such as form, melody, and harmony, it reveals the emotional and thematic nuances that define a piece of music. This method is particularly significant in Chinese music, where traditional elements like melodic structure and tonality are central. Beyond its technical focus, music analysis also explores the spiritual and historical dimensions that lend deeper meaning to musical works. When integrated with historical and social contexts, it enhances our understanding of music, not only as an artistic form but also as a cultural artifact (Zhao Yawei, 2019; Zhao Zhongming, 2009).

The research methods of Western musicology used in this research help to reveal the breakthroughs and innovations of musical elements in the fusion process. From the perspective of Western musicology, the singing or playing techniques of Huayin Laoqiang and contemporary music are analysed, and the structural characteristics of Huayin Laoqiang and modern music in terms of tonality and rhythm are discussed.

5.5 Communication theory

Communication studies is an interdisciplinary field that examines various communication activities by integrating diverse perspectives and methodologies. It explores the principles governing the occurrence and development of human communication behaviors and transmission processes, as well as the relationship between communication, individuals, and society. As a science, it focuses on social

information systems and their operational dynamics. Characterized by its intersectionality, marginality, and comprehensiveness, communication studies emerged as an independent discipline towards the end of the 19th century. It was formally established in the United States during the 1930s and 1940s as a result of interdisciplinary research. The field developed essential attributes for disciplinary independence, including self-awareness, generality, systematicity, and scientific rigor. Globally, communication studies is typically divided into two major schools: the traditional school, centered in the United States, and the critical school, centered in Western Europe (Dong, 2016).

In this research, the researcher conducted in-depth field research in Shuangquan Village, Huayin City, Shaanxi Province, and conducted in-depth interviews with teachers and students at the local Huayin Laoqiang Training School to understand the Current Status, model, and quality of education there. In addition, the process of the spread of Huayin Laoqiang in the Huayin area of Shaanxi Province, China, needs to be explained from a communication perspective.

In summary, in this section, researchers have conducted research from five perspectives: Anthropology, Ethnomusicology, Chinese music theory, Western musicology and Communication theory. Chapters 4 and 5 of this paper will use anthropology, ethnomusicology, Chinese music theory, Western musicology and communication theory to conduct discussions. Through these five theories, this paper provides a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the integration of Huayin Laoqiang in contemporary music, which gives the research a deeper breadth, while also crossing the theoretical frameworks of different music cultures to form a rich and comprehensive perspective.

6. Related research

The literature review will adopt a comprehensive perspective, unfolding around multiple angles and combining aspects of culture, society, history, and art to deeply analyze the current research status of Huayin Laoqiang.

Sun Jie systematically analyzed the origins, musical characteristics, and contemporary theatrical form transformations of Shaanxi's distinctive shadow puppetry art, "Huayin Laoqiang." She effectively revealed how this traditional art

form has adapted to modern society and gained widespread popularity. Particularly, her analysis of the connection between Laoqiang and the changing aesthetic and cultural needs of urban areas provides valuable references for the modern transformation of other folk art forms (Sun Jie, 2010).

Zhang Dan pointed out that Laoqiang, as the Zhang family's household drama, was formed and inherited in a specific geographical and historical context. This mode of transmission, limited to male members within the family, reflects the influence of traditional Chinese agrarian culture and clan systems on the inheritance of cultural skills. Furthermore, she analyzed the cultural value of the Laoqiang family drama, revealing its significance within the context of traditional Chinese culture (Zhang Dan, 2008).

Yang Rui believes that in the era of "Internet Plus," the protection of China's intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in music should not only focus on traditional preservation but also pay attention to how to revitalize and integrate these resources with the times, bringing them new life. He specifically mentioned the collaboration between modern rock singer Tan Weiwei and Huayin Laoqiang performers, considering this cross-genre fusion as providing a new direction for the development of musical ICH. This fusion promotes the transition from niche to mainstream culture, achieves the connection between urban and rural music, expands new models of heritage economy, and provides new meanings and insights for the protection and development of musical ICH (Yang Rui, 2017).

Wei Qing views Huayin Laoqiang, as a national intangible cultural heritage, has reignited its artistic flame through modern performance forms such as plays, movies, and variety shows, achieving a fusion of tradition and modernity. Particularly, Tan Weiwei's "Give You a Little Color" showcased the charm of the new style of Laoqiang singing, prompting deep reflection on the inheritance of traditional folk music. Wei Qing also discussed the phenomenon, characteristics, and artistic features of the new style of Laoqiang singing, emphasizing the importance of protecting and inheriting folk music in modern society (Wei Qing, 2017)

Li Hongxiao stresses the importance of inheriting and disseminating traditional opera music, proposing a strategy that emphasizes both protection and innovation. Taking Huayin Laoqiang as an example, Li points out the challenges

faced by traditional music, such as the lack of inheritors and the loss of repertoires. He emphasizes adapting to contemporary needs through innovation, citing the success of "Huayin Laoqiang Yisheng Han" and advocates the use of diverse media channels, such as multimedia and short videos, to meet the communication needs of the new era (Li Hongxiao, 2023)

Yan Yi delves into the developmental history of Huayin Laoqiang shadow puppetry and its transformation in modern society. By analyzing the strategies of "three changes," "three shifts," and "three innovations," Yan reveals the transition of Huayin Laoqiang from a family drama to a popular drama, from behind the scenes to the forefront, and from traditional themes to modern expressions. Particularly, the analysis of Huayin Laoqiang's appearances on CCTV, international stages, and grassroots activities demonstrates the extensive influence and profound significance of this art form (Yan Yi, 2022)

Yao Xiaoting conducted an in-depth analysis of the development of Huayin Laoqiang in the context of inheritance and innovation, particularly through the case study of Tan Weiwei's performance of "Huayin Laoqiang Yisheng Han." She explored how to adapt to the new era, enhancing artistic appreciation. Yao also elaborated on attempts to combine Huayin Laoqiang with modern musical elements and performance forms, including innovations in musical elements, changes in musical rhythms, and stage effect designs. Her research not only showcases the efforts of Huayin Laoqiang in blending tradition with modernity but also reflects its new explorations in artistic expression and cultural dissemination (Yao Xiaoting, 2021).

Ji Yuxuan delved into the trend of incorporating ethnic music elements into Chinese pop music innovation, especially the application of Huayin Laoqiang in pop music. She analyzed the popular elements of Huayin Laoqiang, revealing the possibilities and methods of combining ethnic music with pop music from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Her in-depth study of techniques and sound fields of Huayin Laoqiang in pop music provides new perspectives and strategies for the modern transformation of ethnic music (Ji Yuxuan, 2021).

Yuan Jingru's Theoretical Analysis of the Innovative Combination of Shaanxi Huayin Laoqiang and Rock Music:

Yuan Jingru conducted a theoretical analysis of the innovative combination of Shaanxi Huayin Laoqiang and rock music, exploring the impact of this "mash-up style" on modern audience aesthetics and its significance for Chinese ethnic music culture. She also reflected on this fusion approach, discussing how to maintain the core values of ethnic music while adapting to the needs and aesthetic changes of the times (Yuan Jingru, 2017).

Yang Liu considers Laoqiang, an ancient opera genre, to possess a bold and impassioned singing style, characterized by unrestrained and free-spirited performances. However, it still faces challenges such as the lack of inheritors and the degradation of skills (Yang Liu, 2021).

Yao Donglai posits that the Chinese pop music scene is characterized by an integration of a multitude of musical styles and elements, exhibiting a trend towards diversified development. This fusion has given rise to works that not only retain the essence of traditional culture but also embody modern pop characteristics. Taking Huayin Laoqiang as a case study, he analyzes the collision, integration, and innovation between traditional and contemporary music. Yao demonstrates how this amalgamation achieves remarkable feats in musical techniques and emotional resonance (Yao Donglai 2023).

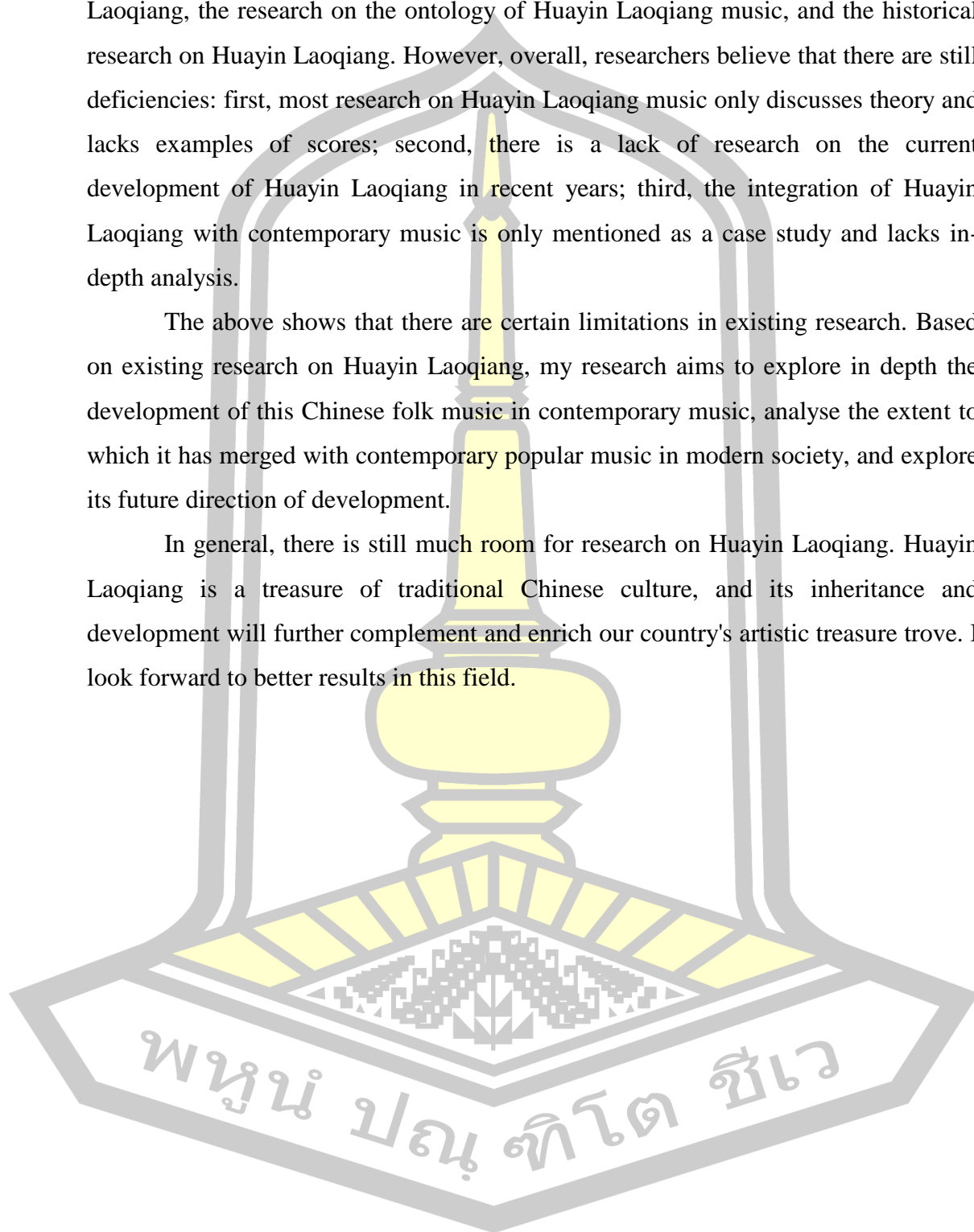
Wang Xiaoyan believes that nationalization is a major trend in contemporary Chinese pop music, emphasizing the importance of integrating Chinese folk music with Western pop music. Using "Huayin Laoqiang Yisheng Han" as an example, she delves into the fusion of folk music and contemporary pop singing techniques. She explores the phenomenon and characteristics of song fusion, the application of Tan Weiwei's singing style, and the integration of music. Wang argues that this fusion not only aligns with contemporary popular aesthetics but also stimulates musicians' creativity and enhances singers' comprehensive abilities, playing a significant role in developing pop music with ethnic characteristics (Wang Xiaoyan, 2019).

In summary, by combing and interpreting the literature related to Huayin Laoqiang music culture, the researcher has a basic understanding of its current achievements and development direction. Looking at the above literature, the current situation of domestic research on Huayin Laoqiang music is that there have been relatively abundant research results. The research topics that have received relatively

high attention are, in order: the research on the aesthetics and inheritance of Huayin Laoqiang, the research on the ontology of Huayin Laoqiang music, and the historical research on Huayin Laoqiang. However, overall, researchers believe that there are still deficiencies: first, most research on Huayin Laoqiang music only discusses theory and lacks examples of scores; second, there is a lack of research on the current development of Huayin Laoqiang in recent years; third, the integration of Huayin Laoqiang with contemporary music is only mentioned as a case study and lacks in-depth analysis.

The above shows that there are certain limitations in existing research. Based on existing research on Huayin Laoqiang, my research aims to explore in depth the development of this Chinese folk music in contemporary music, analyse the extent to which it has merged with contemporary popular music in modern society, and explore its future direction of development.

In general, there is still much room for research on Huayin Laoqiang. Huayin Laoqiang is a treasure of traditional Chinese culture, and its inheritance and development will further complement and enrich our country's artistic treasure trove. I look forward to better results in this field.



CHAPTER III

Research Methodology

This study provides ideas and insights for the preservation and development of Huayin Laoqiang's intangible cultural heritage in Shaanxi Province, China. The research structure is as follows:

1. Research scope
 - 1.1 Scope of content
 - 1.2 Scope of time
2. Research process
 - 2.1 Selection of the research sites
 - 2.2 Selection of the key informants
 - 2.3 Selection of the song
 - 2.4 Research tools
 - 2.5 Data collection
 - 2.6 Data management
 - 2.7 Data analysis
 - 2.8 Data presentation

1. Research scope

1.1 Scope of content

The study investigates the Current Status of Huayin Laoqiang, a traditional folk music from Laoqiang, Huayin, Shaanxi Province, China. It involves data collection, surveys, and field research to assess its preservation, contemporary practice, and transmission. The researchers also analyze the integration and innovation of traditional and contemporary popular music, examining its structure, melodic characteristics, rhythm, beat, and singing techniques.

1.2 Scope of Time

Data collecting time from January 2023 to October 2023

Analyzing time from October 2023 to March 2024

2. Research process

2.1 Selection of the research sites

2.1.1 Shuangquan Village, Huayin City, Shaanxi

Shuangquan Village, the birthplace of Huayin Laoqiang, is located in Weiyu Township, Huayin City, in the northern foothills of the Qinling Mountains. The area is 32 square kilometers, containing 18 villages and 39 villagers' groups, with a population of about 10,700. The town is mainly agricultural, with a total cultivated area of 16,000 mu and an irrigable area of 5,900 mu. Shuangquan Village has a rich cultural heritage, including traditional specialties like the capital granary during the Western Han Dynasty, the tribute dish nine-eyed white lotus, persimmons, and yellow plums. The ruins of Ningqin County Town, the predecessor of Huayin City, have attracted archaeologists. The village is known for its Shuo Drums, a large-scale drum dance reflecting war stories, and its unique historical value and cultural charm. Shuangquan Village is the best place to study Huayin Laoqiang, preserving its rich cultural heritage and historical significance.

2.1.2 Gao Family Residence, Xi'an

The Gao Family Residence, a historic government dwelling, was constructed during the Chongzhen period of the late Ming Dynasty and boasts a history of nearly 400 years. The Dafeng Tang Tang Hall and the Theater Building within the Gao Family Compound serve as significant venues for the preservation and exhibition of national intangible cultural heritages, including Qinqiang, Heyang Puppet, Huaxian Shadow Puppet, and Huayin Laoqiang. The theater structure within the Gao Family Compound, featuring intricate wood carvings and an ample viewing area, serves as an exemplary venue for presenting traditional art forms. The Qinqiang and shadow puppet performances it hosts are significant components of cultural heritage and offer abundant field material and experiential insights for the study of Huayin Laoqiang. Shaanxi Provincial Local Codification Committee, 1996.

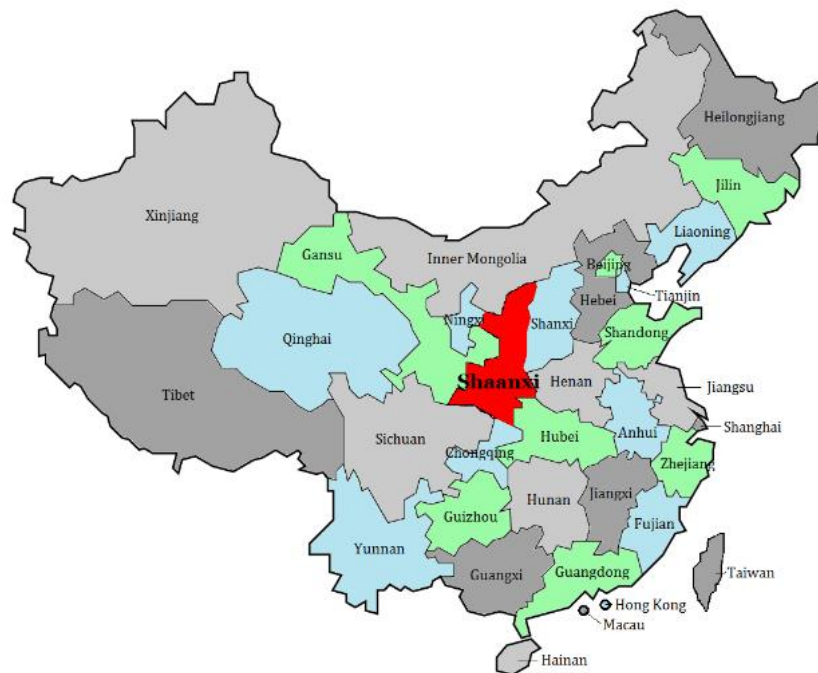


Figure 8. Map of research sites in Shaanxi Province

Source: Chinafolio (n.d.), Travel China Guide (n.d.)

2.2 Selection of the informants

2.2.1 Key informants

The key informants were selected based on specific criteria outlined below:

- 1) The individuals are directly related to the research field of this paper.
- 2) They must be a native of Huayin, Shaanxi, and have been born, raised and lived in the area.
- 3) They should have a profound understanding of the local Huayin Laoqiang.
- 4) The selected person is a representative inheritor of the Huayin Laoqiang at the municipal level or above and enjoys high prestige in the area.
- 5) The informer has rich experience in performing Huayin Laoqiang.

After a rigorous selection process, three key informants stood out: Zhang Ximin, Zhang Xiangling, and Zhang Benfu, who were the most prominent representatives of the key informants. The researcher interviewed the three key

informants, all of whom are musicians of the Huayin Laoqiang ICH. These three musicians are my key informants because two are also composers, and their video and audio materials will contribute to the subsequent research in this paper. In addition, the researcher conducted interviews with the three ad hoc informants to accumulate written and oral information about the development of Huayin Laoqiang folk music.

1) Zhang Ximin

Male, Han nationality, born in 1947, is a native of Huayin, Shaanxi. Zhang Ximin is one of the representative inheritors of the second batch of national intangible cultural heritage projects, namely, the shadow play (Huayin Laoqiang). Zhang Ximin was named '2022 Person of the Year for China's Intangible Cultural Heritage' by the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Zhang Ximin, 13 years old by the village Zhang Shangkun, and other old artists as a teacher to learn, 14 years old on the stage, in 1980 set up their own class society, "Ximin class", over the decades, have been active in the qin jin yu area, and gradually formed their own unique old art style, is currently Huayin Laoqiang of the backbone of the force. There are more than thirty disciples now; the main representative works are "Give You a Little color" and so on.



Figure 9. Key Informant Zhang Ximin

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

2) Zhang Xiangling

Female, born in 1966, a native of Shuangquan Village, Huayin City, the eleventh generation of the Laoqiang inheritor, Weinan City Huayin Laoqiang Inheritor, began to study the Huayin Laoqiang in 1993, and in 2004 she studied the Laoqiang's singing and Yueqin playing under the mastership of Zhang Ximin, a national-level Laoqiang inheritor. Zhang Xiangling is the first female apprentice of Zhang Ximin, the national non-genetic inheritor of the Huayin Laoqiang. In 2006, she participated in the play "Bai Lu Yuan" with her master at Beijing Renyi, and from 2007 to 2009, she participated in performances in Beijing, Shanghai, Suzhou, etc. In January 2016, she took part in the Spring Festival Gala of CCTV Opera, and in June 2016, she registered with the Huayin Laoqiang Xiangling Art Troupe.



Figure 10. Key Informant Zhang Xiangling

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

3) Zhang Fuben

Male, born in 1957, Huayin Laoqiang municipal inheritor, college education, living in Huayin City, Shuangquan village, from childhood like arts and cultural performances, entirely by the hometown of the old opera culture, successively worship Wang Zhenzhong, Zhang Ximin, Zhang Quansi as a teacher to learn the folk music of Huayin Laoqiang. In 2021, Zhang Fuben was employed as a teacher in the

sixth training course of Huayin Laoqiang, a national intangible cultural heritage project.



Figure 11. Key Informant Zhang Fuben

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

2.2.2 Casual informants

The Casual informants were selected based on specific criteria outlined below:

- 1) The person has heard of Huayin Laoqiang or seen a related performance.
- 2) The person has a specific understanding of Huayin Laoqiang culture.
- 3) The person is a practitioner in a music-related industry.

Audience representatives

Sampling Strategy:

A targeted sampling strategy will be used to select individuals who have heard of Huayin Laoqiang and deeply understand it.

2.3 Selection of Songs

- 1) Suggestions from respected "intangible cultural heritage" bearers.
- 2) Classic representative work from Huayin Laoqiang.
- 3) It has a distinctive regional charm.

- 4) Contemporary musical works incorporating the Huayin Laoqiang.
- 5) It significantly impacted the Huayin area of Shaanxi Province.

Table 1. Song selection and classification

Type of songs	Description	Selected song
1. Operatic	Operatic is strongly narrative in nature, with ancient character stories as the main plot. It incorporates various art forms such as singing, reciting, and acting, and emphasises dramatic expression. Examples include 'Qin Qiong Da Liang' and 'Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai'.	2
2. Folkloric	It focuses on folk life and regional culture, expresses local folklore, and conveys historical culture and emotions. For example, 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan' and 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge'.	2
3. Huayin Laoqiang fusion contemporary music	Up to now, the only representative work of the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang and contemporary pop music is 'Give You a Little Colour', a song that has attracted a great deal of response in China.	1

2.4 Research tools

The research tools include an observation form and an interview form.

- 1) Design questions according to the research objectives.
- 2) Design observation forms and interview forms.
- 3) After completing the design, hand it over to the advisor for inspection.
- 4) Make revisions according to the advisor's comments.
- 5) Modifications were made according to the specialist's advice before being used in the investigation.

2.4.1 Observation form

The researcher surveyed Shuangquan Village, Huayin City, Shaanxi Province, through direct observation during the data collection. Using a mobile phone,

SLR camera, video camera, voice recorder, etc., the researcher recorded music-related activities in Laoqiang, Huayin, Shaanxi Province, directly observed the singing process of 5 songs, recorded complete videos and took relevant photos, collected first-hand information, and used SD cards, computers and USB drives for data storage. So far, the researcher has watched performances by inheritors of Shuangquan Village in Huayin City and performances of Huayin Laoqiang and shadow puppetry at the Gao Family Courtyard in Xi'an, the capital of Shaanxi Province, and has gained a corresponding understanding of the different performance forms in the two places.

2.4.2 Interview form

Interviews will be another critical method in this study to collect personal insights and experiences from Huayin Laoqiang artists, audiences, music educators, and cultural workers. Through semi-structured interviews, the study will explore participants' views, feelings, and the significance of Huayin Laoqiang in society and culture. Interviews will revolve around topics such as the historical development of Huayin Laoqiang, musical integration, and its performance and changes in different socio-economic backgrounds. The purpose of in-depth interviews is to understand the significance of Huayin Laoqiang for different groups and how it is experienced and interpreted at individual and community levels. Additionally, interviews will provide insights into the adaptation and development of Huayin Laoqiang in the context of modernization and globalization. By analyzing interview data, the study will reveal the diverse perspectives and profound impacts of Huayin Laoqiang in contemporary society, thereby providing rich information for understanding its complexity as a cultural phenomenon.

2.5 Data collection

2.5.1 When conducting fieldwork in Shuangquan Village, Huayin City, and Xi'an City, various data collection methods can obtain comprehensive and in-depth information, from preliminary understanding to in-depth research.

1) Observation: Field observation of Huayin Laoqiang performance scenes, including traditional theaters, temple fairs, and cultural performances. Through observation, record the details of the performances in terms of performance forms and actor interactions; observe the status of Huayin Laoqiang in the culture of

the local community, including whether there are relevant activities, support from cultural policies, and the impact of the fusion performances on the society and culture.

2) In-depth interviews: Conduct in-depth interviews with Huayin Laoqiang inheritors to discuss their understanding of fusion, the creative process, musical choices, and performance experience. In-depth interviews can provide more specific and individualized information.

3) Audio and video recordings are made to capture the musical performance and stage presentation of the fusion performance. This helps analyze the musical elements and artistic expression of Huayin Laoqiang in fusion.

2.5.2 Literature Review: Conduct research on the historical documents of Huayin Laoqiang to understand its inheritance history, classic works, and evolution in contemporary music. Literature research helps establish a theoretical framework and historical lineage.

2.5.3 Data Collection and Interview Submitting the designs to the advisor for review upon completion.

2.5.4 Making Necessary Modifications Based on the Advisor's Feedback.

2.5.5 Further refining the tools based on expert opinions for investigation.

2.6 Data management

After the fieldwork, observation, and interviews end, the researcher organizes the notes and recordings obtained from the fieldwork and analyzes the content objectively and structurally. The researcher chose textual analysis to analyze the content of the interviews, present a large number of documents and information in an orderly and quantitative manner, and minimize the subjectivity and tendency in the analysis as much as possible.

2.7 Data Analysis

2.7.1 Survey Overview: The analysis for this objective will employ qualitative methods, including surveys and questionnaire surveys. Qualitative data gathered from interviews, observations, and document analysis will undergo thematic analysis to delve deeper into the cultural significance of Huayin Laoqiang folk songs, their current practices, and the challenges they may encounter.

2.7.2 Characteristics and analysis of music fusion: Research for this objective will primarily use qualitative analysis, including archival, documentary, and

oral history exploration, to trace the evolution and development of Huayin Laoqiang folk music in Shaanxi Province, China. This investigation aims to identify critical events, social influences, and changes in musical elements (music, melody, lyrics, singing style) over time.

2.8 Data presentation

2.8.1 Chapter I: Introduction

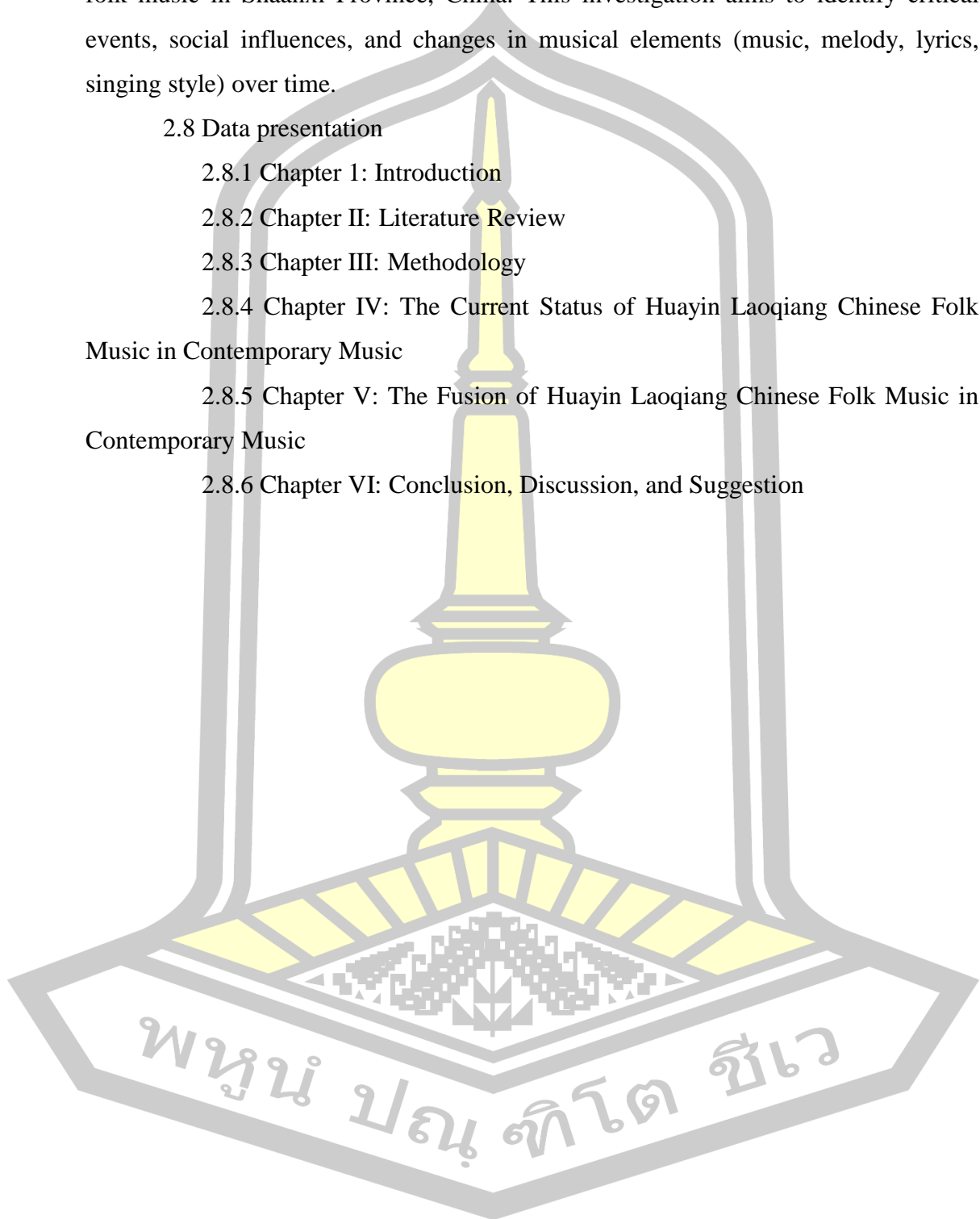
2.8.2 Chapter II: Literature Review

2.8.3 Chapter III: Methodology

2.8.4 Chapter IV: The Current Status of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese Folk Music in Contemporary Music

2.8.5 Chapter V: The Fusion of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese Folk Music in Contemporary Music

2.8.6 Chapter VI: Conclusion, Discussion, and Suggestion



CHAPTER IV

The Current Status of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese Folk Music in Contemporary Music

This chapter focuses on examining the current status of Huayin Laoqiang in contemporary music by exploring its historical development, unique performance characteristics, and evolving role in the modern cultural landscape. This chapter investigates the origins of Huayin Laoqiang, tracing its roots to Huayin City in Shaanxi Province and its significance in traditional shadow puppet theatre. The study delves into its distinct musical qualities, rugged performance style, and transmission methods through family-based inheritance. Additionally, it assesses the significant transformations in performance formats and cultural relevance, from its historical forms to its contemporary resurgence through media exposure and international recognition. Through an analysis of educational initiatives and current performers, the chapter highlights how Huayin Laoqiang has adapted to modern contexts, preserving its artistic heritage while thriving in contemporary music culture.

1. The Current Status of the Birthplace of the Huayin Laoqiang in China
2. The Current Status of Huayin Laoqiang Inheritance in Contemporary Music
3. The Current Status of Huayin Laoqiang's Education in Contemporary Music
4. The Performance Status of Huayin Laoqiang in Contemporary Music
5. What are the current repercussions and status of the Chinese Huayin Laoqiang in Chinese society?

1. The Current Status of the Birthplace of the Huayin Laoqiang in China

1.1 Current Situation of Geographic Environment

Huayin Laoqiang, popular in Huayin City, Shaanxi Province, China, is a unique form of shadow theater art. It is also known locally as "Laoqiang shadow puppetry," while its related but different style, "Wanwan qiang," is called "Shi qiang." Considered the predecessor of Wanwan qiang, Laoqiang has a long history and is said to have a long lineage, and the existing Laoqiang shadow art has been widely popular

since at least the Ming Dynasty. Huayin Laoqiang's tunes are simple and mournful, the singing voice is steady and thick, the style is rugged and bold, and the range of tones is wide and soaring, demonstrating its unique artistic charms, exuding the richness of a northwest Chinese culture and the richness of the Chinese culture. Laoqiang is not only popular among the locals but has also successfully entered urban theaters with its innovative form of performance as the reform era changes (Sun Jie, 2007).

Liang Zhigang's 'The Origin, Living Environment and Performance Form of Laoqiang Shadow Play' (2007), Shi Na's 'The Art of Laoqiang from Huayin, Shaanxi' (2014), etc., all mention the birthplace of Laoqiang shadow play, Shuangquan Village in Huayin, Guanzhong. This is a quiet village located at the foot of Mount Hua in the Guanzhong region, at the confluence of the Yellow, Luo and Wei rivers. There are various theories about the origin of Huayin Laoqiang, the earliest of which is the military barracks theory. The following are current pictures of Shuangquan Village in Huayin City, Shaanxi Province:



Figure 12. Shuangquan village

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

Shuangquan Village is located 4 km to the east of Huayin City's Yue Temple Office, adjacent to the old Xihuang Road, and was formed by the merger of the former Shuangquan Village and Shapo Village. The village office is located in the former Shapo Village. The village has jurisdiction over a total of 3 village groups, 295 households and 1198 people, including 148 migrant households. The cultivated land area is more than 3130 mu (including 2350 mu of water land and 780 mu of dry land), and the per capita cultivated land Shuangquan Village has a rich historical and cultural heritage, with a simple folkway and a profound heritage. It is located south of the ruins of the Xi Han capital's granary and north of the Wei River. It was known as 'Yehu Quandian' before the Qin Dynasty (221 BC - 209 BC), and was already an important town on the Qin postal road. During the Eastern Han Dynasty, it was called Quandian Town. According to legend, it was renamed Langya Villa during the Ming and Qing Dynasties.



Figure 13. The map of Shuangquan village

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 14. Diagram showing the location of Shuangquan village

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

The village was named Shuangquan Village because there is a natural spring on the east and west sides of the town, with water flowing day and night.



Figure 15. The spring on the east side of Shuangquan Village 'Yu xia ming quan'

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 16. The spring on the west side of Shuangquan Village 'Xi quan'

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

Shuangquan Village was approved by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development and five other departments in June 2019 to be included in the fifth batch of the List of Chinese Traditional Villages. Shuangquan is also the birthplace of Laoqiang, which was included in the first batch of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage List in 2006. There are 3A-level scenic spots in the territory, including the 10,000-mu Lotus Garden and the Xi Han Imperial Granary ruins. In recent years, to implement General Secretary Xi Jinping's important instructions on transforming and protecting traditional villages, Shuangquan Village has been one of the critical national conventional villages. The project will be protected and enhanced from 2021 to 2023. It is mainly conceived based on the idea of 'protecting the eight ancient things' (ancient buildings, ancient dwellings, ancient lanes, ancient trees, ancient customs, ancient skills, ancient legends, and ancient culture), presenting the 'Ten Scenes of Shuangquan'. It is also built based on the principle of 'keeping the villagers, protecting the countryside, and remembering the nostalgia', promoting the revitalisation of rural industries, ecology, culture, and talent. Efforts are being made to turn Shuangquan Village into the 'No. 1 Intangible Cultural Heritage Village' and 'the birthplace of Huayin Laoqiang culture' in China.



Figure 17. Shuangquan Village Cultural Protection Unit Plaque

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

To the south of Shuangquan Village are the ruins of the granary of the capital of the Xi Han Dynasty (202 BC–8 AD). The site of the capital granary is located on the second-level terrace to the north of Duanjiacheng Village, Yue Temple Office (formerly Weiyu Township), Huayin City, and to the south of Shuangquan Village. Archaeological excavations have shown that it was built during the reign of Emperor Wu of the Western Han Dynasty more than 2,000 years ago. The capital granary is located at the mouth of the Wei and Luo rivers into the Yellow River. The Huashan Mountains flank it to the south and the Guanshi Avenue to the north. It is surrounded by mountains and cliffs on three sides, making it a relatively safe place. The city walls of the granary were built along the cliff face, roughly rectangular in shape. According to barments, it is 1,120 meters long from east to west, 700 meters wide from north to south, and has a circumference of 3,330 meters. It covers an area of 784,000 square meters (according to the latest archaeological findings, its location is still much larger). The granary was an extremely important for the capital Chang'an during the Western Han Dynasty. All the grain from the eastern provinces destined for the capital had to be stored here before being transported to Chang'an. Because the villagers near the granary mostly ground grain for a living, the name Weitong (Mill)

Valley (Huayin locals call ground grain Mill-flour) came about. The famous ‘living fossil of folk opera music,’ Huayin Laoqiang, was born with the shouts of the boatmen who transported grain to the granary, and the drills of the soldiers guarding the granary gave rise to Huayin's unique folk art, Huayin Shuangquan Sugu.



Figure 18. Entrance to the site of the Xihan Imperial Granary

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

During the investigation and excavation of the site of the Imperial Granary, it was found that the stratum can be roughly divided into three layers. The lowest layer is the Yangshao culture Miaodi ditch type cultural layer, the second layer is the Warring States period cultural layer, and the upper layer is the Han Dynasty cultural layer. Many bricks with the seal ‘Ning Qin’ were collected inside the granary, proving that the predecessor of the Imperial Granary was the former site of Ning Qin County, which was established in the fifth year of King Huiwen of Qin (333 BC). According to the archaeological excavations and analysis of the unearthed relics, Cangcheng was rebuilt during the reign of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty on the site of the former Ningqin County. The lower limit of the abandonment of Cangcheng is roughly the early years of the Eastern Han Dynasty. Regarding the time and reason for its

abandonment, according to archaeological excavation data, it was not destroyed in the war at the end of the Western Han Dynasty but was probably abandoned because the irrigation canal became too silted with sand to use, and the capital of the Eastern Han Dynasty moved to Luoyang. The scale of Jing Shi Cang is one of the most significant Western Han grain storage buildings discovered in Chinese archaeology. Inside the warehouse were the original granaries for storing grain, and around the buildings were seepage wells, cisterns, pits for living, wells, kilns for firing bricks and tiles, etc. There are a total of six granary ruins on the site, all of which are concentrated in the north-west of the warehouse.



Figure 19. Xihan, the site of the Imperial granary
Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

The excavation of the Jing Shi Cang has significant practical and far-reaching historical significance. The bricks found at the site with the stamp 'Ning Qin' and the clay moulds for casting weapons from the Warring States period prove that the predecessor of the Jing Shi Cang City was the former site of the Ning Qin county town built in the fifth year of the Qin Huiwen King (333 BC) and the location of the Ning Qin county town of the Qin state, providing an important basis for the study of the historical geography of Huayin. The Structure and Style of the Jing Shi, The

structure and style of the Imperial Granary, have had a huge impact on later generations of architecture, adding a new dimension to the study of ancient Chinese architectural history and providing invaluable physical evidence. The cultural relics excavated and preserved at the Imperial Granary site include bricks, roof tiles, pottery, ironware, weapons, coins, etc., which will be a huge material wealth and cultural treasure in China's cultural relics. It is the earliest and most complete site of a national grain depot discovered in China so far, providing very important historical data for the study of the architectural history, economic history, and shipping history of the Qin and Han dynasties, as well as the development of ancient Chinese grain storage technology.



Figure 20. Ancient world's number one granary plaque

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

1.2 Current Status of development of Huayin Laoqiang

It is said that the name "Laoqiang" did not exist in the early days. It was called "Paiban qiang" because it was sung without musical instruments, and the beat was only made by tapping a wooden block against a ship's board. Later, local opera gradually took shape during the Qing Dynasty and became famous. Over time, the rhythmic method of hitting the ship's planks with wooden blocks gradually evolved into hitting the benches with wooden blocks. In contrast, 'Paiban qiang' has a more

extended history, and its singing style is more straightforward, tragic, calm, deep, rough, and unrestrained.



Figure 21. The wooden board on which Huayin Laoqiang performed

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

Therefore, people call Wanwan qiang "Shi qiang" and "Paiban qiang" "Laoqiang" (Zhang Kejia, 2019). There is also a story about a storyteller named Meng'er who came to Shaanxi Province long ago to perform storytelling and gradually combined storytelling with local folk songs and ditties. With the passage of time, through continuous development and refinement, a unique opera was steadily formed. Since Meng'er comes from Laohekou, it is called "Laoqiang" (Zhang Dan, 2008). The development of any art or culture is closely related to the natural conditions and regional characteristics of its location, as well as to the production and labor practices of the local people, and Huayin Laoqiang, with its thousand years of history, is inextricably linked to the geographic and cultural background of the Huayin region.

Among the many theories about the origin of music, the labor origin theory is highly respected. According to this theory, music originates from people's labor activities, and labor is the critical material and spiritual basis for the existence of music. People's beautiful voices in singing, their ears for appreciating sounds, their

hands for playing musical instruments, etc., and many elements of artistic aesthetics are gradually cultivated and perfected in the process of labor. In primitive labor societies, spiritual and cultural resources are incredibly scarce, and the labor activity provides melody, tone, and rhythm for music (Liu Yujia, 2018).

Huayin Laoqiang, recognized for its unique artistic style, was included in the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list in 2006. It belongs to the same category as "Wan Wan Qiang," "A Gong Qiang," and "Xian Ban Qiang" of the Northwest shadow puppetry singing styles, yet it differs significantly in its musical form. The music of Laoqiang mainly consists of three parts: Wen Wu (civil and martial) field music, singing music, and recitative music (Sun Jie, 2010).

(1) Wen Wu chang: Wen chang music, primarily used for singing accompaniment, is generally elegant and detailed, including various tunes and instruments, playing a crucial role in the evolution of the plot, character portrayal, and singing accompaniment. The instruments used in the Wen chang mainly include bangzi (woodblock), yueqin (moon lute), banhu (a type of Chinese fiddle), jingmu (shock wood), and bells, later supplemented by low-pitched banhu and erhu. Wu chang music, known as "Re Chang Zi" (warming up the scene), is designed to attract the audience's attention and create an atmosphere, using instruments like dry drums, large cymbals, small cymbals, cloud gongs, and shock wood. The civil and martial cymbals express emotions ranging from elegance, calmness, and passion to vigorous, intense, and majestic feelings.

(2) Chanting tunes: Laoqiang's singing and recitative music are integral to its musical form. Singing music conveys emotions and stories through melody and rhythm, while recitative music focuses more on the rhythm and cadence of the words, adding depth and layers to the plot.

A unique feature of the martial field music in Laoqiang is the use of homophonic notation, where Chinese characters' pronunciations are used to mark the sounds of percussion instruments. For example, "ci" indicates a stroke at the center of the dry drum, "lang" represents a single strike of the horse gong, and "de lang" signifies a continuous strike of the horse gong. This unique notation method not only reflects the traditional characteristics of Laoqiang music but also adds to its artistic appeal and ease of transmission.

Chang Qiang: Chang Qiang is the central part of opera music and is a critical indicator for distinguishing different types of drama. It expresses the emotions and thoughts of the characters, as well as portrays their personalities. Due to the solid linguistic nature of Huayin Laoqiang, it is often referred to as China's earliest form of "rock music." In its performance, speaking, singing, and recitation are usually interwoven within a single section. The singing music includes various styles such as slow tempo, flowing water, and flower battles, divided according to certain rhythms. These can be categorized into two melodic types: fixed and non-fixed. In the singing styles of Laoqiang, apart from rolling and pulling tunes, other styles are relatively accessible, including one beat, one eye, one beat, two eyes, and even one beat, five eyes. The "La Po" in singing music is a crucial element that showcases the uniqueness of Laoqiang music. When the singer reaches the latter half of the last sentence, all performers on stage join in the chorus, creating an atmosphere similar to the labor chants of boatmen, forming a stark contrast with "Shi Qiang." Sun Jie mentioned in her master's thesis, "Research on Huayin Laoqiang," that through communication with veteran artists, it was understood that they all sing in their natural voices. Therefore, singing in Laoqiang requires not only talent but also effort. The singing voice needs to be robust and powerful. The lead singer is responsible for the entire performance, often needing to imitate various roles, such as Sheng, Dan, Jing, and Chou, placing high demands on the performer (Li Hanya, 2023).

In Huayin Laoqiang's performance, the yueqin is one of the essential accompanying instruments. As a kind of Chinese folk music with solid local characteristics, Huayin Laoqiang emphasizes a rough and unrestrained style, and the yueqin, with its high-pitched and bright tone, blends well with this style of music. The yueqin usually provides rhythmic and harmonic support for the performance of the lead singer and actors, enriching the sound and setting the mood. In the Huayin Laoqiang music system, the Yue Qin can also form a unique vocal combination with other accompanying instruments, such as the Banhu and the drum, to make the performance more expressive. The Yue Qin is a traditional Chinese string instrument in the plucked-string category. It is named after its round body, which resembles a full moon. It has a long history, dating back to the Han Dynasty, and usually has four strings played with a plectrum or the fingers. The yueqin has a bright and crisp sound

and is often used for accompaniment and solo performances. It is widely used in operas, folk music, and ethnic orchestras all over China. As shown in the following picture :



Figure 22. Yueqin

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

2. The Current Status of Huayin Laoqiang Inheritance in Contemporary Music

2.1 Methods of Huayin Laoqiang Inheritance

Huayin Laoqiang, a traditional form of theatre, has been passed down through the Zhang family in Shuangquan Village, Huayin, for over two centuries. From a modern perspective, this seems miraculous, but such family-based inheritance is relatively common in China's long history. For instance, numerous similar traditions have been preserved within families, such as the Dengzhantou Wanwanqiang shadow puppetry in Baoji, the Gonggu variety theatre in Hedong, southern Shanxi, and the Bu Dai Xi puppet theatre in Jinjiang. These theatrical forms have survived through the transmission of skills from one generation of men in the family to the next.

Expanding our view further, we find that family-based inheritance is prevalent across various categories of traditional Chinese music. Examples include the

Shuangqiang Yangge from Hohhot and the Korean Ggilip Dance in Huanren County, Benxi, Liaoning. Looking back even further, we see that this phenomenon extends beyond theatre and music to other fields in China, such as acrobatics, martial arts, and clay sculpture. It even includes crafts and culinary arts like Zhang Xiaoqian scissors, Lao Sun's lamb soup, and Lao Fan's pork sandwich.

We can glimpse China's wealthy, ancient cultural heritage through the widespread presence of family inheritance and family troupes in traditional Chinese culture and music. This family-based inheritance is not only a cultural phenomenon but also a social one, reflecting the importance of family and kinship ties in traditional Chinese culture.

In traditional society, the family was the basic unit of production and life and the primary vehicle for cultural transmission. Elders in the family would teach their skills to the younger generation, ensuring the purity and continuity of these skills through an internal master-apprentice system. This method of inheritance ensured the continuity of culture and significantly promoted the refinement and development of skills.

As the Zhang family's "home-style theatre" in Shuangquan Village, Huayin, Huayin Laoqiang's inheritance and development are inextricably linked to the efforts and perseverance within the family. Through generational transmission, family members have preserved this ancient art form and infused it with new vitality through continuous innovation and development. This method of family inheritance has enabled Huayin Laoqiang to retain its unique artistic charm and cultural value in modern society. The phenomenon of family inheritance in traditional Chinese culture reflects the societal emphasis on family and kinship and the high regard for both inheritance and innovation within Chinese culture. In the future, this method of family inheritance will continue to be an essential means of protecting and developing traditional Chinese culture, allowing more people to appreciate its profound and unique charm.

Chinese culture places a paramount emphasis on life, with all activities aimed at preserving, nurturing, and protecting life, and fostering children's independence. This has created the most stable families. In such families, parents striving to provide a better life for their children may generate a craft or skill through practical labor.

Children, growing up with their parents, are naturally influenced and immersed in these skills; for the sake of their children's livelihood, parents will teach them verbally and practically. In China, many skills have developed and grown in this way, making the family the cradle of skill transmission. In this regard, Huayin Laoqiang is particularly illustrative.

The skill transmission of Huayin Laoqiang within the Zhang family primarily occurs through natural immersion and deliberate instruction. From infancy, male members of the Zhang family are exposed to and learn the generationally transmitted art of Huayin Laoqiang from their grandfathers, fathers, and brothers. In the Zhang family, every elder is an informal teacher and a natural inheritor and disseminator of Huayin Laoqiang within the clan. It is mainly through this affiliative relationship that Huayin Laoqiang has been preserved and developed. It is easy to imagine that the Zhang descendants, who grow up hearing and seeing Huayin Laoqiang, will naturally hum a few lines of Laoqiang even if they are not consciously learning it.

Under the deeply ingrained principles of "ancestral teachings must not be disobeyed," "ancestral business must not be abandoned," and "ancestral methods must not be altered," members of the Zhang family consciously and deliberately teach their sons and grandsons to learn and pass down the art of Huayin Laoqiang. According to Zhang Xinmin, his father, Zhang Quansheng, began learning Laoqiang formally at the age of ten from his grandfather, Zhang Huaiying, and later from his father, Zhang Jingkun, to master the skill of manipulating bamboo sticks. At just fifteen years old, his first performance brought him instant fame.

This method of family inheritance has not only ensured the purity and continuity of Laoqiang skills but also significantly promoted their refinement and development. The transmission of Laoqiang within the Zhang family underscores the importance of family and kinship ties in traditional Chinese culture. Through intra-family inheritance, this ancient art form has gained new vitality in modern society.



Figure 23. Key Informant Zhang Xiangling interview

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

The tradition of ‘male but not female transmission’ has a long history in the Huayin Laoqiang, however, with the progress of the times, this tradition has long been broken, and the researcher had the honour of interviewing Mrs Zhang Xiangling, the female singer of Huayin Laoqiang, who is worth mentioning that she is also the first female singer of Huayin Laoqiang in China. It is worth mentioning that she is also the first female inheritor of Huayin Laoqiang in China. Zhang Xiangling believes that the change in the way Huayin Laoqiang is passed down from ‘male to female’ in the past to the present is mainly due to the following aspects:

Huayin Laoqiang's ‘male but not female transmission’

I. Troupe inheritance and family concept

The Huayin Laoqiang can be traced back to the Ming Dynasty, and at first it was performed at temple fairs, social fires, and village festivals, with men as the main members. In the past, the transmission of the troupe was mainly based on the family or master-apprentice system, and men were usually considered more suitable to take on this responsibility of cultural transmission, while women's role in society in the old society was relatively limited.

II. Singing Style and Physical Demands

The Huayin Laoqiang is known for its bold, rough, high-pitched and exciting singing style, which requires great lung capacity and physical strength to perform, accompanied by intense drumming, banging and shouting. Traditionally, women's voices and physical abilities were considered to be less capable of performing in this way, so the custom of 'passing on the tradition to men but not to women' was gradually formed.

III. Feudal rites and social concepts

In the old society, under the influence of feudal rites, women engaging in opera and folk arts were often regarded as 'immodest' or not in line with 'women's morality', so many folk arts, including the Huayin Laoqiang, have long been restricted to women's participation.

Changes and Evolution of the Status Quo

After entering the modern society, the concept of Huayin Laoqiang's inheritance has gradually changed, mainly influenced by the following factors:

I. Cultural protection and non-heritage policy promotion

In 2006, Huayin Laoqiang was listed in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage, and governments and cultural institutions at all levels have strengthened its protection and promotion. Under the non-heritage protection policy, the inheritor system has become more open and is no longer limited to family males, but has been expanded to include all those interested in learning.

II. Progress in society's concepts

With the popularisation of the concept of gender equality, women's participation in the arts has increased dramatically, and more and more women are coming into contact with and learning the Huayin Laoqiang. Modern society no longer considers women to be unsuitable for such grandiose forms of performance, and the participation of female artists in the fields of folk theatre and traditional music has increased significantly.

III. Demand from the performance market

In recent years, the combination of Huayin Laoqiang with modern elements such as rock and pop music has given it a new lease of life on a wider stage. With diversified performance demands, the addition of female participants has enriched the expression of Huayin Laoqiang and expanded the audience base.

It can be seen that in recent years, Huayin Laoqiang has emerged as a number of female inheritors and singers. According to the oral statement of Zhang Xiangling, the inheritor of Huayin Laoqiang, she has recruited female apprentices, including some young female opera singers and folk music lovers. They are gradually becoming official performers of the Huayin Laoqiang, and have even made their way onto important performance stages.

It is reported that there are more and more cases of women studying Huayin Laoqiang in some opera colleges and folk art groups in Shaanxi and even across the country. For example, some students from colleges and universities such as the Xi'an Conservatory of Music have tried to integrate Huayin Laoqiang into modern music, expanding its artistic expression.

In addition to this, women can already be seen singing Huayin Laoqiang in some cultural exchange activities, TV variety shows and opera exhibitions. For example, Chinese director Zhang Yimou's film *The Great Wall* features a soundtrack that combines Huayin Laoqiang with pop music, and although the main performers in the film are still predominantly male, it has inspired more women to take an interest in the art form.

In conclusion, the tradition of 'male but not female transmission' of the Huayin Laoqiang originated mainly from the family troupe system, singing style requirements and feudal concepts. However, this situation has changed as a result of non-heritage protection policies, advances in society's gender concepts, and the demands of the performance market. Moreover, the Zhang family's inheritance of the Laoqiang is not only a cultural phenomenon, but also a society phenomenon, reflecting the inheritance and innovation of traditional Chinese culture. In this context, while retaining its original artistic essence, the Huayin Laoqiang continues to innovate and adapt to the development and changes of modern society, bringing it to life in the new era. In the future, the Laoqiang will continue to show its unique charm on more stages, attracting a wider audience and ensuring that this artistic treasure from the Yellow Earth is passed on and carried forward.

2.2 The Current Status of Huayin Laoqiang Inheritance

The reform of Huayin Laoqiang has led to the emergence of several key artists and troupes, which have played a pivotal role in preserving and developing this art form. Noteworthy among these are:

2.2.1 The Wang Zhenzhong Troupe

Wang Zhenzhong, born in Nanzhai Village, Huayin, Shaanxi Province, was nicknamed "White Hair" due to his albinism, which left him with white hair, eyebrows, and skin. After only three years of schooling, he returned home to learn theatre. From the age of six or seven, he began learning to sing Qin Opera and developed a wide range of interests. In 1970, he switched to studying Huayin Laoqiang, first under the tutelage of Guo Ziren from southern Huayin and later under Lü Xiaolan. According to Wang himself, he was able to perform on stage after just six days of learning the moon guitar, earning him the nickname "Artistic Prodigy."

After mastering Huayin Laoqiang shadow puppetry from Lü Xiaolan, Wang Zhenzhong established the "Musheng Troupe." During this period, he combined Meihu Opera with other related genres and brought these innovative performances to the shadow puppet stage, earning widespread acclaim from audiences. He further integrated Laoqiang with other theatrical genres, continuously enhancing the performance skills of Laoqiang shadow puppetry. Wang Zhenzhong's obsession with art led him to create numerous singing segments that combined Laoqiang with Qin Opera, quickly garnering a large audience due to his exceptional skills. His repertoire included hand-copied and self-written scripts, totaling sixty to seventy plays, primarily featuring martial scenes.

Due to congenital visual impairment, Wang Zhenzhong memorized entire scripts, earning him the moniker "Living Script." He could perform various roles, including sheng (male), dan (female), jing (painted face), and chou (clown), as well as work as a qian hand. During the Cultural Revolution, Wang adapted to the times by creating many revolutionary-themed plays, such as "Golden Flower and Silver Flower," "Studying Mao's Works," and "Learning from Jiao Yulu," which he performed with the village's art propaganda team.

In 1980, the Wang Zhenzhong Troupe became the first shadow puppet troupe to revive traditional theatre in Huayin, performing "Taking Tiger Mountain by

Strategy," "Dujuan Mountain," and his new play "Forced to Mount Liang" at the county stadium, receiving applause from the audience and recognition from higher authorities. He then adapted "Havoc in Heaven" and created "Three Battles with the White Bone Demon," which caused a local stir. In 1993, Wang participated in the rehearsals and performance of Zhang Yimou's film "To Live," dubbing songs for Ge You. In 1996, he contributed to dubbing the movie "Peach Blossom Red," bringing Huayin Laoqiang to greater public attention.

To preserve this art form, the Shaanxi Provincial Department of Culture began recording Wang's Laoqiang music segments in late 1995, producing a booklet titled "Laoqiang Ban Style" in 1996, with over 60 pages.

The members of Wang Zhenzhong's troupe have included Sheng Xiangzhong, Wang Heli, Wei Xingbao, and others. Additionally, Wang Zhenzhong took on a female apprentice, Li Guizhen, which caused quite a stir, especially in Shuangquan Village, the stronghold of Laoqiang shadow puppetry, where the idea of a woman singing Laoqiang was initially unacceptable. However, Li Guizhen's success is undeniable. According to Wang Zhenzhong, he has now taken on a second female student, Zhang Qiuya. Modern acceptance of new performance formats for Laoqiang has led to the gradual acceptance of female performers. The nationwide success of the stage play "White Deer Plain" has changed many people's perceptions of Laoqiang, which is gratifying for the artists.

Through continuous effort and innovation, Wang Zhenzhong and his troupe have made significant contributions to the preservation and transmission of Laoqiang. Their various performances and exchanges have brought this ancient art form to broader stages. Their efforts have revitalised Laoqiang in modern society, winning the love and recognition of more audiences. In the future, Laoqiang will continue to spread and thrive in more places, allowing more people to appreciate this artistic treasure from the yellow earth.

2.2.2 The Zhang Ximin Troupe

The Zhang Ximin Troupe, one of the Huayin Laoqiang shadow puppet troupes from the Zhang family, is led by troupe master Zhang Ximin. Born in Shuangquan Village, Weiyu Township, Huayin County, Zhang Ximin was trained by the blind master Li Jishan and also studied under Zhang Shankun and Zhang

Quansheng. The leading members of the Zhang Ximin Troupe include Zhang Ximin (front hand and troupe leader), Zhang Shimin (qian hand), Li Genxian (banhu player), Zhang Siji (rear slot), and Zhang Weidong (assistant qian hand), with occasional assistance from Zhang Xinmin. Locally, the Zhang Ximin Troupe is considered an authentic Laoqiang troupe.

Zhang Ximin began performing before the Cultural Revolution. According to Zhang Ximin, he started learning Laoqiang shadow puppetry in 1963 after returning to Huayin from Ningxia with his family. Having grown up listening to the opera and possessing a natural musical talent, he was able to perform on stage just three months after beginning his studies. His father, Zhang Quansheng, assisted him with the qian hand, while his master, Li Jishan, played the banhu. Usually, it would be impossible to perform on stage after only three months of training. Still, Zhang Ximin achieved this thanks to his innate intelligence and talent, combined with the expert guidance of Zhang Quansheng, Li Jishan, and Zhang Zhiying. During performances, these three masters would cover Zhang Ximin's mistakes, ensuring his initial foray into the art was flourishing. He quickly gained fame, earning the affectionate nickname "Quandian Wa" from the villagers. His young age and role as the lead singer became significant attractions, drawing audiences to his performances. Annually, they performed about 150 shows, each earning around 15 yuan.

By 1980, shadow puppet performances had become increasingly frequent and widespread, often described as "booming." Local celebrations and events regularly invited shadow puppet troupes to perform, with the number of performances exceeding 100 annually. Performance fees rose from 15 yuan in the early 1960s to 60 yuan by the 1980s.

Zhang Ximin has won multiple awards. In 1994, he participated in the "Zhonglou Cup" new opera performance competition, organised by Shaanxi People's Radio, the Propaganda Department of Weinan City, and the Weinan Cultural Bureau, winning first prize for his role in "The Battle of the Three Heroes and Lü Bu." In January 1995, he received an Outstanding Performance Award at the "Weinan City Jianxing Cup" opera competition, hosted by the Shaanxi Provincial Department of Culture and the Weinan Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China. In May 1997, at the inaugural China Youth Culture Week "Chinese Youth Ethnic

Features Showcase," his works won the "Special Contribution Award for Heritage" for their ethnic characteristics. In 1998, at the first Weinan Shadow Puppet Performance Festival, Zhang Ximin won the Excellent Singing Award.

The Zhang family shadow puppet troupe and the Wang Zhenzhong Troupe are currently the leading Huayin Laoqiang troupes in the region, significantly contributing to the development and preservation of Laoqiang, ensuring its artistic charm continues to be appreciated.

Through diligent preservation and innovation, the Zhang Ximin Troupe has garnered widespread attention and affection. They showcase the unique charm of Laoqiang in various performances and competitions. Their efforts have revitalised this ancient art form in modern society, attracting an ever-growing audience.



Figure 24. Key Informant Zhang Ximin interview

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

It is a great honour that in March 2024 the researcher interviewed Mr. Zhang Ximin, a national inheritor, who mentioned that the Huayin Laoqiang originated in Huayin, Shaanxi Province, and is an ancient folk opera music with a history of thousands of years. It first originated as a prototype of the Qin opera, and then gradually developed and matured through the singing of the local working people. The Huayin Laoqiang is known for its stirring, high-pitched singing, strong emotional

expression and unique board changes, and was once widely circulated in the Guanzhong region, mainly used for temple fairs, rituals and other folk activities. The performance form of Huayin Laoqiang is very unique, relying mainly on simple percussive and plucked instruments, such as the wooden board and the moon zither, combined with a unique singing voice and performance style. The performers usually sit and sing with strong rhythms and powerful, penetrating tones. Laoqiang singers often need strong lung capacity and voice control in order to achieve a stunning artistic effect. Regarding the current status of Huayin Laoqiang, he told the author that in recent years, Huayin Laoqiang has gradually moved to a bigger stage, and even combined with pop music, to which he believes: 'To develop traditional art, we can't stick to the stereotypes, but rather, we have to follow the trend of the times and find new ways of expression. We have co-operated with rock bands, combining the original singing of the old cavity with modern music elements, bringing a sense of freshness to the audience. This crossover attempt has brought more young people to pay attention to Laoqiang, and at the same time broadened the expressive power of the Laoqiang, making it more contemporary. Currently, we are trying to introduce more young people to Laoqiang through school education, online promotion and stage performances, etc. We are also encouraging young people to participate in Laoqiang classes to experience the charm of this art. At the same time, the government and relevant cultural organisations are also increasing their support in the hope of attracting more young people to devote themselves to the study and inheritance of Laoqiang.' Mr Zhang Ximin also said that he hoped we could also try to combine it with film and television, animation, stage plays, etc., so that the sound of the old canton can travel through time and space and touch more people's hearts. Inheritance is not simply copying, but constantly innovating while adhering to the fundamentals. From this, we can see that the Huayin Laoqiang can not only continue to flourish in the traditional field, but also find a broader horizon in new cultural contexts in the future.

In the future, the Zhang Ximin Troupe and other Laoqiang artists will continue to shine on various stages, conveying the profound emotions and unique charm of the yellow earth. Through continuous performances and promotions, they will not only spread and promote Laoqiang art in Shaanxi but also across the country and

internationally. The efforts of Zhang Ximin and his troupe members will ensure that this precious cultural heritage is better preserved and developed.

3. The Current Status of Huayin Laoqiang's Education in Contemporary Music

In response to the national call for the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), Professor Yang Junyan, director of the Qin Dong Intangible Cultural Heritage Base, has led efforts to promote local traditional culture. These efforts focus on the inheritance, display, and research of ICH cultural arts, integrating a comprehensive inheritance model across universities, middle schools, and primary schools with local cultural and artistic resources. This integrated approach supports the propagation and educational outreach of Qin Dong ICH culture within schools. Currently, the university base is at Weinan Normal University, the middle school base is Weinan Junior High School, and the primary school bases are Huashan Town Primary School and Guanchi Primary School in Dali County.



Figure 25. Huayin Laoqiang campus activities

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

In 2021, Huashan Town Yaochang Primary School in Huayin City was designated as a Qin Dong Intangible Cultural Heritage Science Popularisation Base. On November 17, 2021, the successful hosting of the fifth University Students' Laoqiang Music Festival at the Weinan Normal University Qin Dong ICH Science Popularisation Base marked the achievements of the integrated model. Yaochang

Primary School, as a branch venue, collaborated with Laoqiang artist Zhang Ximin to perform "The General's Call Echoes Across the Mountains and Rivers."



Figure 26. Huayin Laoqiang campus activities II

Source: Zhang Ximin, from fieldwork in March 2024

The Qin Dong Intangible Cultural Heritage Science Popularisation Base, a Shaanxi Province Social Science Popularisation Base, is supported by the Weinan Normal University ICH Inheritance Research Team. It was established on August 8, 2019, with approval from the Shaanxi Provincial Federation of Social Sciences, building upon the University Students' Laoqiang Drama Club (founded in December 2016) and the University Students' Laogu Troupe (established in December 2017). The base, led by Professor Yang Junyan, comprises 31 full-time and part-time researchers. Their primary research areas include the inheritance studies of Qin Dong ICH Laoqiang shadow puppetry, Qin Dong ICH gong and drum arts, and Qin Dong ICH music and dance cultural arts.

These educational initiatives demonstrate a structured and collaborative approach to preserving and promoting Huayin Laoqiang. By integrating Laoqiang into the curricula and extracurricular activities of various academic institutions, these efforts protect this ancient art form and breathe new life into it, ensuring that future generations can appreciate and carry forward its unique cultural heritage.



Figure 27. Huayin Laoqiang campus activities III

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

The base is rooted in the Qin Dong region, with a mission to promote local traditional culture. By integrating an "ICH" inheritance model across universities, middle schools, and primary schools and leveraging local cultural and artistic resources, the base supports the inheritance and popularisation of Qin Dong ICH culture within educational institutions. Under the guidance of Professor Yang Junyan, the base has trained 210 university students in Laoqiang and traditional drum performance. It has successfully hosted four Laoqiang academic seminars and music festivals, with team members publishing over 30 scholarly papers and authoring two monographs. The team has secured one national-level project and 25 projects at the provincial, departmental, and university levels, as well as six national patents. Faculty members have guided six student innovation and entrepreneurship projects, "Internet Plus" projects, and excellent teacher projects. Additionally, they have organised more than 160 ICH popularisation series performances and academic exchange activities.

These efforts have yielded significant academic and practical results, garnering widespread acclaim from various sectors of society. More than 60 news media outlets, including the People's Daily, Guangming Daily, CCTV-10, CCTV-2, Shaanxi TV, Hebei TV, and Hubei TV, have reported on these activities, further enhancing the visibility and influence of Huayin Laoqiang and Qin Dong ICH. According to the report, these achievements and initiatives demonstrate the base's

commitment to the protection of traditional culture and innovation. By training a new generation of Laoqiang performers and integrating this art form into a modern educational environment, the base ensures that Huayin Laoqiang remains vibrant and relevant.



Figure 28. Shuangquan Village Huayin Laoqiang Training Centre

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

However, during field research in Shuangquan Village, Huayin City, Shaanxi Province, in 2024, the researchers visited the local Huayin Laokuang Training School. Despite the centre's aim to teach this unique art form, most of the people enrolled in the training programme are elderly. The conspicuous absence of young trainees is worrying for the future of the art form.

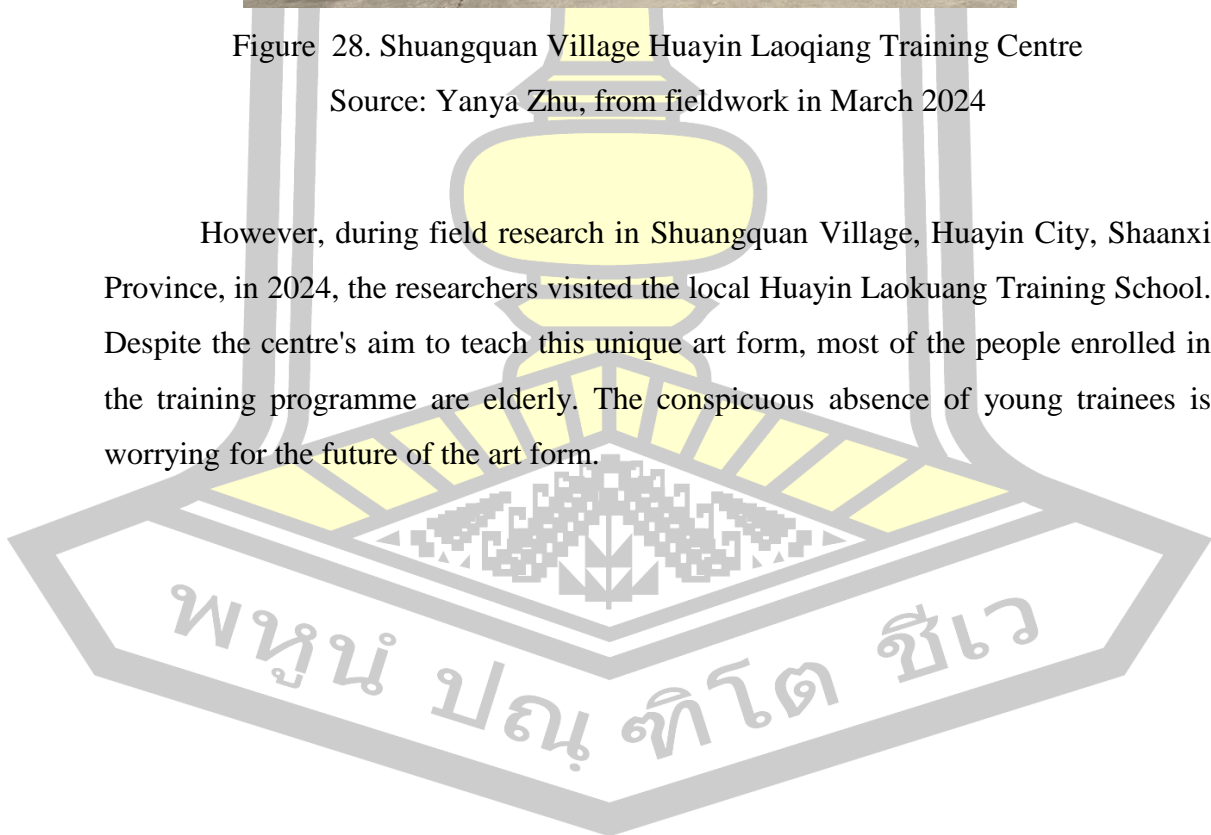




Figure 29. Zhang Fuben, a teacher at the training centre, shares information about education with researcher.

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

Zhang Fuben, an educator at Huayin Laoqiang, told me that many courses are free in order to encourage participation. However, despite this incentive, participation rates among young people remain low. A common problem highlighted by the teachers is that young learners often lack perseverance. In addition, cultural and historical factors have led to the limited preservation of traditional repertoire. For example, some songs are limited by the original ‘male-only’ (passed down only to males) customs, while others have been lost due to historical disruptions. At the same time, inheritor Zhang Fuben said that the most widely disseminated work of Huayin Laoqiang is currently ‘Give You a Little Color’, which combines contemporary pop music, and to date there has only been one contemporary music work of this type. Many young learners only learned about Huayin Laoqiang because of the media buzz. Many years have passed, and there has been no new work to continue the output, which also affects the current situation of Huayin Laoqiang education development... Due to the complexity of Huayin Laoqiang's singing skills, it mainly relies on personal experience to teach, and the lack of standardised syllabus, teaching materials and assessment system makes it difficult to enter the formal music education system. Compared with popular music and traditional opera, the audience of Huayin Laoqiang is narrower, and young people are generally not interested in it, resulting in a limited number of students. In addition, due to the high demands on the voice, it is difficult

for learners to insist on long-term training. Although Huayin Laoqiang has been fused with rock, pop and other forms of music, this fusion is still in the preliminary stage of exploration. How to maintain the original flavour of the Huayin Laoqiang on the basis of the development of singing techniques and arrangements suitable for the modern stage still requires in-depth research.

To summarise, at present, the transmission of Huayin Laoqiang relies mainly on the traditional master-apprentice system and folk training courses. For example, national non-genetic inheritors such as Zhang Ximin have organised training courses to train a new generation of inheritors. However, due to the long learning cycle, the high demand for singing skills, and the limited interest of young people in this art form, the participants are mostly middle-aged and old people, and young trainees between the ages of 10 and 30 are extremely rare. In the higher music education system, Huayin Laoqiang has yet to receive systematic and professional teaching support. The music courses of most colleges and universities are still dominated by mainstream music education such as American voice, folk singing and pop singing, while the teaching of Huayin Laoqiang, a local opera and folk music, is less involved and limited to non-heritage courses or special lectures in some colleges and universities. In recent years, Huayin Laoqiang has gradually been noticed by the pop music industry, and the combination with modern music has become a new way to promote it. For example, in 2016, Huayin Laoqiang's performance of Huayin Laoqiang with Chinese singer Tan Weiwei at the CCTV Spring Festival Gala brought Huayin Laoqiang rapidly into the public eye. However, in the field of music education, the research and teaching of this cross-border fusion has not yet formed a complete curriculum system, with only scattered case studies. Once again, the Huayin Laoqiang is mainly sung with the real voice, emphasising a high and impassioned tone, and this way of singing is more burdensome to the voice. Because the traditional master-apprentice system relies mainly on experience and lacks scientific methods of voice protection, many veteran artists face the risk of voice damage after a long period of singing. However, no in-depth study of Huayin Laoqiang's vocal techniques, voice training and scientific protection methods has yet been conducted in the opera or folk vocal courses of music colleges and universities. How to maintain the original flavour of Huayin Laoqiang and draw on modern vocal techniques for scientific

training is still a problem that needs to be considered in contemporary music education. Huayin Laoqiang, as an important part of traditional Chinese music culture, is facing the dual challenges of inheritance and innovation. In the contemporary music education system, how to maintain its original artistic charm while adapting to the communication needs of modern society is a topic worthy of in-depth discussion. By establishing a systematic education system, training young inheritors, strengthening cross-disciplinary research and promoting scientific vocalisation methods, Huayin Laoqiang may be able to regain its vitality in the new era.

4. The Performance Status of Huayin Laoqiang in Contemporary Music

In recent years, Huayin Laoqiang has seen a resurgence in public attention, bolstered by government promotion and encouragement. Despite being a traditional music form that might have faded into obscurity, it has re-emerged in the public eye, thanks to successful heritage preservation efforts, appearances on major television events like the Spring Festival Gala, and participation in various music programmes. The collaborative performance "Give You a Little Color" by Tan Weiwei and Laoqiang artists Zhang Ximin garnered widespread attention, highlighting the fusion of traditional and modern music and offering valuable insights into blending these genres.

The researchers visited Shuangquan Village, the birthplace of Huayin Laoqiang, and toured the local opera stage. The inheritors expressed that with the support of the government, the stage has been rebuilt and the classrooms for learning Huayin Laoqiang have also been refurbished. Every major holiday, this opera stage will have performances of Huayin Laoqiang.



Figure 30. View of the Huayin Laoqiang stage in Shuangquan Village
Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 31. Close-up of the Huayin Laoqiang stage in Shuangquan Village
Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

At the same time, performances of Huayin Laoqiang and shadow puppetry are also held every night in the Gao Family Courtyard in Xi'an, the capital of Shaanxi Province, for tourists to enjoy.



Figure 32. Xi'an Gao Family Courtyard

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

The Gao Family Courtyard is located in the heart of Xi'an and is a typical Ming and Qing Dynasty courtyard house. Stepping into the courtyard, the first thing that catches the eye is the well-proportioned courtyard and exquisite architecture.



Figure 33. Xi'an Gao Family Courtyard Huayin Laoqiang Performance Venue

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

In addition to its grand scale and exquisite craftsmanship, the Gao Family Courtyard also offers many national intangible cultural heritage experiences with ethnic characteristics, such as folk paper cutting, painting, shadow puppetry, etc.

Among them, the performances of Huayin Laoqiang and shadow puppetry are the most popular in the Gao Family Courtyard. Many tourists who come here will watch a performance of Huayin Laoqiang and shadow puppetry.

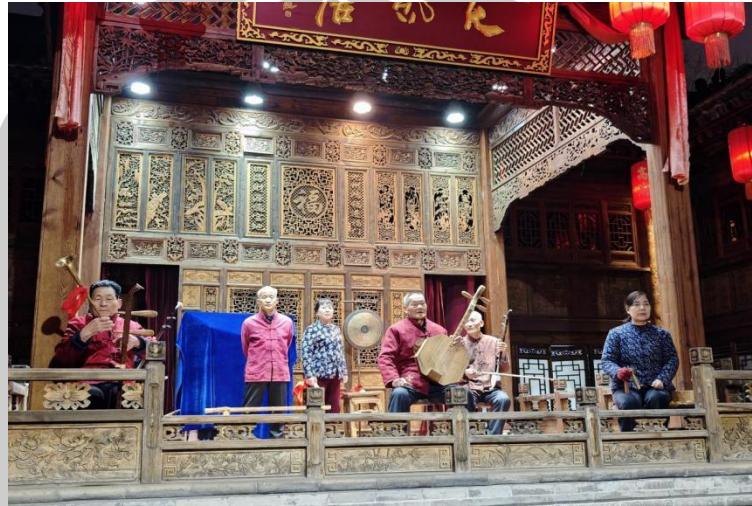


Figure 34. Xi'an Gao Family Courtyard Huayin Laoqiang live performance

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

4.1 Contemporary Huayin Laoqiang Performers

Huayin Laoqiang, as an important branch of traditional Chinese opera art, can trace its origins back to the Ming and Qing dynasties, and is deeply influenced by Shaanxi folk culture and regional characteristics. Huayin Laoqiang is known for its high-pitched and passionate singing style, its highly penetrating vocal techniques, and its sonorous and powerful ban drum accompaniment. Its singing style mainly relies on local temple fairs, folk sacrifices and other occasions, showing a strong local cultural colour. In addition, Huayin Laoqiang's musical language is full of expression, and its unique vocal structure and rhythmic changes create a powerful aural experience. In recent years, Huayin Laoqiang has shown new vitality in contemporary music creation. Its art form has gradually broken through the performance mode of traditional opera and has carried out various fusion practices with modern music. For example, rock bands have collaborated with Huayin Laoqiang artists to combine their high-pitched and passionate singing with modern instruments, giving it new vitality. At the same time, some music creators have explored the application of Huayin Laoqiang in modern music, film and television soundtracks, and other fields by re-

arranging the music and incorporating electronic music elements, giving it a wider space for dissemination. So far, the most influential contemporary music work of Huayin Laoqiang is ‘Give You a Little Colour’ , performed by national inheritors Mr. Zhang Ximing and Ms. Tan Weiwei.

Tan Weiwei: Born in Zigong, Sichuan, in 1982, Tan Weiwei is a famous female singer from mainland China who pursued advanced studies at the Sichuan Conservatory of Music. She possesses a unique artistic talent, adeptly understanding and integrating different musical styles, combining techniques from folk, bel canto, and pop singing in her performances. This versatility was evident in her participation in singing competitions.

During her appearance on the program "Chinese Star" on Dragon TV, Tan Weiwei achieved great success by collaborating ideally with five Huayin Laoqiang artists to perform the unique piece "Give You a Little Color." In 2016, she participated in the CCTV Spring Festival Gala for the Year of the Monkey, once again joining forces with five veteran artists to perform "The Call of Huayin Laoqiang," which was well received by a broad audience. This female singer, who excels at "crossing over" between traditional Chinese folk music and modern pop music, has made a significant impact through her talent and dedication, bringing Huayin Laoqiang to a broader audience and demonstrating the perfect fusion of traditional and modern music.

Tan Weiwei's success not only showcases her personal artistic talent but also injects new vitality into the dissemination and development of Huayin Laoqiang. Her work has ensured that more people remember and appreciate this ancient art form, highlighting the potential for traditional music to thrive in a modern context.

The reinvigorated interest in Huayin Laoqiang has led to the creation of many new works, demonstrating that traditional music can find a dynamic place in contemporary culture. The collaboration between Tan Weiwei and Huayin Laoqiang artists serves as a model for how traditional and modern music can coexist and enrich each other, paving the way for further innovations and ensuring the continued relevance and vibrancy of this cultural heritage.

Interviewee Zhang Fuben said that from the perspective of singing techniques, there are significant differences between Huayin Laoqiang and popular songs in terms

of breath control, use of resonance and emotional expression. Huayin Laoqiang singing emphasises chest resonance and a high sound pressure to achieve a high-pitched and passionate effect, while popular songs pay more attention to the diversity of timbre, soft transitions and subtle emotional expression. In addition, Huayin Laoqiang singing emphasises ‘shouting’, which is to say that it uses extreme pitches and explosive power to create a strong dramatic tension. This is combined with a unique percussion instrument, the wooden board, to achieve a double shock to the senses. Pop songs, on the other hand, usually use more fluid melodic lines to appeal to a wider audience.



Figure 35. Key informant Zhang Fuben shows the interviewer the percussion instruments used in the performance

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

Huayin Laoqiang not only carries the deep cultural memory of the Chinese nation, but also plays an important innovative role in the context of contemporary music. Its unique artistic expression makes it uniquely attractive in cultural exchanges and international communication. However, against the backdrop of accelerating

modernization, the protection and development of Huayin Laoqiang still faces challenges. Therefore, in the future, the sustainable development of Huayin Laoqiang in the new era should be promoted by strengthening the protection of intangible cultural heritage, encouraging cross-border cooperation, and expanding educational and promotional channels, so that it can continue to shine in the contemporary music culture ecosystem. Since the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang and popular music in the work ‘Give You a Little Color’ has received a huge response in China, many Chinese singers have since invited Huayin Laoqiang inheritors to collaborate on covers of the song. For example, the famous Chinese rock singer Cui Jian once invited Huayin Laoqiang inheritor Zhang Fuben to collaborate, as shown in the photo below:



Figure 36. Key informant Zhang Fuben shows the interviewer photos of the performance

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

4.2 Contemporary Huayin Laoqiang Performers

4.2.1 Film and television work promotion: In 2016, the documentary Laoqiang was released, detailing the origin, inheritance, and development of Huayin Laoqiang. This film has played a positive role in protecting and disseminating Huayin Laoqiang. In addition, Huayin Laoqiang has also appeared in various variety shows, TV dramas, and documentaries, further enhancing its social influence.

4.2.2 Artistic awards and recognition: In recent years, Huayin Laoqiang has won numerous artistic awards on many domestic and international stages in recognition of its outstanding contributions to the art of opera and the inheritance of culture. For example, the Huayin Laoqiang Opera Troupe has won many awards at the Chinese Opera Festival, and its performers have also been awarded honorary titles such as 'Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor'. These honours reflect society's recognition of Huayin Laoqiang's artistic value.

4.2.3 Appearances at major domestic and international arts festivals: Huayin Laoqiang frequently participates in important arts festivals and cultural performances at home and abroad, becoming an essential ambassador for traditional Chinese culture abroad. For example, Huayin Laoqiang has appeared at the China Arts Festival, the Beijing Music Festival, and other important events and has been invited to tour Europe and the United States, winning the recognition and appreciation of international audiences. These performances not only showcase the artistic charm of Huayin Laoqiang but also promote cultural exchange and integration between China and the rest of the world.

In summary, contemporary urbanites increasingly seek authentic art forms, yearning for a sense of peace and belonging that traditional culture can provide. Huayin Laoqiang perfectly satisfies this pursuit of pure art with its unique, expressive style and rich rustic charm. Its rough, powerful voices and bold performances deliver a solid audiovisual impact and convey a long-lost simplicity and sincerity, resonating deeply with audiences. The fast pace and high pressure of modern society drive people to seek a simple and pure way of emotional expression amidst the complexities of life. The straightforward emotional expression and uninhibited performance style of Huayin Laoqiang offer emotional release for audiences. During a Laoqiang

performance, people can temporarily forget their daily troubles and fully immerse themselves in the passionate display, finding spiritual release and satisfaction. Huayin Laoqiang's appeal lies in its ability to starkly contrast the often artificial and superficial forms of modern entertainment. It brings audiences back to the basics of human emotion and connection, tapping into their deep-seated desires for authenticity and genuine experience. This connection to traditional culture not only preserves but also revitalizes Huayin Laoqiang's heritage, making it relevant and accessible to contemporary audiences. Through its integration with modern society, Huayin Laoqiang has not only preserved its original artistic essence but also gained new vitality. Whether in large domestic concert halls or on international art exchange stages, Huayin Laoqiang has showcased its unique charm, attracting widespread admiration and attention. In the future, Huayin Laoqiang will continue to spread and flourish in more venues, allowing a broader audience to experience and appreciate this artistic treasure from the yellow earth.

5. What are the current repercussions and status of the Chinese Huayin Laoqiang in Chinese society?

At present, Huayin Laoqiang's influence in Chinese society is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

I. Increased cultural fervour: Since Huayin Laoqiang's appearance at the CCTV Spring Festival Gala and its collaboration with rock bands, it has received widespread attention across the country. Many viewers have been attracted by its shocking singing style and highly charged expression, and consider it a highly powerful and nationally distinctive form of music.

II. Crossover co-operation to boost popularity: In recent years, Huayin Laoqiang has actively integrated modern music, including rock, pop, film and television soundtracks. For example, it has collaborated with singer Tan Weiwei in the rendition of 'Give You Some Colour', which combines traditional and modern music to interest young audiences. This kind of cross-border co-operation has allowed Huayin Laoqiang to step out of the realm of traditional folk music and attract a wider audience.

III. Academic research and cultural protection: As a national intangible cultural heritage, Huayin Laoqiang has been highly valued by the government and the academic community. Various cultural institutions and music colleges have carried out relevant research, trying to explore its artistic value, technical characteristics and development path from an academic point of view. At the same time, the government has also increased its support for non-genetic inheritance so that it can be better preserved and developed. As shown in a series of diagrams below, the researcher watched the recently launched Shaanxi Intangible Cultural Heritage stage play Wu Jie:



Figure 37. Researchers watch the intangible cultural heritage stage play 'Wu Jie' in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

Wu Jie is the first large-scale resident conceptual performance in China directed by the famous Chinese director Zhang Yimou. It officially debuted in Xi'an on November 9, 2023. The work is based on the intangible cultural heritage of Shaanxi Province and incorporates modern technological methods to present a unique artistic charm. The performance is divided into eight chapters: 'He Ming', 'Ni

Shang’, ‘Ying Ren’, ‘Wan Xiang’, ‘Chang An’, ‘Chong Yuan’, ‘Gong Sheng’ and ‘Chuan Qi’. Each chapter has a different style and a profound meaning. These chapters are based on classic intangible cultural heritage, exploring the artistic expression methods with the most distinctive Shaanxi characteristics. Combined with cutting-edge stage technology, they present the artistic conception and thinking of ‘a square inch of stage, time and space without boundaries’ through collision, exploration and integration. In terms of stage design, the performance uses high-tech elements such as rotating and moving LED side screens, liftable LED screen matrices, and holographic gauze screens to create a huge image box space and create an immersive audiovisual experience. Zhang Yimou, the chief director, said that he hopes to break the boundaries of time and space and connect the ancient and the modern through this new type of stage that is full of a sense of the future and technology, and showcase the unique charm of Shaanxi. Since its premiere, ‘Wu Jie’ has received widespread attention and acclaim from the audience, and has been hailed as a borderless journey of technology and art. This work not only showcases the infinite possibilities of traditional culture, but also brings new thinking and expectations for future cultural development.



Figure 38. Intangible Cultural Heritage Live Stage Theatre Huayin Laoqiang Chapter
‘Ying Ren’

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

Ying Ren is a distinctive chapter in Wu Jie, which explores the unique charm of traditional Chinese folk music culture by exploring the interplay of light and shadow, the imaginary and the real, with 'Huayin Laoqiang' as its core. Ying Ren is centred around the Shaanxi shadow puppetry, an ancient intangible cultural heritage of China. Shadow puppetry is a traditional form of theatre that uses light to project leather silhouettes and performs stories on a curtain, and is known as 'the origin of animation in China'. This chapter tries to reproduce the meaning of 'between light and shadow, a hundred forms of life' through the combination of modern technology and traditional art, and expresses the persistent pursuit of shadow puppeteers, as well as the vitality of this art form through time and space. The soundtrack is based on Huayin Laoqiang tunes, fused with electronic music and orchestral arrangements, giving new life to traditional folk singing. During the performance, the actors interact with the projected shadow characters, creating a special way of performing that pays homage to tradition and presents a new form of theatre expression. Ying Ren is not only a presentation of Huayin Laoqiang and shadow theatre as an art form, but also a reflection on the relationship between traditional cultural heritage and modern innovation. After watching the film, many audience members said that they had a deeper understanding of the traditional art of Huayin Laoqiang and shadow puppetry, and were also impressed by the artistic effect of 'interlacing light and shadow, hard to distinguish the real from the fake'. This chapter was also considered one of the most poetic and symbolic parts of the show.

พหุมนุ ปรณุ ทิโต ชีเว

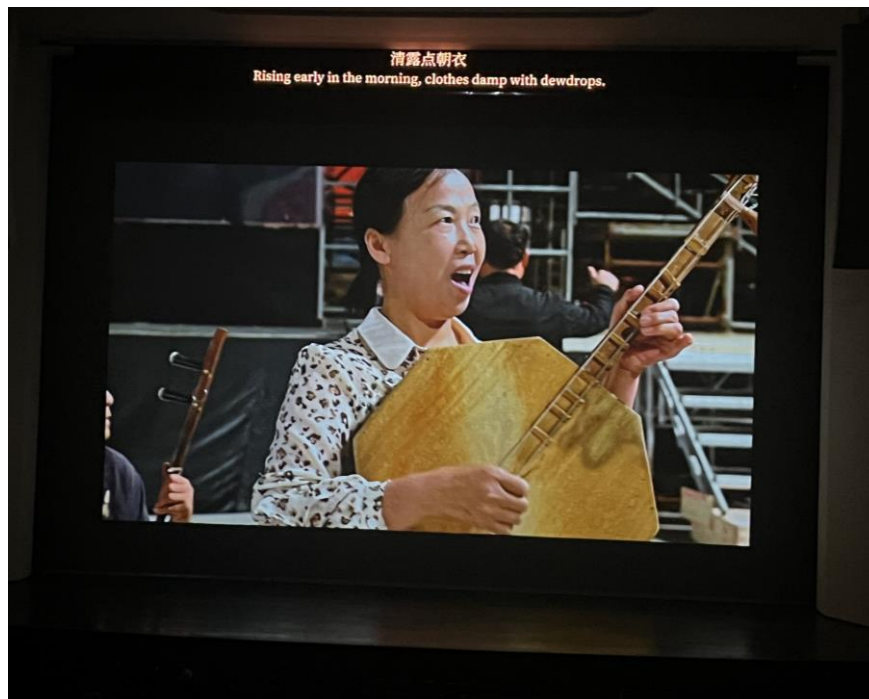


Figure 39. Huayin Laoqiang female inheritor Zhang Xiangling performs in ‘Ying Ren’

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

IV. Acceptance by the younger generation: Although Huayin Laoqiang has received more attention, its acceptance by the younger generation is still limited due to its unique singing style and its big difference from mainstream pop music. Although some young people are interested in it because of its shocking power, more innovative and promotional approaches are still needed to make it as popular as pop music.

V. Society communication and media influence: With the rise of short video platforms, variety shows and music festivals, Huayin Laoqiang's communication in the new media environment has increased. For example, some bloggers and musicians share clips of Huayin Laoqiang's performances on social media, which creates a certain buzz on the internet. In addition, some Chinese music festivals have also tried to introduce Huayin Laoqiang performances to a younger music scene.

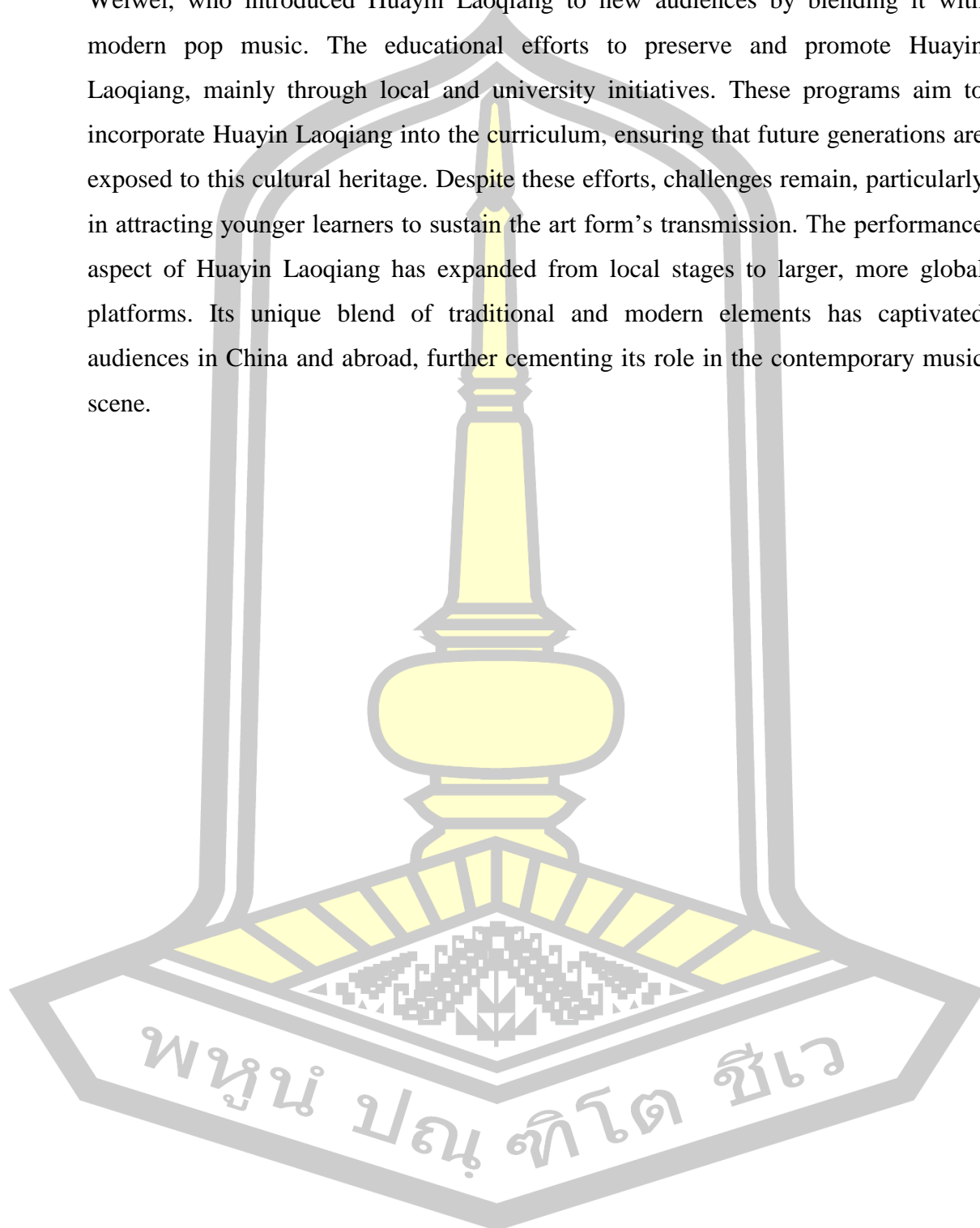
As seen in the above five aspects, Huayin Laoqiang's influence in Chinese society has gradually increased, but it still faces the problem of how to better integrate

into the modern music environment and attract young audiences. In the future, in addition to government support and academic research, Huayin Laoqiang needs to occupy a more important position in the contemporary music market through innovative interpretation, digital dissemination, and international promotion. As one of the first batch of intangible cultural heritages in China, Huayin Laoqiang has attracted a lot of attention in society in recent years. In 2015, singer Tan Weiwei sang a performance incorporating Huayin Laoqiang in the music programme China Star. In 2015, singer Tan Weiwei sang the song 'Give You a Little Color' in the music programme 'Star of China', which combined elements of Huayin Laoqiang. The performance was hailed as 'a perfect combination of rock and traditional art in the Chinese pop music scene', and triggered a strong reaction from the audience and professionals. In 2016, Huayin Laoqiang appeared at the CCTV Spring Festival Gala, causing quite a stir and attention nationwide. However, this fervour waned over time. In 2024, in October, Huayin Laoqiang artists were invited to perform in Beijing, attracting a large number of young viewers and demonstrating its continued influence in specific cultural circles. Overall, Huayin Laoqiang's mainstream popularity in Chinese society is relatively limited, but it maintains a certain level of interest among traditional culture enthusiasts and specific art circles. As for Tan Weiwei's Give You a Little Colour, a fusion of tradition and modernity, its influence has waned in the years since its release, and it is now not as hot as it was at the beginning of its popularity in the pop music scene.

Summary

The current status of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese folk music in contemporary music by examining its geography, transmission, education, performance and social reaction. Huayin Laoqiang originated in Huayin City, Shaanxi Province, and played a central role in shadow puppet theater. Its distinct musical style, characterized by rugged vocals and rhythmic use of clappers and benches, has evolved while maintaining its artistic integrity. The chapter explores the family-based inheritance system of Huayin Laoqiang, highlighting the Zhang family's role in passing down this tradition over centuries. Although traditionally confined to male family members, the art form has gradually opened up, allowing for broader participation and adaptation. Recent years have seen Huayin Laoqiang gain prominence through media exposure,

international performances, and collaborations with contemporary artists such as Tan Weiwei, who introduced Huayin Laoqiang to new audiences by blending it with modern pop music. The educational efforts to preserve and promote Huayin Laoqiang, mainly through local and university initiatives. These programs aim to incorporate Huayin Laoqiang into the curriculum, ensuring that future generations are exposed to this cultural heritage. Despite these efforts, challenges remain, particularly in attracting younger learners to sustain the art form's transmission. The performance aspect of Huayin Laoqiang has expanded from local stages to larger, more global platforms. Its unique blend of traditional and modern elements has captivated audiences in China and abroad, further cementing its role in the contemporary music scene.



CHAPTER V

The Fusion of Huayin Laoqiang Chinese Folk Music in Contemporary Music

This chapter explores the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang, a traditional Chinese folk music genre, with contemporary music, highlighting its integration into modern musical forms while retaining its cultural essence. Through a descriptive research approach, fieldwork, and in-depth interviews with three key inheritors from Shuangquan Village, Huayin City, Shaanxi Province, this chapter analyzes five representative Huayin Laoqiang pieces. These pieces are examined across five musical aspects: structure, rhythm, melody, lyrics, and singing characteristics. By integrating Huayin Laoqiang with modern musical elements, the chapter emphasizes the transformative potential of blending traditional art forms with popular music, reflecting both a preservation of cultural heritage and an adaptation to contemporary trends.

1. Qin Qiong Da Liang
2. Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan
3. Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai (with Yueqin)
4. Guan Zhong Gu Ge (with Yueqin)
5. Give You a Little Color

1. Qin Qiong Da Liang (秦琼打粮)

Background of the song 'Qin Qiong Da Liang' (See full score in Appendix I)

Qin Qiong Da Liang is a Huayin Laoqiang classic theatre piece with a background derived from traditional Chinese folktales and historical legends, particularly those relating to Qin Qiong (Qin Shubao), a famous general of the Tang Dynasty. Qin Qiong Da Liang takes place during the chaotic period of the late Sui and early Tang dynasties, when Qin Qiong, a famous general, was revered for his loyalty to his country. However, due to the social turmoil of the time, Qin Qiong was once in dire straits, struggling to maintain even a basic living. To support his family, he had to

sell his art and fight for food to make a living. This work depicts Qin Qiong's spirit of loyalty and resilience despite his difficult life, and also highlights his inner struggle and helplessness as a heroic figure.



Figure 40. Qin Qiong Da Liang

Source: Yanya Zhu, retrieved from Fieldwork (2024)

1.1 Structure

Table 2. The Musical structure of Qin Qiong Da Liang

Structure name	Parallel binary form							
Primary structure	A				B			
Secondary structure	a	b	a1	c	d	e	f	g
Number of bars	1-6	7-9	10-14	15-18	19-24	25-29	30-34	35-39
(musical) mode	A Qing Yue Shang Qisheng							

The music is in parallel single-movement binary form and consists of two sections: the exposition (A) and the contrasting development (B). The primary key is A-minor, a simple tonality. The tempo is medium, and the time signature is 2/4.

The exposition A is a compound section with a four-phrase structure, consisting of four phrases of unequal length, and is not a regular structure. The theme

phrase a is divided into two sections of 3+3. Phrase b contrasts phrase a and is shortened to three bars. Phrase a1 develops the theme phrase from the beginning to the end. Phrase c also contrasts the previous phrase and ends with the tonic of the key to form a conclusion.

The contrasting section B is a four-phrase structure with a beginning, a middle, and a conclusion, and consists of four contrasting phrases of unequal lengths. The d phrase has an internal structure of 3+3. The e phrase has an internal structure of 3+2 and contrasts with the d phrase. The f phrase has an internal structure of 2+3 and is also in contrast to the previous phrase. The g phrase cannot be divided into bars and has the characteristics of a coda and an epilogue, expanding the entire phrase.

1.2 Rhythm

The piece is rich in rhythmic combinations. In addition to the regular even combination of eighth notes and the rhythmic pattern of quarter notes, the main features are the rhythm of sixteenth notes followed by eighth notes, the rhythm of syncopation, the rhythm of crotchet and quaver, and the rhythm of a dotted crotchet followed by a dotted quaver.

7

堂主爷 圣旨降下来 大小 哎

tang zhu ye sheng zhi jiang xia lai da xiao ai

Figure 41. Excerpt from 'Qin Qiong Da Liang'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The rhythm constantly drives the development of the music. The syncopated rhythm is the most characteristic of this song. For example, the syncopated notes formed by the sustained lines in bars 1, 4, 7, 10, 12, 13, 24, 26, and 28 break the beat's original firm and weak rhythm, thus giving the folk song its characteristic rhythm. Overall, the rhythm in the piece's beginning is relatively loose, gradually becoming more dense as the melody develops until it ends with a series of sixteenth notes. Regarding the rhythm of each section, the first section is sparse, and the second

is dense, while the contrasting section is dense in the first half and sparse in the second.

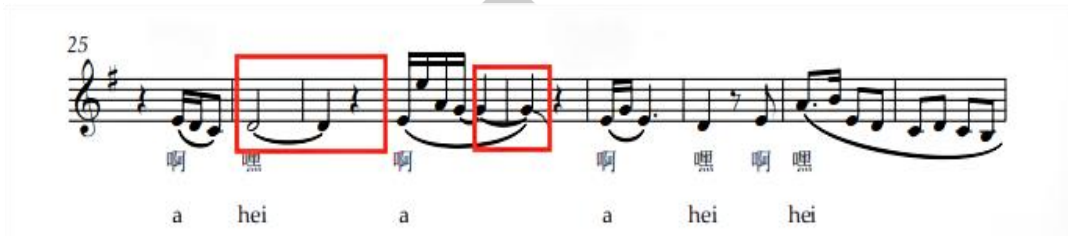


Figure 42. Excerpt from 'Qin Qiong Da Liang'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

1.3 Melody

Presentation section a The melodic theme is framed by a downward motion broken down into e, g, and b chords, with the descending third as the primary interval relationship. The steady progression gives the melody a narrative character. b The overall presentation of the phrase is downward, but the interval progression adds fourths, sixths, and sevenths, gradually expanding. a1 The melody of the phrase a1 The melody shows a wavy line. Third and fourth intervals dominate the first half of the phrase, and the intervals are expanded at the end, with a seventh leap upwards, making the melody more passionate. c The overall melody of the phrase is downward, with intervals narrowing from a fifth at the beginning to a third and a second and ending smoothly on the key's tonic.

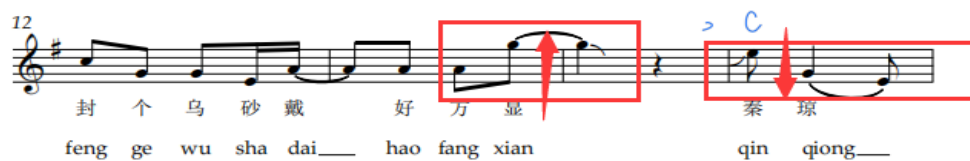


Figure 43. Excerpt from 'Qin Qiong Da Liang'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The contrasting section d has a characteristic inverted U-shaped melody. The first bars pushes upwards, the second goes downwards, and the core interval is mainly a fourth. The characteristic of the e phrase is the upward octave jump in bars 28. The

octave jump in Chinese folk songs is very representative. The f phrase moves steadily downward to the tonic in a descending melody. The g phrase is highly mobile, but the upward leap of a fourth at the beginning of bars 35 is still typical and is related to the fourth material in the d phrase.

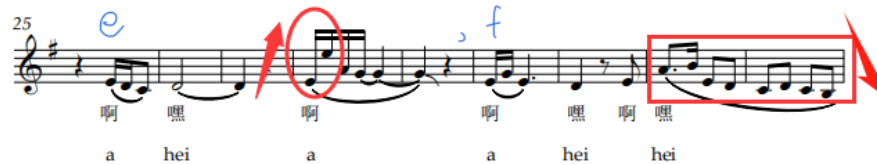


Figure 44. Excerpt from 'Qin Qiong Da Liang'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

1.4 Lyrics

The lyrics to 'Qin Qiong Da Liang,' a classic piece from Huayin Laoqiang, describe the courageous exploits and the glory of the Tang general Qin Qiong (Qin Shubao), who was given an official title and title. The lyrics, as shown in the full score in Appendix I, are as follows:

shang zhen sha de ren ji ge.
tang zhu ye sheng zhi jiang xia lai.
da xiao feng ge wu sha dai.
fang xian qin qiong you qi cai.

We can understand the meaning of each lyric in this way:

'Shang zhen sha de ren ji ge': this line depicts Qin Qiong's valor in killing the enemy on the battlefield, implying that as a military general, he excelled in war and defeated the enemy.

'Tang zhu ye sheng zhi jiang xia lai': the "tang zhu ye" mentioned here refers to the authority of the imperial court, and the issuance of the imperial decree implies the court's recognition and affirmation of Qin Qiong.

'Da xiao feng ge wu sha dai': this sentence expresses that Qin Qiong, because of his outstanding achievements in battle, was rewarded by the imperial court with an official title, symbolizing the promotion of his honor and status. 'Wu Sha' refers to the black hat representing the official position.

‘Fang Xian Qin Qiong you Qi cai’: the last sentence highlights Qin Qiong's talent and achievements, showing that he was not only brave but also a talented and famous general who was able to gain recognition from the imperial court through his military successes.

Huayin Laoqiang commonly uses five-character phrases, seven-character phrases, and ten-character phrases, all of which have one upper sentence and one lower sentence as the primary structural form. Huayin Laoqiang also has ‘sigh’ style long and short phrases with irregular structure, different numbers of words, and different lengths of words. This song belongs to the seven-word sentence whose word frame is divided into two, two, and three structural forms. These lyrics continue the narrative style of singing the praises of historical heroes in traditional Chinese operas, showing the praises of loyal officials and good generals. By describing Qin Qiong's bravery on the battlefield and the reward he receives, the song demonstrates the cultural heritage and social values that Huayin Laoqiang carries as an opera with a historical theme.

1.5 Singing characteristics

The singing characteristics of ‘Qin Qiong Da Liang’ are mainly embodied in its bold and magnificent vocal style, complex vocal techniques, and musical rhythm, which express the strong emotions and storyline.

Huayin Laoqiang belongs to the Plate Cavity Opera genre, and the basic plate styles are: (1) Slow Plate, which is the slowest speed, and the mood is calm. (2) Plate with flowing water, sung at a free tempo with big changes in speed. (3) Crying Plate, when you are crying, with a high voice and a medium or fast tempo. (4) Flying Plate, sung at a fast tempo. (5) Walking and Flower Fighting. It is used only by the wushang and hua face when they are fighting each other. (6) Rolling Plate, a free tempo and rhythm of the loose plate, often performed to express the feelings of pain and desolation. (7) Lapo, a special way of singing, a leader and the crowd. (8) Kezi Plate, a non-singing style, formed by saying and reciting rhyming phrases in the form of a quick tempo, with a fast and dry rhythm and a funny and witty language. The song ‘Qin Qiong Da Liang’ belongs to the flowing Plate.

The performers use the local dialect when they sing ‘Qin Qiong Da Liang’, and they mostly use the chest voice, that is, the original voice to sing. In singing, the performer often uses vocal outbursts in the high register to enhance the dramatic effect.

During the singing process, when describing a fierce battle or an emotional climax, the performer creates a tense and exciting atmosphere by lengthening the syllables and raising the pitch. Depending on the content of the lyrics, the performer switches between tense and soothing, from intense and fast singing to low and slow narration. Huayin Laoqiang's singing style is known for its high pitch and ruggedness, which is especially important in a heroic story such as 'Qin Qiong Da Liang'. The singer needs to express Qin Qiong's heroic fighting spirit and his pride in his victory through a rousing, powerful vocal tone.

2. Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan (把生死只当着过眼云烟)

Background of the song 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan'(See full score in Appendix II)

Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan is a classic cantata in Huayin Laoqiang, which embodies the unique charm of Laoqiang music with its bold, deep emotions and imposing style of expression. The background of this piece is derived from traditional Chinese historical themes and stories of heroic characters, most often found in epic narratives full of heroism such as 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms' or 'Water Margin'. In these stories, life and death become realities that the heroes must face, and they often take a heroic attitude towards life and death, integrating their personal destinies into the righteousness of the family and the nation. 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan' demonstrates the hero's calmness and fearlessness in the face of life and death through its bold singing and exciting rhythms. The theme and ideas behind the song focus on the profound propositions of life and death, destiny and heroism, and is a concentrated demonstration of Huayin Laoqiang's power of artistic expression.

พหุ ประถมศึกษา



Figure 45. Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan

Source: Yanya Zhu, retrieved from Fieldwork (2024)

2.1 Structure

Table 3. The Musical structure of Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan

Structure name	Parallel Three-Part Song										
Primary structure	A			B				C			
Secondary structure	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
Number of bars	1-3	4-8	9-15	16-23	24-32	33-38	39-48	49-54	55-64	65-71	72-80
(musical) mode	A Qing Yue Shang Qi Sheng										

The music has a parallel, single-movement structure, consisting of three contrasting sections: A, B, and C. The main theme is in A-minor, a simple key. It is in 2/4 time and has a moderate tempo.

Exposition A has a four-phrase structure with a beginning, a development, a transition, and a conclusion. It is composed of four contrasting phrases of unequal length, which is an asymmetrical structure. The theme phrase a is three bars long, the b phrase is expanded to six bars, the c phrase is seven bars long, and the d phrase is eight bars long. The four phrases gradually expand in length until the end of the phrase, which ends on the tonic of the mode.

The middle section B is a three-phrase structure with an asymmetrical structure consisting of three contrasting phrases of unequal length. The e phrase uses new material to contrast with the presentation section, and the following two phrases still use a developing approach to contrast with the previous one, emphasising the change in melody.

The C section is a four-phrase structure with a beginning, development, transition and conclusion, consisting of four contrasting phrases of unequal length. The first phrase uses melodic material from the introduction, which is based on the theme phrase and has been changed, once again emphasising the melodic development. The i phrase is divided into two sections of 4 and 6 beats, which lengthens the phrase. The j phrase once again introduces new melodic material to emphasise the contrast. The k phrase is divided into two sections of 4 and 5 beats, which lengthens the phrase rhythmically and creates a sense of closure.

2.2 Rhythm

In addition to the evenly combined eighth notes and quarter note rhythm, the main characteristic of this piece is the unaltered syncopated rhythm composed of syncopated rhythms and sustained lines. The naturally occurring syncopated rhythm is the core of the music, and the rhythm is used as the core throughout the music, making the entire piece blend together, for example in bars 7, 13 and 14.

Moderato

北边有河叫黄河 南边有山是华山
 bei bian you he jiao huang he. nan bian you shan shi hua shan
 黄河到华山拐了个弯 弯出
 huang he dao hua shan guai liao ge wan wan chu

Figure 46. Excerpt from 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

Next, the characteristic rhythm composed of a sustained line and syncopation is still important. It mostly appears at the end of decorative melodies and phrases. This kind of syncopated rhythm breaks the beat rhythm and makes the ethnic characteristics more intense. For example, in the 9th, 46th, and 72nd bars. In addition to the above rhythmic patterns, dotted rhythms are also reflected in some bars, such as the dotted rhythm at the end of the first bars and the dotted rhythm with a large dot at the 16th bars. The music combines common rhythms with characteristic rhythms. In addition to the evenly combined common rhythms, the main characteristic is the syncopated rhythm composed of natural syncopation and sustained lines. The naturally syncopated rhythm is the core of the music, and the rhythm is used as the core throughout the music, making the whole music blend into one. The characteristic rhythm of the syncopated rhythm composed of the sustained line is still important. Most of it appears at the end of decorative melodies and phrases. This kind of syncopated rhythm breaks the beat rhythm and forms a song with strong ethnic characteristics.

45

与欢 北边是黄河 南边
 yu huan bei bian shi huang he nan bian

Figure 47. Excerpt from 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

Figure 48. Excerpt from 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

3.3 Melody

The first phrase of the presentation section consists of a steady progression of thirds and fourths, and both types of interval are used extensively throughout the piece. The second phrase features a theme in the form of a third progression and a scale-like second progression, in addition to the octave leap at the beginning jump. The c phrase continues the parallel progression, mainly with third progressions and second-degree progressions.

At bars 18, the d phrase features an upward seventh-degree jump, which fully reflects the characteristics of folk songs.

Figure 49. Excerpt from 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The first phrase in the middle section is the new thematic material, with melodic progressions based on second and fourth progressions as the main material. The f phrase begins with an upward octave leap, which echoes the second phrase of the presentation section, but its melodic form is a downward line, so it is innovative.

The g phrase has the characteristics of combining the first two phrases of the presentation section. The melody combines the smooth progress of the theme phrase with the upward octave leap of the second phrase.

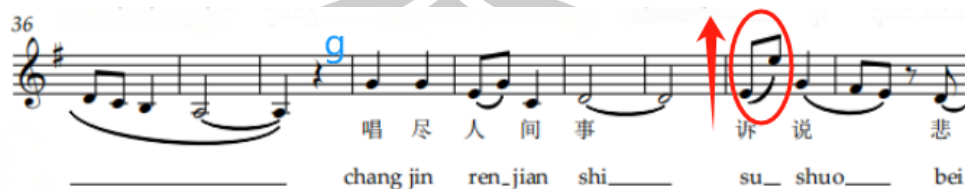


Figure 50. Excerpt from 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The first phrase of the C section is characterized by a downward seventh leap in bars 52.

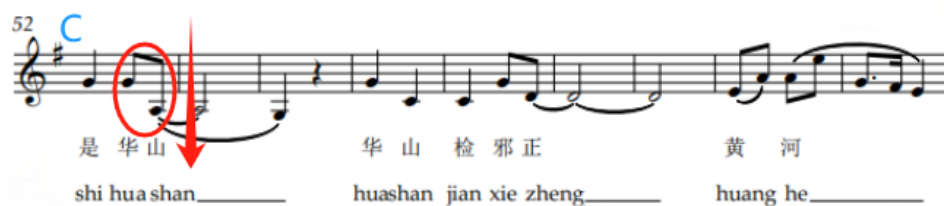


Figure 51. Excerpt from 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The i phrase begins with a leap of a fifth and a fourth, and the melody gradually narrows the intervals until it becomes a stepwise progression. The j phrase also begins with a leap of a fourth and makes full use of melodic material that proceeds by thirds.

The k phrase begins with a progression of fourths, and then uses leaps of sixths and octaves. The phrase ends with a downward scale-like melodic progression to the home key.

2
70

钱 把 生 死 只 当 着

qian ba sheng si zhi dang zhuo

Figure 52. Excerpt from 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

Through analysis, the main melodic material in this piece is the progression of fourths, fifths, and octaves. In the Chinese pentatonic scale, the progression of fourths and fifths or the superposition of chord tones is often seen, and it is also the interval that best expresses the characteristics of the nation. Octave jumps often appear in the genre of folk music-mountain songs, which vividly reflects the heroic sentiments of different peoples.

2.4 Lyrics

Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan From the literal meaning of the lyrics, it expresses a transcendent view of life and death, seeing life and death as easily dispersed like smoke, reflecting the open-mindedness of the heroes in the face of the impermanence of life. This outlook on life and death is gradually formed by the performers of the Huayin Laoqiang through the interpretation and inheritance of traditional heroic stories over a long period of time, and they express their profound feelings about life through art forms. As shown in the full score of Appendix II, the meaning of the lyrics mainly includes the following three aspects:

1) natural imagery and regional culture. The Yellow River and Mount Huashan mentioned in the lyrics are essential landmarks in Shaanxi; the Yellow River symbolizes the passage of time and strength, while Mount Huashan symbolizes justice and resilience. The lyrics combine these two to depict Shuangquan Village, where Huayin Laoqiang is sung, and the geographical roots of Laoqiang are embodied through the description of the geographical environment.

2) Philosophy of life and attitude towards life: 'Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo

Yan Yun Yan' in the lyrics expresses a liberal view of life and death, reflecting the insight of Huayin Laoqiang artists into the impermanence of life and their indifference to the worldly pursuits of honour, shame, money and so on. This philosophy of life runs through the singing and lyrics of the Laoqiang, with strong local cultural characteristics.

3) History and cultural inheritance: The phrase 'a voice that has roared for thousands of years' in the lyrics highlights the long history and cultural inheritance of the art of Huayin Laoqiang, which is not only a form of music, but also the voice of an era, a cultural symbol that has gone through countless historical storms.

Huayin Laoqiang commonly uses five-character phrases, seven-character phrases, and ten-character phrases, all of which have one upper sentence and one lower sentence as the basic structural form. Huayin Laoqiang also has 'sigh' style long and short phrases with irregular structure, different number of words, and different lengths of words. The song, however, belongs to the combination of five-word and seven-word phrases, and its word frame divisions are: two, three and two, two, three structural forms, respectively. The lyrics of Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan explore the symbols of regional culture and philosophical expressions of life in the music of the Laoqiang. Through the combination of natural imagery and reflections on life, Huayin Laoqiang exhibits a unique musical style that reflects the deep heritage of Shaanxi's local culture and shows insight into the impermanence of life and the ups and downs of fate.

2.5 Singing characteristics

Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan is characterized by its bold and magnificent vocal style, and by the complexity of its vocal techniques and musical rhythms to express strong emotions and storylines.

Huayin Laoqiang belongs to the Plate Cavity Opera genre, and the basic Plate styles are as follows: (1) Slow Plate, which is the slowest speed, and the mood is calm. (2) Plate with flowing water, sung at a free tempo with big changes in speed. (3) Crying Plate, when you are crying, with a high voice and a medium or fast tempo. (4) Flying Plate, sung at a fast tempo. (5) Walking and Flower Fighting. It is used only by the

wushang and hua face when they are fighting each other. (6) Rolling Plate, a free tempo and rhythm of the loose plate, often performed to express the feelings of pain and desolation. (7) Lapo, a special way of singing, a leader and the crowd. (8) Kezi Plate, a non-singing style, formed by saying and reciting rhyming phrases in the form of a quick tempo, with a fast and dry rhythm and a funny and witty language. Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan belongs to the slow Plate.

The performer sings Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan in the local dialect and uses the chest voice, which is the original voice. Drag and glissando are common techniques in singing. By lengthening certain syllables and making subtle slides in pitch, the singer is able to enhance the fluidity and emotional tension of the melody, especially when expressing the hero's resilience and fearlessness, this technique has a powerful emotional rendering effect. In the process of singing, the singer also uses the unique 'voice' technique, by changing the tension and resonance of the vocal folds to create a special vocal effect. This technique makes the voice more explosive in the high register and deeper in the low register. Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan has a strong mood, a simple but powerful melody, and a rough and bold singing voice in the performance. These musical features echo the lyrics and add to the emotion and philosophy of the song.

3. Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai (with Yueqin) (一颗明珠卧沧海)

Background of the song 'Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai' (See full score in Appendix III)

'Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai' is a classic song from Huayin Laoqiang that demonstrates Laoqiang's unique ability to express emotional depth and historical themes. The theme of 'Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai' is inspired by heroic stories from Chinese history. The pearl symbolises the glory of a hero or an ideal, and the fact that it is lying in the middle of the ocean implies that the hero still maintains his inner light and firmness in the midst of hardship and suffering. The pearl symbolises loyalty, courage and the pursuit of justice and ideals. On the other hand, the 'ocean' represents endless trials and tribulations, reflecting the insignificance of human beings in the vast river of destiny. The song expresses heroism, historical destiny and

contemplation of the vagaries of fate through symbolic lyrics. The song continues Huayin Laoqiang's bold and impassioned style, expressing a contemplation of life's destiny with strong emotional outpouring and unique singing.



Figure 53. Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai (with Yueqin)

Source: Yanya Zhu, retrieved from Fieldwork (2024)

3.1 Structure

Table 4. The Musical structure of Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai

Structure name	Parallel single two-part form					
Primary structure	A		Interlud e	B		Coda
Secondary structure	a	b		c	d	
Number of bars	1-5	6-9	10-19	20-25	26-32	33-37
(musical) mode	b Yuefei seven-tone mode					

3.2 Rhythm

From the perspective of the entire piece, the rhythm of the melody is mainly composed of even quarter notes and eighth notes, with two-beat notes appearing at the end of each musical phrase to emphasise the end. In addition to the main rhythmic

patterns, small syncopated rhythms, the rhythm of sixteenth notes followed by eighth notes and followed by eighth notes followed by sixteenth notes, appear and are the main characteristics.

Figure 54. Excerpt from 'Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai (with Yueqin)'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

In the theme phrase, the rhythm is steady, with only eighth notes and quarter notes, which reflects the steadiness of the theme as it is presented. The beginning of the b phrase introduces a small syncopated rhythm, which is used as new material to create a stark contrast with the theme phrase. The contrast between phrases is further increased by the introduction of the eighth-note-followed-by-sixteenth rhythm at the beginning of the c phrase. The d phrase then enters again with this rhythm, which reinforces and highlights the rhythm pattern.

Figure 55. Excerpt from 'Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai (with Yueqin)'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

3.3 Melody

The melody in bars a of the theme phrase has a horizontal line in the form of a broken F#, A, C#, E chord. The minor seventh chord formed by these four notes is the

only seventh chord that can be formed in the Chinese pentatonic scale, so it is very Chinese in character. The upward seventh-degree leap in the third bars is the main characteristic of the entire phrase. The b phrase presents a downward melodic line, which is mainly a smooth downward progression except for the downward fourth-degree leap at the beginning.

The B phrase c phrase also begins with a downward fourth leap, after which the melody gradually expands the fourth to a downward fifth, a downward sixth, and an upward octave. The ever-widening intervals create an emotional contrast, but the entire phrase still presents a melodic shape that eases downward.

14
Voice
Y.Q.
灵芝草
ling zhi cao

Figure 56. Excerpt from ' Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai (with Yueqin) '

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The first bars of the d phrase continues the material of the fourth leap, and the second bars again features a downward fourth leap, which then ends smoothly with the tonic.

21
Voice
Y.Q.
倒被蒿蓬盖
dao bei hao peng gai
聚宝盆
ju bao pen

Figure 57. Excerpt from ' Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai (with Yueqin) '

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

3.4 Lyrics

The lyrics of ‘Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai ’ use highly symbolic language to express the theme of buried talents and treasures being neglected. This metaphorical expression shows the helplessness and sadness of those talents in society who should shine brightly but are covered up due to circumstances, misunderstanding, or the limitations of the times. The full lyrics are shown below in Appendix III:

yi ke ming zhu wo cang hai, da xiao feng ge wu.

fu yun zhe gai dong liang cai.

ling zhi cao dao bei hao peng gai.

ju bao pen qian nian tu nei mai.

We can understand the meaning of each line of the song in this way:

‘yi ke ming zhu wo cang hai’ symbolizes the priceless treasure hidden in the ocean, a metaphor for the talent and wisdom of those buried in the world. This imagery expresses that the capable and outstanding in society do not get the attention and appreciation they deserve. ‘Fu yun zhe gai dong liang cai’ further reinforces this injustice, pointing out that the mundane or superficial often obscures the truly outstanding. The floating clouds symbolize superficial and ephemeral things that hinder society's proper talent assessment. ‘Ling zhi cao dao bei hao peng gai’ uses a strong contrasting technique, comparing the rare lingzhi grass with the common artemisia, showing the helplessness of valuable things being covered or even replaced by unimportant things.

The theme of precious things being neglected is further continued in ‘ju bao pen qi nian tu nei mai,’ which symbolizes that many talents and wisdom have been buried deep in the long river of history and cannot be revealed. The thousand-year soil symbolises the passage of time, implying that this burial is temporary and a long-lasting social phenomenon.

Huayin Laoqiang commonly uses five-character sentences, seven-character sentences, and cross sentences, all of which take the upper and lower sentences as their primary structural form. Huayin Laoqiang also has long and short sentences like ‘sigh,’ with an irregular structure, different numbers of words, and various lengths. On the other hand, the lyrics belong to the seven-word stanzas, whose word frames are divided into three structural forms: two-word, two-word, and three-word. The

lyrics of this song use the technique of simile, analyzing in detail the imagery of ‘pearl,’ ‘floating cloud,’ ‘Ganoderma lucidum’, and ‘artemisia.’ and ‘artemisia’. These images express the theme of social injustice and the burial of talent by way of contrast, reflecting a profound reflection on the miscalculation and misplaced values in the world.

3.5 Singing characteristics

Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai is a work that embodies the traditional opera style and intense emotional expression, with robust dramatic and lyrical features, combining the roughness and boldness of the conventional Huayin Laoqiang and the delicate emotional delivery. The following is an analysis of the singing characteristics of this song and the vocal skills required by the singer:

1. Singing Characteristics: Coexistence of Boldness and Delicacy

The singing style of this song combines the boldness and roughness of the Huayin Laoqiang with delicate lyrical passages. When the singer expresses boldness, the voice is thick and robust, reflecting a majestic temperament, while in the emotionally delicate parts, the voice needs to show softness and emotional depth.

2. Dramatic expression and emotional tension

The singing style of Huayin Laoqiang is strongly dramatic, especially in expressing emotion through different pitch and volume changes, as well as dragging and other techniques, to show the tension of the music and the progression of emotion. The song enhances the emotional impact of the song through exaggerated timbre and undulating melody.

3. Long Phrase and Drag Technique

The song uses a lot of long phrases and drags, and the singer needs to drag out each long phrase fully while keeping the timbre stable. The dragging part increases the song's drama and enhances the expressive power of emotion, showing the unique ‘roaring’ style of Huayin Laoqiang.

4. Clear and magnificent character sounds

Every word in the performance needs to be clear and powerful, which is a characteristic of Huayin Laoqiang’s singing and a meaningful way to enhance the

expression of emotion. Especially in the expression of the high register, the clarity of the words directly affects the audience's understanding of the emotion.

4. Guan Zhong Gu Ge (with Yueqin) (关中民歌)

Background of the song ‘Guan Zhong Gu Ge’ (See full score in Appendix IV)

‘Guan Zhong Gu Ge’ is a representative piece of Huayin Laoqiang, which shows the unique cultural heritage and musical style of the Guanzhong region in Shaanxi. ‘Guan Zhong Gu Ge’ originates from the folk music tradition of the Guanzhong region of Shaanxi, which has been one of China's political, economic, and cultural centers since ancient times and is also an important birthplace of Chinese civilization. Guanzhong has been the capital city of many dynasties and has a long history and deep cultural deposits. During its long history, the people of Guanzhong have developed unique musical and cultural traditions, of which the Huayin Laoqiang is an essential part of this culture. ‘Guan Zhong Gu Ge’ reflects the history and life of the people of Guanzhong through its strong local characteristics. The ancient songs of Guanzhong are often closely related to the local farming culture, rituals, and festivals and express the local people's unique understanding of life and nature and their emotional attachment. The song reflects the history and culture of the Guanzhong region, its customs and people, and the attitude and spiritual pursuit of the Guanzhong people.

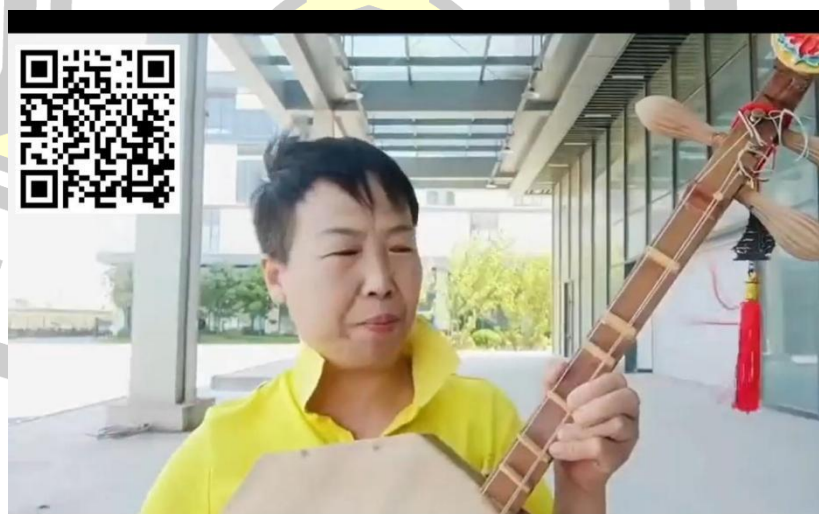


Figure 58. Guan Zhong Gu Ge (with Yueqin)

Source: Yanya Zhu, retrieved from Fieldwork (2024)

4.1 Structure

Table 5. The Musical structure of Guan Zhong Gu Ge

Structure name	Parallel Simple Ternary Form																					
Primary structure	re	A			In	A ¹			In	A ²			In	C	In	E	Coda					
Secondary structure					1		1			2	1	1				1	I	I	II			
Number of bars	-2	-6	-11	2-16	7-25	6-29	0-34	5-39	0-48	9-58	9-67	8-71	2-76	7-81	2-90	1-96	7-100	01-110	11-120	21-133	34-139	40-147
(musical) mode	C Zhi Pentatonic Mode															F Yan Music Gong Heptatonic Mode						

The piece adopts a parallel single three-part structure, consisting of six main parts: A, B, C, intro, intermezzo, and coda, with two repetitions of the A1 section and one repetition of the B1 section and an intermezzo running through each section, the order of repetition is shown in the schematic diagram. The primary key is in c pentatonic mode, and at the end, it changes to F allegro heptatonic mode. 2/4 time, minor Allegro tempo. The introduction begins with the yueqin repeating the tonic of the mode, clearly defining the mode's tonality. The introductory part starts with Yueqin repeating the tonic, clarifying the tonality of the key.

The A section is a three-phrase structure consisting of three contrasting phrases of unequal length, creating an asymmetrical structure. The A1 section is parallel to the presentation section, with the first and third phrases repeated with variations. The melodic pattern changes slightly at the beginning, and the second phrase is repeated.

The B section is a one-phrase structure consisting of one phrase divided into beats 6 and 4. The first beat is rap-style, and the second beat adds a melody. The A2 section repeats the A section once.

The C section is a two-phrase structure consisting of two contrasting phrases of unequal length with an asymmetrical structure. The B1 section repeats the B section once.

The coda is divided into three sections, each in contrast to the other, and ends with a perfect cadence on the tonic of the new key.

4.2 Rhythm

The rhythm in the form section of this piece is mainly based on evenly combined eighth notes and quarter notes, and this rhythm is characterized by its evenness and fluidity. In addition to this main rhythm, the main features are syncopated rhythms and rhythms with appended dots. The syncopated rhythms include syncopations that cross bars through a sustained line, making the melody appear folk song-like while maintaining a sense of fluidity. The unmodified syncopated rhythm appears more often in the middle of phrases, such as bars 13, 36, and 94 (where it is syncopated over the first quaver rest). Syncopated rhythms created by sustained lines often appear at the beginning or end of phrases, for example, at bars 3, 8, and 14.

The image displays a musical score excerpt for 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge'. It features two systems of music. The first system is labeled 'Allegro' and includes a voice line and a Yue Qin (Yue Qin) accompaniment. The voice line has lyrics '女娃啊 娘娘补了天' (nv wa a niang niang bu le tian). The second system starts at measure 9 and includes a voice line and a Yue Qin accompaniment. The voice line has lyrics '剩块石头 成华山' (sheng kuai shi tou cheng hua shan a). Red boxes highlight specific rhythmic patterns in the voice lines, and a red arrow points from the first system to the second.

Figure 59. Excerpt from 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge (with Yueqin)'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

In the contrasting section, dotted rhythms predominate, such as the sizeable dotted rhythm in bars 49 and the back dotted rhythm in bars 57.

Figure 60 shows two excerpts from the song 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge'. The first excerpt (bars 47-50) features a voice line with lyrics: 天黑了 又亮了 人睡了 又醒了 啊嘿 (tian hei le you liang le ren shui le you xing le a hei). Red boxes highlight dotted rhythms in bars 49 and 50. The second excerpt (bars 57-58) shows a voice line with the lyric: 嘿啊 (hei a) followed by a long note. A red box highlights a dotted rhythm in bar 57. The Yueqin accompaniment is shown below the voice line in both excerpts.

Figure 60. Excerpt from 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge (with Yueqin)'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

4.3 Melody

The theme in section A is characterized by the fifths and fourths formed by the alternating tonic and subdominant tones of the key of C major. The second phrase continues the theme's descending fifths, while the third is based on fourths. The third phrase of section A1 uses the minor seventh chord of d, f, a, and c as its melodic framework, creating a wavy melodic line. The second bars of the d phrase in section B use a descending scale starting on the note.

Figure 61 shows an excerpt from 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge' starting at bar 24. The voice line has lyrics: 鸟儿啊 (niao er a) and 背着太阳飞 (bei zhe tai yang fei). Red circles highlight specific notes in the voice line, and blue annotations (A, a, b) are present above the staff. The Yueqin accompaniment is shown below the voice line.

Figure 61. Excerpt from 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge (with Yueqin)'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

Figure 62. Excerpt from 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge (with Yueqin)'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The first phrase in section C is characterized by the fifth between d and a, while the f phrase uses the minor seventh chord d, f, a, and c as its melodic framework.

Figure 63. Excerpt from 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge (with Yueqin)'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

Ascending fourths characterize the three phrases of the coda, while the rest of the piece is dominated by ornamental scales that have a calming effect. The piece ends on a new tonic note, with a steady downward motion.

4.4 Lyrics

The lyrics of 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge' use highly symbolic and vernacular language to demonstrate the harmonious coexistence of man and nature, the cycle of change between heaven and earth, and the endlessness of life. By describing such mythological stories as Nuwa mending the sky, Tai Shang Lao Jun plowing the land,

and birds flying with the sun on their backs, and combining them with natural scenes such as the wind blowing the wheat yellow, and the river turning, the lyrics express the theme of the Yellow River, Huashan Mountain, and the people living on this land being at one with nature, showing the spirit of labor and the concept of the cycle of life in the ancient farming culture. As shown in the full score of Appendix IV, the meaning of the lyrics mainly includes the following four aspects:

(1) Harmony between heaven and earth and human beings:

The cyclical natural phenomena mentioned in the lyrics, such as ‘the sky gets dark and lights up again,’ ‘man sleeps and wakes up again,’ and ‘wheat is green and yellows again,’ symbolize the laws of nature and the life cycle. The life cycle is symbolized by the laws of nature and the cycle of life. This cyclical narrative not only expresses the changes of all things in heaven and earth but also maps out the endlessness of life.

(2) Myths and legends and local culture:

The lyrics combine myths and legends, such as Nuwa mending the sky and Taishang Laojun ploughing the earth, with the natural geographical features of Guanzhong, such as the Yellow River and Huashan Mountain, to show the people of this land's reverence for nature and the gods. At the same time, they symbolise the unique cultural background and historical inheritance of the Guanzhong region.

(3) Praise for labor and life:

The lyrics depict the joy of labor and the vitality of life in the words ‘the stiletto is swung more roundly’ and ‘the coccyx is twisted more happily.’ The lyrics use vivid language to express the joy and satisfaction of farmers in their labor, showing the simple and industrious spirit of the working people.

(4) The symbiotic relationship between humans and nature:

The lyrics show the philosophical concept of symbiosis between man and nature by closely linking nature with human daily life. The natural scenes in the lyrics (e.g., ‘The wind blows, the moon turns, the east bank turns to the west bank’) depict natural scenery and symbols of the harmony between human beings and nature.

Huayin Laoqiang commonly uses five-character phrases, seven-character phrases, and ten-character phrases, all of which have one upper sentence and one lower sentence as the primary structural form. Huayin Laoqiang also has ‘sigh’

style long and short phrases with irregular structure, different numbers of words, and different lengths of words. This song belongs to a seven-word piece whose word frame is divided into two, two, and three structural forms. The lyrics of Guan Zhong Gu Ge describe the ancient farming civilization's reverence and understanding of the nature of heaven and earth through the narration of mythological stories, natural phenomena, and life scenes. In particular, how the narrative structure of reincarnation expresses the repetition and cycle of nature and life.

4.5 Singing characteristics

Guan Zhong Gu Ge, a classic piece in the Huayin Laoqiang, demonstrates this traditional art form's unique flavor and skills. In terms of singing, it has a bold and vigorous style, showing a strong sense of regional color and historical weight. The following is a specific analysis of the singing characteristics and required singing techniques of Guan Zhong Gu Ge and a discussion of how to conduct an in-depth academic exploration in a music dissertation in light of these elements.

I. Singing Characteristics of S Guan Zhong Gu Ge

Thick and bold voice style

Guan Zhong Gu Ge inherits Huayin Laoqiang's usual rough and bold voice style. The singers usually show their thick and rich voice quality through full chest resonance and sound solid pressure. This vocal characteristic is powerfully penetrating and full of power, complementing the heroic temperament of the lyrics.

Strong and powerful tone

The performance's tone is strong and majestic, with a strong sense of history. Song of Guanzhong' is about the Guanzhong region in history, full of praise for heroic figures and historical stories, so the singer often expresses a strong sense of historical weight and emotional depth through a firm tone.

Free change of rhythm

The rhythm of the Guan Zhong Gu Ge changes freely between narrative and emotional climax. This rhythmic change not only enhances the drama of the performance but also allows the audience to feel better the ups and downs of the emotions and the story.

II. Second, the wide range of singing requirements

Singers need to master this piece by using a wide range of voices. Especially when expressing the character's inner passion and fighting spirit, the high register is often used to achieve a solid emotional outburst effect, while in the narrative passages, a lower register is needed to show the deep, heavy emotional expression.

III. Singing Techniques of Guan Zhong Gu Ge

Thoracic resonance is an essential feature of Huayin Laoqiang. In singing the Guan Zhong Gu Ge, the singer must rely on solid chest resonance to enhance the thickness and depth of the voice. Breath support is also crucial, especially in sustained long tones and high notes, where reasonable breath control is needed to maintain the stability of the voice.

IV. True and false voice conversion and glissando technique

In singing, the transition between true and false voices and the glissando technique are essential for expressing emotions. In 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge,' when the singer describes a tense narrative or emotional excitement, the conversion of true and false voices can increase the layering of sound, while the glissando technique makes the transition between notes more natural and enhances the fluidity of the melody.

V. Soprano outbursts and long tones dragged voice

Soprano outbursts are often used to express emotional climax passages, and this technique requires substantial pitch control. The long-drawn-out voice is a crucial way to continue the emotion, especially when the feeling is intense, and the singer enhances the dramatic effect of the music by dragging out the notes.

5. Give You a Little Color (给你一点颜色)

Background of the song 'Give You a Little Color' (See full score in Appendix V)

'Give You a Little Color' is a representative work of Huayin Laoqiang's fusion of contemporary music elements. Based on the song 'Guan Zhong Gu Ge,' the song preserves the essence of Huayin Laoqiang's traditional music and some of its lyrics while combining it with popular music forms such as rock and electronica to demonstrate the innovation and development of traditional Chinese folk art on the contemporary stage.

Give You a Little Color was initially created as a collaboration between the inheritors of Huayin Laoqiang and contemporary music creators. Huayin Laoqiang, as the traditional folk opera music of the Guanzhong region of Shaanxi, China, originated in an ancient historical period dating back to the Qin and Han Dynasties, and through centuries of inheritance and development, it has gradually developed. Through centuries of inheritance and development, it has slowly formed a form of music known for its impassioned and rough singing style and strong sense of rhythm.

In today's society, with the development of the times, traditional music is in danger of being forgotten and marginalized. To preserve and develop this ancient art form, many musicians have tried to combine it with contemporary pop music to attract the attention of a younger audience. It is against this backdrop that Gives You a Little Color was born. It is a bold musical experiment that aims to combine tradition with modernity, giving the ancient Huayin Laoqiang a new lease of life in contemporary music.



Figure 64. Give You a Little Color

Source: YouTube, retrieved from the website (2022)

5.1 Structure

Table 6. The Musical structure of Give You a Little Color

Structure name	Parallel mono-tripartite form																			
Primary structure	Prelude			A				B				C		I Interlude	A	B	C	Coda		
Secondary structure		I	II			1	2			1				Bridge				I	II	
Number of bars	17	36	75	81	265	69	073	477	881	285	689	093	497	98-105	106-113	114-129	130-145	146-161	162-178	179-191
(musical) mode	b Ya-yue Yu seven-tone mode			b Yu pentatonic mode				b Gong mode with added Qingjue				b Shang pentatonic mode		b Yu pentatonic mode	b Gong mode with added Qingjue	b Shang pentatonic mode				

The music is in parallel single-movement form and consists of seven main sections: introduction, A section, B section, C section, transition, interlude, and coda. The A, B, and C sections are repeated once. The primary key of the piece is b-feather tuning, and a tonic transposition is performed based on this key. The introduction is in b-ya music with seven tones, the presentation section is in b-feather music with five tones, and the middle section enters b-gong plus qingjiao music with six tones, creating a color change between major and minor with the presentation section. The C section enters b-shang music with five tones, and the coda also uses this type of key. The music alternates between 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 time signatures, with free and fast tempi.

The introduction (bars 1–57) can be divided into three sections. The first section is introduced by a slogan sung by a male soloist and later joined by the orchestra. A male rap-style melody dominates the second section. The third section is dominated by the orchestra as a whole, with percussion instruments standing out. The introduction mainly sets the basic mood of the music, while the latter half of the third part prepares the presentation section.

The presentation section A (bars 58–73) is a four-phrase structure consisting of four phrases of unequal length, each with four bars and a symmetrical structure. The theme phrase can be divided into two 2+2 phrases, the first for the vocals and the second for the counterpoint melody played by the accompaniment part. The second phrase, b, contrasts the theme phrase and is internally composed of two 2+2 phrases. The first phrase is the vocal melody, and the second phrase is the counterpoint played by the accompaniment part. The contrasting relationship between the phrases makes the development of the phrases more prominent. The third phrase is parallel to the theme phrase, which strengthens the theme melody. The fourth phrase parallels the theme phrase, with a development from the beginning to the end.

The middle section B (bars 74–89) also has a four-phrase structure, with each phrase having a binary four-phrase structure and four bars and a square and complete structure. The first phrase is divided into two phrases of 2+2, with a repeated relationship between the phrases. The second phrase is parallel to the first phrase, with a development from the beginning to the end. The third phrase is a contrasting phrase to the first phrase and is also internally structured as two 2+2 bars. The fourth phrase is parallel to the third phrase, repeating the third phrase as it is. The entire phrase comprises four phrases, all adopting the internal structure of 2+2 bars, and the material is relatively uniform.

The C section (bars 90-105) is a three-phase structure with an asymmetrical structure consisting of two parallel phrases and a connecting phrase. The first phrase is internally 2+2 with two beats, and the second is a parallel phrase of the first phrase, repeating the first phrase as is. The connecting phrase is 4+4 beats and is sung by the male voice, forming a contrasting ending to the section. At the same time, it is still structured as a 16-bars section, maintaining its integrity.

to a plain style, dominated by evenly grouped eighth notes and quarter notes. Only in bars 173 and 184 does a syncopated rhythm consisting of sustained lines appear. The rhythm in bar 173 is syncopated from the start of the second note of the small dotted rhythm. Two consecutive sustained lines form a continuous three dotted eighth note, which, together with the even rhythmic nature of the previous section, creates a sense of slowing down, in line with the gradual emotional crescendo of the coda. In bars 183, the crotchets are syncopated, which creates a contrast in tension with the long-value duplets in the previous bars. The rhythmic progression is also more natural, with the rhythmic characteristics of gradually tightening.

The image shows a musical score excerpt for three parts: S. Solo, T. Solo, and Choir. The T. Solo part is the focus, with red boxes highlighting specific rhythmic features. The lyrics are: 堰上转哩娃娃一片片哩副在堰上转 (yuan_shang zhuan hei wa wa yi pian pian hei dou zai yuan_shang zhuan). The score is numbered 169 at the start and 25 at the end.

Figure 66. Excerpt from 'Give You a Little Color'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

In the presentation section A, the rhythm of the female vocal melody is characterized by large syncopations and a syncopated rhythm consisting of a sustained line, in addition to an even combination of eighth notes and quarter notes. For example, at the beginning of each phrase and at the junctions between bars, the use of syncopated rhythms breaks the regularity of the beat, which is more in line with the free rhythm of folk songs. The rhythm in the middle section B is the main unifying material. All four phrases use the same rhythm type, which is mainly based on evenly combined eighth notes and quarter notes. The characteristic is the syncopated rhythm formed by the weak beat entering and the sustained line. In all four phrases, the weak beat enters, suspending the first eighth note of the first bars of the phrase, which contrasts with the on-beat entry in the presentation section and adds its own characteristics at the same time. The end of each bars in the four phrases is syncopated from the third beat, which moves the secondary beat to the second half of

the beat. The first phase of the third bars, C, is characterized by a dotted rhythm. In the second bars of this phrase, in addition to the dotted rhythm, the weak beat is used again to enter, and the first eighth note at the beginning of the bars is suspended, which echoes the weak beat at the middle.

10
75

S. Solo
变成灰色 为什么大地没有绿色 为什么人心不是红色 为什么雪山
bian cheng hui se_ wei shen me da di mei you lv se_ wei shen me ren xin bu shi hong se_ wei shen me xue shan

T. Solo

Choir
变成灰色 为什么大地没有绿色 为什么人心不是红色 为什么雪山
bian cheng hui se_ wei shen me da di mei you lv se_ wei shen me ren xin bu shi hong se_ wei shen me xue shan

Figure 67. Excerpt from 'Give You a Little Color'

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The rhythm of the female singing melody in the three sections has a standard feature, which is that it is dense at the beginning and sparse towards the end. This rhythm pattern is representative of folk songs from northern Shaanxi Province in China, and it embodies the heroic characteristics and uninhibited personality of northerners. The rhythmic pattern that runs throughout the entire piece is the syncopated rhythm formed by the sustained line, which is characteristic of both the male and female voices and also connects the whole piece, giving the music a sense of unity and making full use of the rhythmic material.

5.3 Melody

The melody of the song as a whole is characterized by its loud and high-pitched nature. As the song is based on the Shaanxi folk song 'Song of Guanzhong', the high-pitched excitement and distinctive rhythm of the folk song are fully reflected. The male voice melody in the introduction is mainly based on a smooth second-degree progression. It first enters with a leap of four degrees upwards, and the jump of four degrees upwards in the middle and high register is very high-pitched. Later, it is mainly based on the same-tone repetition between the tonic b and the C# in the key

tone, which is the same as the tone of human speech. The sixth interval between the e and C# notes in the C section of the connecting sentence moves smoothly, mainly in the second, third, and fourth degrees, with a steady tune and a characteristic narrative style. The male melody in the coda combines the melodic progressions of the two parts mentioned above and, overall, presents steady progress, gradually returning from the high register to the low register and finally ending with an upward octave jump from the low register to the middle register.

The image shows a musical score excerpt for the song 'Give You a Little Color'. It features three parts: S. Solo (Soprano Solo), T. Solo (Tenor Solo), and Choir. The S. Solo part is in the key of F major and starts at measure 67. The lyrics are in Chinese: '太阳飞呀' (tai yang fei ya), '东边飞到西那边' (dong bian fei dao xi na bian), and '为什么天空' (wei shen me tian kong). A red arrow points to a specific interval in the S. Solo part, which is a sixth interval between the notes e and C#.

Figure 68. Excerpt from ' Give You a Little Color '

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The theme phrase a in the presentation section A has a jagged character. It starts with the tonic b and gradually descends to the note f, then jumps up seven degrees to the note e, and finally descends four degrees to return to the tonic. The upward leap of seven degrees in the phrase best reflects the high-pitched character of the mountain song. The melody of the b phrase is framed by a minor seventh chord consisting of b, d, f, and a, which appears in a broken chord form. However, in the second bars, a downward seventh frame appears from the sound to the b sound, which echoes the upward seventh frame in the theme phrase. The third phrase consists of an upward leap of the seventh degree of the key of F to the key of E, followed by a repetition of the same tone, creating an opposition between the middle and high registers. The fourth phrase is a combination of the a and b phrases. The first bar is the beginning of the phrase, and the second bar is the downward seventh-degree framework of the b phrase. The entire melodic phrase is characterized by seventh-degree progressions, and the seventh-degree material also runs through the four phrases, making each phrase closely linked.

Figure 69 shows a musical score excerpt for the song 'Give You a Little Color'. It features three staves: S. Solo (Soprano Solo), T. Solo (Tenor Solo), and Chorus. The S. Solo part is marked with a blue 'B' and a '25' measure number. The lyrics are in Chinese: 变成灰色 为什么大地没有绿色 为什么人 心不是红色 为什么雪山. Red circles and arrows highlight specific melodic features in the S. Solo part.

Figure 69. Excerpt from ' Give You a Little Color '

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The melody of the first phrase of the middle B section is a descending scale of the notes F#-e-D#. Each note is repeated homophonically. The steady progression has the characteristic of narration. In the second phrase, the original downward movement from F# to D# is changed to an upward leap of a third back to F#. This subtle change highlights the development between the melodies and sets the stage for the upward development of the later phrases. The first half of the third phrase is a free-modulating upward fourth of the first phrase, which changes from a continuous downward movement of three notes to a downward movement followed by an upward movement. However, the second-degree progression remains unchanged, while the second half is a strict modulating upward fourth of the second phase. The main feature of the melody in this passage is the second-degree progression, which contrasts sharply with the seventh-degree progression in the presentation section. The presentation section is high-pitched, while the middle section is slightly hesitant.

Figure 70 shows a musical score excerpt for the song 'Give You a Little Color'. It features three staves: S. Solo, T. Solo, and Chorus. The S. Solo part is marked with a blue 'C' and a '148' measure number. Red circles and arrows highlight specific melodic features in the S. Solo part.

Figure 70. Excerpt from ' Give You a Little Color '

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

The overall melody of the C section is presented in the high register, and the melody has a wavy character. The first bars of the first phrase use the e, b, and f notes as the skeleton notes, interspersed with second and third-degree progressions, giving the melody a decorative quality. The second bars alternates between the third between the e and c notes and is the same as the second half of the first bars, forming a relationship between the beginning and end. The two bars of the phrase already have a relationship between the end, and the melody is constantly strengthened with the repetition of the phrase. At the same time, the high-pitched characteristics of the melody in the high register of this section echo the presentation section again.

5.4 Lyrics

The lyrics of Give You a Little Color are full of challenge and defiance, paying homage to the traditional culture of the past as well as a strong vision of the future. The phrase ‘give you a little color’ in the lyrics is not only a literal meaning but also a symbol of an attitude: to face difficulties and pressures, not to be afraid of difficulties, and to bravely pursue one's own goals in life. The lyrics give new life and emotional resonance to the Huayin Laoqiang through language and expression in a modern context. As shown through the full score of Appendix V, the meaning of the lyrics mainly includes the following four aspects:

(1) Symbolism: ‘Color’ in the lyrics is not just a visual Color, but also a symbol of diversified emotions and vitality, expressing confidence in life and the pursuit of personal values.

(2) Integration of tradition and modernity: The lyrics retain the traditional simplicity of the style, but by integrating modern expression, the songs are more contemporary, bringing them closer to the young audience and becoming a cultural dialogue across the ages.

3) Cultural symbolism:

The lyrics are full of symbolism, which can be regarded as an expression of personal attitude towards life and a metaphor of cultural attitude. The song expresses the intermingling of modernity and traditional cultural values in its lyrics. For example, ‘Give You a Little Color’ may symbolize the right to self-expression while echoing the spirit of heroism in traditional culture.

4) Emotional and Social Meaning

The emotions conveyed by the lyrics are not only personal but also have a strong social significance. The sense of family, justice, and defiance contained in the Huayin Laoqiang tradition is reinterpreted and expressed in a contemporary context. Through this modern pop expression, the lyrics echo the pursuit of individual freedom and social responsibility of young people in today's society.

The lyrics of Give You a Little Color show that the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang and contemporary pop music is not only an innovation in musical style but also a combination of cultural heritage and the spirit of the times. This innovation provides a new path for the survival and development of traditional music forms in the contemporary context.

5.5 Singing characteristics

'Give You a Little Color' is a fusion of the styles of Huayin Laoqiang and modern pop music, so its singing features both the roughness of traditional opera singing and the delicacy of modern pop music. The work retains the unique grandeur and passionate singing style of the Huayin Laoqiang while adding the more gentle and rhythmic elements of modern pop music. The following is an analysis of the singing characteristics and vocal techniques required for Give You a Little Color:

1. Singing Characteristics

Combination of tradition and modernity

In the performance, the traditional opera style of Huayin Laoqiang is combined with the melodic lines of modern pop music. The singing voice of Huayin Laoqiang is very powerful, showing strong emotional tension, especially in the high pitch. The voice is full of tension. The modern pop music part, on the other hand, pays more attention to the mellowness of the tone and the smoothness of the melody.

2. The power of the treble and the calmness of the bass

The singer needs to use a strong chest voice to highlight the drama of the Huayin Laoqiang in the treble part, while in the bass part, he pays attention to the emotional padding and the thickness of the voice to express the sense of calmness and tension. The treble needs to be loud but not harsh, while the bass requires stability but not loss.

3. Tension and contrast of emotional expression

The performance of emotion in the singing has great ups and downs, from the passionate shout to the lyrical murmur; the emotional expression needs to be layered, not only the passionate part but also the quiet, introverted part. This emotional contrast is one of the key features of the work.

4. Vocal Singing Techniques

Breath support and control

Breath control is the foundation for singing Huayin Laoqiang, as well as any singing style of high intensity. The singer needs good breath support in the high register and in long phrases, especially when performing passionate passages, to ensure breath stability and voice penetration. In addition, the use of breath should be adapted to the melodic and fluid nature of modern pop music, and the singer should switch flexibly between strong and weak, tension and softness.

5. Switching between mixed voice and chest voice

The singer needs to switch between chest voice and mixed voice. The Huayin Laoqiang emphasizes the use of the chest voice, which is rough and powerful and full of drama, while in modern pop music, the use of the mixed voice is softer and more suitable for the expression of lyrical parts. This kind of switching requires singers to have strong vocal control.

6. Bite word clarity and operatic flavor

When singing the part of Huayin Laoqiang, the singer's biting should be clear, emphasizing the ending of the words, especially in the treble part, where the accuracy and clarity of the words are crucial. At the same time, the singing should have the flavor of opera, especially in Huayin Laoqiang, with a certain 'roar' characteristic, which needs to show a sense of 'swallowing mountains and rivers.'

7. Tone change and regulation

In the process of singing, the singer should flexibly adjust the tone of the light and dark changes in order to adapt to different musical styles. In the part of Huayin Laoqiang, the tone should be bright and rough, while the part of pop music pays more attention to the softness and delicacy of the tone. This tonal modulation requires strong skills from the singer to ensure a natural transition through the different styles.

8. Combination of Opera Style Accent and Pop Style Melody

The singing of Huayin Laoqiang has a strong opera accent, such as dragging and flinging techniques, while the pop music part pays more attention to the coherence and rhythm of the melody. The performer needs to maintain the opera cadence while handling the pop music melody smoothly so as to achieve the natural integration of the two.

6. Connection with the Guan Zhong Gu Ge?

In summary, this song fuses pop music with folk songs. First, in the choice of accompaniment instruments, it retains the yueqin, which is the accompaniment in Guan Zhong Gu Ge, and adds a wealth of ethnic percussion instruments on top of that. The most important characteristic of the accompaniment is the rhythm and sound. The accompaniment of ‘Guan Zhong Gu Ge’ mainly uses an even combination of eighth-note rhythm, flowing sixteenth-note rhythm, and syncopation formed by the sustained line. The accompaniment sound is characterized by homophony repetition, and all of these points are fully reflected in this song. For example, at bars 19 the eighth-note rhythm and homophony of the yueqin and huqin parts at bars 19; the sixteenth-note rhythm and homophony at bars 28; the syncopated rhythm formed by the sustained line of the piano part at bars 82; and the highly mobile sound patterns in the introduction, interlude and coda. These elements are all closely related to the accompaniment in folk songs.

Structurally, the ‘Guan Zhong Gu Ge’ also has a parallel single-movement structure, which is the same as the structure of this song, with several subsidiary structures such as introduction, interlude and coda.

The presentation section between the two songs uses the same lyrics, with changes in the melody. The melody in Guan Zhong Gu Ge is mainly based on fifths and fourths, while seventh leaps characterize this song. Although the melody has been reshaped, the overall melodic direction remains consistent. The theme of the presentation section of this song is downward-upward-downward, and the same downward-upward-downward direction is also found in ‘Guan Zhong Gu Ge’, giving the tones some similarity. The second phrase of the melody of this song is framed by a minor seventh chord consisting of b, d, f and a, presenting a wavy melodic line. The

third phrase of the A¹ section of the ‘Guan Zhong Gu Ge’ also uses a minor seventh chord consisting of d, f, a and c as the melodic framework. Both melodies use the phrase ‘the remaining fast rocks are Mount Hua’. The internal relationship of the phrases in the presentation section also shows that the two songs are the same. The internal phrases are complete musical phrases consisting of melody and accompaniment.

The combination of pitchless rap and melody in the middle section B of the ‘Guan Zhong Gu Ge’ is also reflected in the male voice in the introduction and coda of this song.

Another important element is the use of rhythm. The ancient Guanzhong song is mainly based on evenly combined eighth notes and quarter notes, and is characterized by large syncopated rhythms and dotted rhythms. The syncopated rhythms include syncopated rhythms across bars created by sustained lines. This song is also mainly based on evenly combined eighth notes and quarter notes, and makes full use of large syncopated rhythms and syncopated rhythms that cross multiple bars using sustained lines, such as the syncopations in bars 28, 59, and 62, and the large syncopated rhythm in bar 58. The significant, syncopated rhythm here serves as the beginning of the theme of the song, and this rhythm is a key element in the motive. The dotted rhythm is characteristic of the ‘Guan Zhong Gu Ge’ song, and although it is not an important rhythmic pattern in this song, it is also reflected, for example, in the beginning of bars 59. The eighth notes at the beginning of the restful bars in section B can also be considered a kind of syncopated rhythm because they rest on the most important strong beat at the beginning of each bars. The C section of the Guan Zhong Gu Ge uses a syncopated rhythm, which changes to a dotted rhythm in the C section of this song. The use of syncopated rhythms is also reflected in the third section.

The combination of Huayin Laoqiang and modern music is a wonderful collision between traditional culture and contemporary art. This combination not only opens up new avenues for the inheritance and development of Huayin Laoqiang, but also injects unique cultural charm into modern music. In future artistic creation, we should continue to explore and promote the deep integration of traditional culture and modern music, so that ancient art can shine more brilliantly in the new era.

A Brief Introduction to Huayin Laoqiang

Huayin Laoqiang originated in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, originating from Huayin City, Shaanxi Province. There are different opinions about its origin. It is said to have originated in the late Western Han Dynasty, when boatmen shouted their horns while tapping wooden blocks on the boat's sides to relieve distress and maintain consistency. Over time, this method evolved into the Huayin Laoqiang dialect; Another theory is that it evolved from the rap of Laohekou in Hubei to Huayin. Regardless of the origin theory, it adds a mysterious color to Huayin Laoqiang. Huayin Laoqiang is mainly performed through shadow puppetry. Laoqiang performers behind a white screen manipulate shadow puppets while using bold and passionate singing to tell historical stories and folk legends. This unique and vivid form of performance takes the audience into legendary worlds. The musical characteristics of Laoqiang are extremely distinct. Firstly, there is the unique voice that artists use to sing with hoarse and high pitched vocals, full of power and penetration. Their singing seems to penetrate the dust of time and reach deep into people's hearts. Secondly, the instruments of Laoqiang are rich and diverse, mainly including Yueqin, Banhu, Jingmu, Bangzi, etc. These instruments work together to create a powerful and heavy musical atmosphere. The melodious melody of Yueqin, the passionate sound of Banhu, the crisp sound of Jingmu, and the powerful sound of Bangzi together played the magnificent melody of Huayin Laoqiang. During the performance, artists with Huayin Laoqiang are often full of passion. They are sometimes passionate and sometimes gentle, expressing the joys and sorrows of the story to the fullest. Their performance is not just an artistic display, but also an emotional release and insight into life. When the audience appreciates the traditional Chinese opera performance, they seem to be able to feel the vicissitudes and heroic spirit of the yellow earth, and appreciate the resilience and wisdom of the working people. The repertoire of Huayin Laoqiang is rich and colorful. There are historical stories such as "The Three Kingdoms" and "The Generals of the Yang Family", as well as descriptions of folk legends and life scenes. These songs not only have entertainment value, but also carry rich historical and cultural information. Through the singing of traditional Chinese tunes, people can learn about the ancient wars and heroes, as well as experience the local customs and lifestyle of the people. However,

Huayin Laoqiang has also faced many difficulties in the long river of history. With the development of the times and the diversification of modern entertainment methods, the ancient art form of Laoqiang has gradually been forgotten by people. It once became a "family drama" and faced a crisis of inheritance and discontinuity. But fortunately, with the efforts of some knowledgeable people, Huayin Laoqiang has ushered in new vitality. In recent years, Huayin Laoqiang has gradually entered a broader stage through the combination of modern music, stage performances, and other forms. The collaboration between traditional Chinese opera artists and modern singers has sparked a dazzling collision between ancient Huayin traditional opera and fashionable modern music. This innovative performance form not only attracts more attention from young audiences, but also opens up new paths for the inheritance and development of Huayin Laoqiang. Huayin Laoqiang, as an important component of China's intangible cultural heritage, has extremely high artistic and historical value. It is the crystallization of the wisdom of the laboring people on the Loess Plateau and a treasure of traditional Chinese culture. We should cherish this precious cultural heritage and protect and inherit it through various means, so that Huayin Laoqiang, a thousand year old masterpiece, can continue to shine in the new era. In short, Huayin Laoqiang occupies an important position on the stage of Chinese folk art with its unique artistic charm, profound cultural heritage, and tenacious vitality. It is the pride of our nation and also our common spiritual wealth. Let's work together to continue singing the ancient art form of Huayin Laoqiang in the years to come.

Introduction Contemporary pop music

Pop music, as one of the most dynamic and influential forms of music in contemporary society, attracts the attention and love of countless people with its unique charm. It is like a rushing river that runs through different eras and cultures, carrying people's emotions, dreams, and memories. The definition of popular music is relatively broad, usually referring to music genres that have been widely spread and popular among the public during a certain period of time. It covers a variety of styles, such as pop, rock, folk, electronic, hip-hop, etc., each with its own unique characteristics and charm. The origin of popular music can be traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. With the development of recording technology and the popularization of broadcasting, popular music began to spread rapidly. The charm of

popular music lies first and foremost in its melody. Beautiful and melodious melodies can often instantly catch people's ears and immerse them. Whether it's a cheerful rhythm or a lyrical tune, they can touch people's innermost emotions. The melody of popular music is usually concise, easy to remember, and easy to sing, which is also one of the important reasons why it can be widely spread. For example, some classic pop songs, whose melodies have withstood the test of time, are still sung by people. Lyrics are another important component of popular music. Excellent lyrics can deeply express people's emotions, thoughts, and attitudes towards life. It can be about the sweetness and pain of love, the perception and reflection on life, or the attention and criticism of social reality. The lyrics of popular music often relate to people's lives and express their true feelings in simple and understandable language. The lyrics of many popular songs have become people's catchphrases and even a cultural symbol. The styles of popular music are diverse, meeting the aesthetic needs of different groups of people. Pop music encompasses various music styles, from gentle and lyrical folk to passionate rock, from fashionable and dynamic electronic music to personalized hip-hop music, each style has its own unique charm and audience. Different people can choose different styles of popular music according to their preferences, in order to find their own emotional support and spiritual home. Pop music also has strong contemporaneity. It reflects the social landscape, cultural atmosphere, and people's values of different eras. With the changing times, popular music is also constantly evolving and changing. From early jazz and rock music to today's electronic music and hip-hop music, every era has its representative pop music styles and singers. Pop music records the changes of the times and has become an important carrier for people to recall the past and feel the pulse of the times. In addition, popular music has a wide range of channels for dissemination and enormous influence. With the popularization of the Internet and the development of digital music, the spread speed and scope of popular music have reached an unprecedented level. People can easily access and share popular music through various music platforms and social media. Pop music not only plays an important role in the entertainment industry, but also has a profound impact on other fields such as fashion, film and television, and advertising. Many popular songs have become theme songs for movies and TV dramas, adding emotional color and artistic charm to the works.

Pop music also provides a stage for many singers to showcase their talents. Excellent singers showcase the charm of pop music to the fullest through their performances. They have won the love and pursuit of the audience with their unique voices, superb singing skills, and infectious stage performances. Many pop singers have become idols of their time, and their music and image have influenced generation after generation. However, popular music also faces some challenges. Under the influence of commercialization, some popular music works focus too much on market demand and lack artistic innovation and depth. Meanwhile, with the increasingly fierce competition in the music market, the quality of popular music is also uneven. However, we cannot deny the important position and positive role of popular music in contemporary society.

Huayin Laoqiang and Contemporary Music

Huayin Laoqiang is a popular shadow puppetry opera genre in Shuangquan Village, Weiyu Township, Huayin City, Shaanxi Province during the late Ming and early Qing dynasties. Its integration with popular music is a cultural phenomenon that has received much attention in recent years, injecting new vitality into this ancient art form and allowing more people to appreciate its unique charm. Here are some examples and characteristics of the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang and popular music:

The collision of unique singing style and modern music rhythm :

Huayin Laoqiang has a unique singing style, such as straight and high pitched, majestic and heroic, with rich local characteristics and historical and cultural heritage. When this unique singing style is combined with the rhythm of popular music, it forms a unique musical style. The rhythm of popular music is usually lively and varied, which can add new vitality and dynamism to the old singing style, making it more tense and attractive against the backdrop of modern music rhythm. For example, in some fusion works, the high pitched shouting of the old tune artist echoes the drum beat rhythm of popular music, creating a strong auditory impact that allows the audience to feel both the original charm of the old tune and the fashionable rhythm of popular music.

The fusion of traditional and contemporary musical instruments :

The musical instruments of Huayin Laoqiang are mostly traditional folk instruments, such as Yueqin, Banhu, Dagu, Ma Luo, Yin Luo, Zhan Gu, Jingmu,

Gan Gu, Bangzi, Zhong Ling, etc. These instruments have unique timbres and a strong folk cultural atmosphere. When integrating with popular music, modern instruments such as electric guitar, bass, drums, etc. are often added. The fusion of traditional and modern instruments has enriched and diversified the expressive power of music. For example, the melodious melody of the yueqin interweaves with the passionate sound of the electric guitar, the unique tone of the banhu complements the heavy bass of the bass, and the rhythm of drum instruments creates rich musical layers and unique sound effects, retaining the traditional charm of the old tune while incorporating elements of modern music.

Innovation in lyrics content and theme :

In the process of integration, the lyrics and themes are often innovative. On the one hand, it retains some traditional lyrics with local characteristics and cultural connotations in Huayin Laoqiang, showcasing the charm of ancient culture; On the other hand, incorporating new elements and emotions based on the themes and expressions of modern popular music. For example, in some works, there is both praise and inheritance of the Loess Plateau and ancient culture, as well as expression and reflection on modern life and emotions, making the works more closely related to the lives and emotions of contemporary people and resonating with the audience. This innovation in lyrics not only inherits the cultural genes of traditional Chinese opera, but also expands the scope of its expressed themes, giving Huayin traditional Chinese opera new vitality and expressiveness in the new era.

Masterpiece:

In 2015, singer Tan Weiwei collaborated with Huayin Laoqiang artist to sing this song on the program "China Star". In this song, the bold and unrestrained spirit of Huayin Laoqiang, combined with the rhythm and melody of modern pop music, creates a strong impact and infectiousness. The unique singing style and heroic momentum of traditional Chinese opera performers, combined with the arrangement and production techniques of popular music, give the songs both traditional charm and modern fashion sense, quickly attracting widespread attention and making more people aware of the ancient art of Huayin Laoqiang.

‘Give You a Little Color’ brief introduction:

Cross disciplinary reasons for 'Give You a Little Color':

The emergence and success of the song 'Give You a Little Color' is not accidental. Firstly, the rapid development of the times has led to the collision of diverse cultures. Nowadays, with the rapid development of the economy, networks, electronic devices, and other application facilities have been widely used in China, making music dissemination and development faster and more widespread. In today's fast-paced world, it seems that people are more accustomed to this fast food lifestyle, and music works will gradually be forgotten in the fast-paced world. Therefore, in order to adapt to this fast-paced lifestyle and enable their music works to be widely spread, the phenomenon of cross-border cooperation between different music elements is inevitable. Secondly, the appreciation level and aesthetic concept of contemporary people have changed. As mentioned earlier, modern multimedia applications have profoundly influenced people's daily lives, and many classic music concerts have been gradually forgotten with the rapid development of society. In order to cater to the preferences of the majority of people in the market, catchy songs and non nutritious music works have rapidly emerged. During this period, the public's appreciation taste and aesthetic level have gradually improved based on hearing and seeing. Therefore, the mentality towards music works is quietly changing, and people urgently hope for more innovative music performance forms to meet their needs. Finally, the personal needs of artists continue to grow. China's music and art have developed rapidly in recent years. Artists need to constantly break through and innovate in order to gain recognition from a wider audience and improve their modern singing skills. Many musicians actively engage in divergent thinking, seeking novelty and uniqueness. In addition, traditional ethnic music has rich musical elements and is a very precious resource. Therefore, cross disciplinary combinations of music with different characteristics and styles have become the first choice for artists.

Cross border format of 'Give You a Little Colors':

In the song "Give You a Little Color", Tan Weiwei combines traditional folk music with modern popular music, skillfully uses the music materials of Huayin Laoqiang, and makes the essence of Laoqiang perfectly integrated in modern rock music, thus achieving a different artistic effect.

(1) Cross border singing

The song 'Give You a Little Color' combines the bold and free singing style of Huayin artists with the highly impactful rock female voice, presenting a cross-border collision of tradition and modernity. At the beginning of the music, Tan Weiwei held a small cymbal and waved it high. After the loud cymbal sound, five old artists also began to roar in response: "Hey buddy, copy guy". Their shouts echoed throughout the stage, making people feel strong forces rushing towards them, directly leading the audience to the dusty Loess Plateau. When Tan Weiwei started singing, he used his unique vocal techniques to make the music more full and tense. He not only tried to use local dialects to correspond to the old tune in pronunciation, but also carefully solved the problems of vocal range and singing style. Based on high pitched and passionate rock music, he incorporated a certain melodious melody. However, from the melody perspective, he basically maintained consistency with the old tune. At the same time, he also added many new techniques of popular music singing and used it to weaken the obvious problems of Huayin old tune, such as too abrupt and straight melody. Tan Weiwei blends Huayin Laoqiang with his unique rock singing style, accurately capturing the characteristics of different stylistic elements, flexibly changing various singing techniques, and unleashing an indescribable mix and match beauty, allowing the ancient "rock" Huayin Laoqiang to shine again. Therefore, the entire song is sung very smoothly, with a balance of rigidity and softness, bringing a higher quality artistic enjoyment to the audience. Combining traditional Chinese folk music singing styles with contemporary pop music singing techniques cross disciplinary integration has broken the boundary between traditional singing and popular singing. Traditional folk music has been revitalized with the help of popular music, promoting the inheritance and development of traditional music. At the same time, the singing techniques of traditional singing have also enriched the forms of expression of modern popular singing, requiring singers to possess richer professional abilities. Cross border integration has presented new forms of Chinese folk music, while also bringing a possibility for the nationalization of contemporary popular songs.

(2) Crossover of musical instruments

In the selection and application of accompaniment instruments for the song, the creators of "Give You a Little Color" not only did not abandon traditional old

instruments, but on the contrary, they preserved their original appearance and brought them onto the stage, occupying the main position in the center of the stage, while placing the electronic music band on one side of the stage, showing more respect for the old tune. Such cross-border cooperation between traditional and modern instruments on stage not only does not affect the expression of the instrument's own characteristics, but also effectively compensates for the shortcomings of Huayin Laoqiang music in instrument use. This arrangement fully demonstrates the admiration for traditional Chinese music culture. Before the music began, Tan Weiwei held a small cymbal in his hand, while the five Huayin Laoqiang performers held benches, Jingmu, Banhu, and Yueqin for accompaniment. At the beginning of the music, Tan Weiwei waved his small cymbal high, and the old artists also played their own instruments. After traditional instruments were played, some modern instruments such as drums, bass, electric guitars, and electronic synthesizers began to be added to stage performances. Among these instruments, the electric guitar his metal tone cutting performance and sweeping performance on the yueqin are the most unique, perfectly matched, making the melody of the entire piece particularly clear and clean. Throughout the entire performance, the band's sound system was present throughout, and various types of instruments were used to enhance the atmosphere, creating a relaxed, lively, and solemn atmosphere that was conducive to Tan Weiwei and the five Huayin Laoqiang artists performing on stage. Traditional musical instruments themselves have the advantages of rich and diverse vocal ranges and broadness, while modern instruments have a wider range of applicability. While traditional instruments collide fiercely with modern instruments such as electric guitars, they are also highly unified and blended together to form a unique whole.

The limitations of the integration of Huayin Laoqiang and contemporary music :

For the song "Give You a Little Color", the audience's comments are also mixed. A considerable number of people believe that the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang and Tan Weiwei's rock music is very rigid, without truly realizing the innovation of the song. It is just a "mechanical application" that relies on gimmicks to attract attention. These comments also indirectly reflect that "cross-border music" cannot be fully accepted by the audience. The author believes that as a cultural phenomenon, cross-border music itself contains many factors worth considering. Essentially, cross-

border music has rich musical elements, characteristics, and charm. However, some cross-border music works lack in-depth research during creation, have a poor understanding of the integration of different music elements, and have a limited perspective. The obstacles to artistic mastery are simply driven by profit, resulting in the final displayed works appearing disjointed. Taking Teacher Li Yugang's "The Drunken New Concubine" as an example, with his beautiful voice, unique makeup, and professional performance style, Teacher Li Yugang showcases classic works, which is the discovery of the essence of the song. The popularity of "Give You a Little Color" quickly made its singer go viral, but in contrast, the Huayin Laoqiang continued to quietly disappear after a short period of heat. In some current cross-border music programs, choosing a collaborating singer takes into account the singer's popularity, traffic, etc., without considering whether the singer can match the song themselves, and whether the cross-border singing song can continue to receive attention from the audience after being exposed. Although the success of cross-border music cannot be separated from traffic and the perfect combination between art, so how to achieve a balance between traffic and art, is worth our serious and in-depth exploration and research.

Nowadays, cross-border music is flourishing, and cross-border integration is a serious challenge to traditional culture, but also a rare opportunity. In today's diverse era, crossover music has become a fashion trend. The communication and collision between different musical elements will inevitably lead to the loss of weak musical elements, unable to achieve balance, causing weak musical elements to follow the trend and change themselves to cater to each other. In the long run, its traditional characteristics will be greatly reduced, and returning to the stage will lose its original meaning.

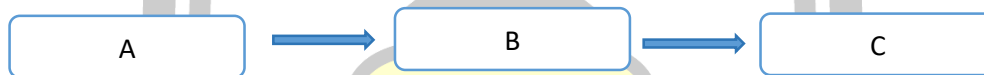
Recommendation:

From the explosive popularity of 'Give You a Little Color', we can see that the fusion of popular music and traditional music is very successful. This cross-border integration is not only a supplement to current traditional music, but also an innovation in the content and form of traditional ethnic music in China, while also promoting the vigorous development of popular music in China. Our country has a vast array of traditional music elements, among which there are many wonderful

aspects. Pop music and traditional music have been absorbed and strengthened on the basis of mutual reference. At the same time, it reminds people that music needs to constantly innovate in artistic form to form a popular music culture with our national characteristics. Cross disciplinary music is deeply loved by people, especially young people, largely because it aligns with their psychological expectations and caters to everyone's preferences. Especially with the addition of traditional music elements, it has attracted people's attention, met public expectations, and presented traditional cultural factors to the public in a new style. At the same time, it has also integrated popular music, becoming modern and popular. Subjectively speaking, a musical piece can resonate with many people and quickly spread, indicating that it meets the aesthetic tastes and needs of modern people to some extent.

Music analysis of A capella solo 'Give You a Little Color'

The following figure shows the formal structure of the A capella solo 'Give You a Little Color.' It can be divided as follows:



The formal structure of A capella solo 'Give You a Little Color'

The following table shows the three parts of this music

Table 7. Music section of A capella solo 'Give You a Little Color'

Section	1	2	3
Phrase	1-6	7-16	17-21
Form	A	B	C

给你一点颜色

Give You a Little Color

作词: 谭维维/陈忠实/路树军

Lyrics: Weiwei Tan, Zhongshi Chen, Shujun Lu

作曲: 刘洲

Composer: Zhou Liu

♩ = 70



女娲娘娘补了天呐, 剩下块石头是华山。
 nv wa niang niang bu liao tian na, sheng xia kuai shi tou shi hua shan.



鸟儿背着那太阳飞呀, 东边飞到西那边。为什么
 niaoer bei zhe na tai yang fei ya, dongbian fei dao xi na bian, wei shen me



天空变成灰色? 为什么大地没有绿色? 为什么
 tian kong bian cheng hui se? wei shen me da di mei you lv se? wei shen me



人心不是红色? 为什么雪山成了黑色? 为什么
 ren xin bu shi hong se? wei shen me xue shan cheng le hei se? wei shen me



犀牛没有了角? 为什么大象没有了牙? 为什么
 xi niu mei you le jiao? wei shen me daxiang mei you le ya? wei shen me



鲨鱼没有了鳍? 为什么鸟儿没有了翅膀? 啊...
 sha yu mei you le qi? wei shen me nian er mei you le chi bang? a...



啊... 啊...
 a... a...



啊... 啊... 啊... 啊...
 a... a... a... a...

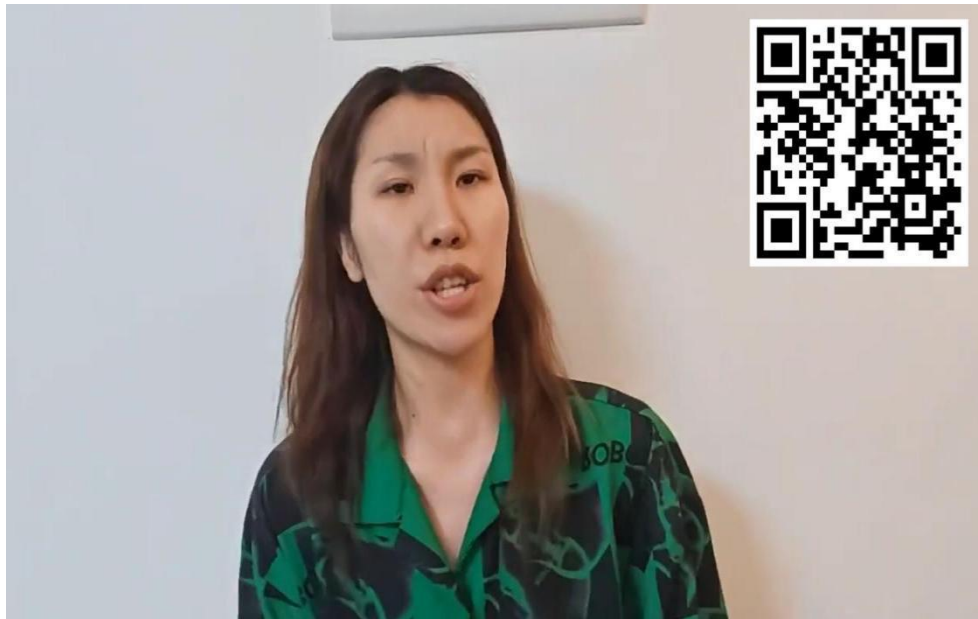


Figure 71. A capella solo 'Give You a Little Color'

Source: Yanya Zhu (2024)

Song background and creative inspiration:

Source of Inspiration: This song's creative inspiration comes from its concern for environmental issues. Using "smog" as a starting point, it expresses reflection on people's excessive exploitation of nature, resulting in a lack of natural colors. It conveys the call to "give the earth some color" and reflects the creator's profound thinking on the current environment and human behavior.

Cultural Integration Opportunity: Tan Weiwei has always been committed to combining traditional music with modern music. As a traditional art form with strong local characteristics and profound cultural heritage, Huayin Laoqiang's unique singing and performance style has attracted Tan Weiwei. She hopes to inject new vitality into traditional art by integrating Huayin Laoqiang with modern rock, so that more people can understand and love traditional culture.

Overall structure:

This song is in D major, with a transition to D major off key in the transitional section, and then a transition from Western mode to B Shang pentatonic at the end. The structure of the song "Give You a Little Color" is relatively complex and unique,

and can be roughly divided into the following parts: Stage a - Stage b - Stage c ending (Huayin Laoqiang).

Stage A: D major

Lyrics and melodic features: Nü wa repaired the sky, leaving only one stone as Mount Hua ", starting with a mythological and regional expression. Starting from here, we enter the main body of the song, with lyrics such as 'birds fly with the sun on their backs, from east to west ', using concise and visually rich language to depict natural scenery. In terms of melody, the main notes are Fa, Si, and Mi, highlighting the style of Shaanxi folk music with a wide range of scales. It has a certain melodious feeling and unique tone direction, while also integrating with modern music elements, presenting both traditional and innovative characteristics. For example, in the progression of the melody, some intervals with local characteristics may be used to jump or decorate the sound, adding charm and uniqueness to the melody.

Rhythm characteristics: The rhythm is mainly divided into sections, with a focus on the sixteenth and dotted rhythms, which are relatively free and not typical regular rhythms. This free rhythm arrangement echoes the original improvisational style of Huayin Laoqiang, making people feel full of vitality and unconstrained. In some musical phrases, there may be changes in rhythm based on the expression of lyrics and the progression of emotions, sometimes fast and sometimes slow, enhancing the expressiveness of the song.

Emotional expression: By mentioning natural elements and ancient legends, it conveys a reverence for traditional culture and a love for nature, while also laying the foundation for the emotional development and deepening of the theme of subsequent songs.

Performer opened his voice with the Qin Opera, bringing the audience's emotions to a climax in an instant. In this section, except for percussion instruments, all other instruments avoid the solo part, highlighting Tan Weiwei's highly impactful singing.

作词: 谭维维/陈忠实/路树军
Lyrics: Weiwei Tan, Zhongshi Chen, Shujun Lu
作曲: 刘洲
Composer: Zhou Liu

♩ = 70

女 娲 娘 娘 补 了 天 呐, 剩 下 块 石 头 是 华 山。
nv wa niang niang bu liao tian na, sheng xia kuai shi tou shi hua shan.

5
鸟 儿 背 着 那 太 阳 飞 呀, 东 边 飞 到 西 那 边。 为 什 么
niaoer bei zhe na tai yang fei ya, dongbian fei dao xi na bian。 weishen me

Figure 72. Excerpt from A capella solo 'Give You a Little Color'(1-6)

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

Stage B: D major off-key

Lyrics and melodic features: This paragraph features temporary variations to highlight the richness of the song. There are some transitional changes in melody, harmony, and other aspects, and new motivations or segments appear to guide the audience's emotions gradually towards the climax; This temporary modulation has a relatively bright and warm tone characteristic. The melody of the lyrics, such as "Why does the sky turn gray, why is the earth not green, why is the human heart not red, why are snow capped mountains black...", may be further strengthened by the off key interpretation of the song's concern, questioning, and emotional appeal towards environmental issues, making the emotional expression more profound and intense. In terms of melody, it is usually more passionate and high pitched, and may use techniques such as repetition and modeling to enhance the melody's memory points and impact, making the audience more easily infected. For example, by repeating the melody of the interrogative sentence "why", the theme and emotional expression of the song are strengthened. The contrast or progression with the previous D-key section enriches the emotional level and musical expression of the song.

Rhythm characteristics: This paragraph is mainly composed of split, sixteenth, and continuous notes, making the rhythm more compact and intense, with emphasis on heavy beats. Some split rhythms or continuous strong beats may be used to create a tense and urgent atmosphere, which is in line with the concern and anxiety about environmental issues expressed in the lyrics. For example, in key phrases such as "the

sky turns gray" and "the earth has no green", the emphasis on rhythm allows the audience to deeply understand the emotions conveyed by the song.

Emotional expression: This is the climax of the song's emotional expression, which fully showcases the thoughts and concerns about environmental degradation, human issues, etc., and triggers resonance and reflection among the audience. Singers convey complex emotions to their audience through powerful singing, making people feel as if they are there, experiencing the seriousness of the various issues depicted in the song, and thus arousing people's attention to environmental protection, human nature return, and other issues.

9
 天空变成灰色? 为什么大地没有绿色? 为什么
 tian kong bian cheng hui se? wei shen me da di mei you lv se? wei shen me

11
 人心不是红色? 为什么雪山成了黑色? 为什么
 ren xin bu shi hong se? wei shen me xue shan cheng le hei se? wei shen me

13
 犀牛没有了角? 为什么大象没有了牙? 为什么
 xi niu mei you le jiao? wei shen me daxiang mei you le ya? wei shen me

15
 鲨鱼没有了鳍? 为什么鸟儿没有了翅膀? 啊...
 sha yu mei you le qi? wei shen me nian er mei you le chi bang? a...

Figure 73. Excerpt from A capella solo 'Give You a Little Color'(9-16)

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

Stage C: Switching from Western mode to B Shang pentatonic mode:

Lyrics and melodic features: This paragraph transitions from D major to B commercial pentatonic mode, entering the chorus opera section ("ah ah"), further showcasing the fusion of traditional opera elements and modern music. There is no specific lyrics here, but a simple and infectious "ah" is used to continue, leaving the audience with a broad space for thinking. Allowing people to have time to reflect on the profound connotations conveyed by the song, such as environmental issues and the relationship between humans and nature, after appreciating the song. At this time,

"no words" are better than expressions with specific lyrics, triggering deep reflections on nature, environment, human nature, and other aspects in the hearts of the audience, enhancing the artistic appeal and ideological depth of the song. Once again ending with Huayin Laoqiang, echoing the introduction, the entire song concludes in a quaint atmosphere, giving a lingering aftertaste.



Figure 74. Excerpt from A capella solo 'Give You a Little Color'(17-21)

Source: Yanya Zhu (The researcher)

Summary of Characteristics

Each musical segment is relatively independent and complete, with its own ups and downs of yin and yang, as well as highs and lows, like independent melodic units.

The song divides the phrases and harmonies into independent main melodic units, and interprets the characteristics of the ideas through each unit.

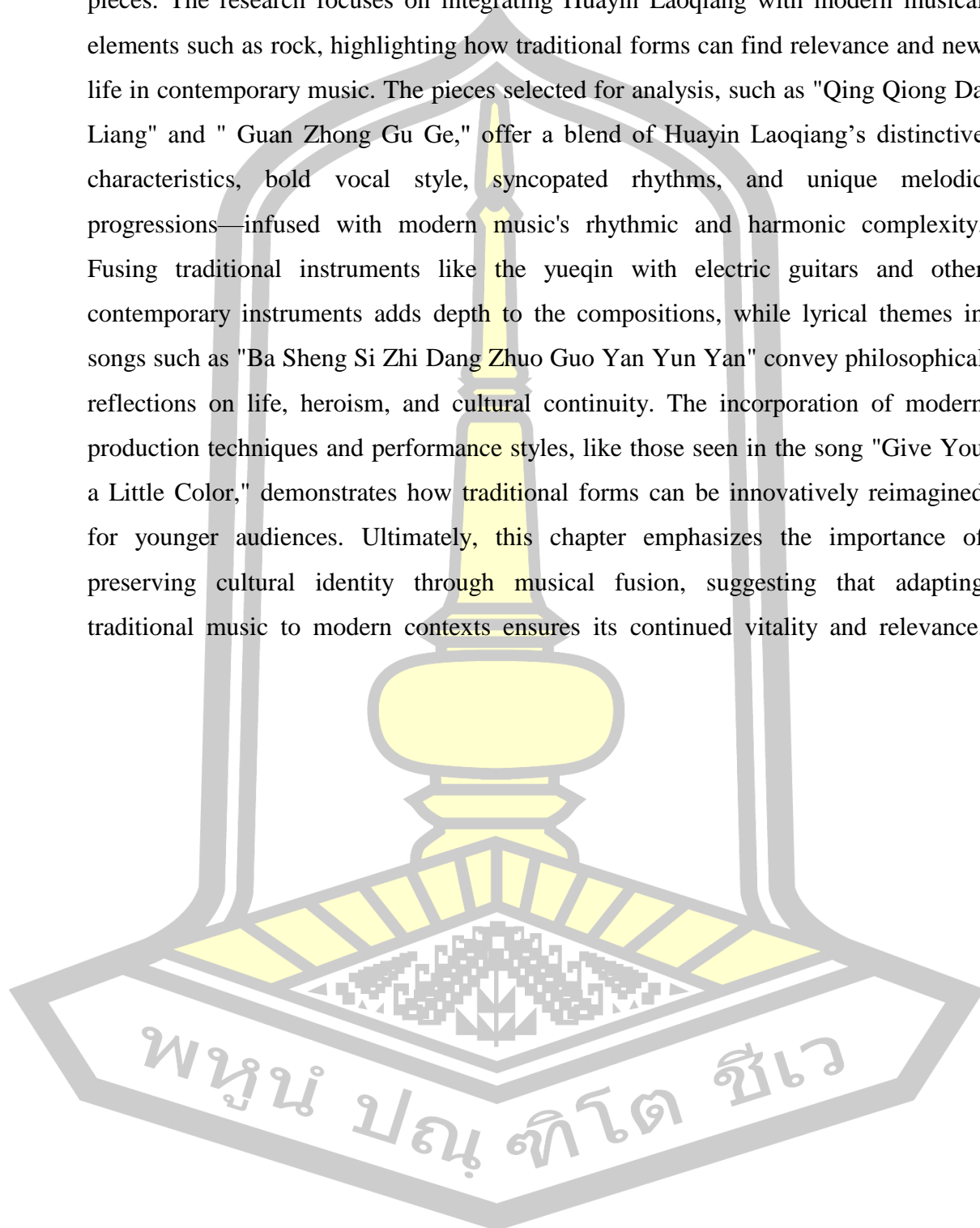
In terms of lyrics structure, each segment is very unified and has a strong impact, bringing strong auditory and emotional impact to the audience.

The song achieves an organic fusion of antiquity and modernity, tradition and innovation, through the perfect combination of Huayin Laoqiang and modern rock and careful arrangement in terms of mode, harmony, rhythm, etc., creating a unique and charming music style.

Summary

The fusion of Huayin Laoqiang, a traditional Chinese folk music form, with contemporary music, illustrates how this blending preserves cultural heritage while adapting to modern trends. The chapter delves into the musical structure, rhythm,

melody, lyrics, and vocal techniques through a detailed analysis of five representative pieces. The research focuses on integrating Huayin Laoqiang with modern musical elements such as rock, highlighting how traditional forms can find relevance and new life in contemporary music. The pieces selected for analysis, such as "Qing Qiong Da Liang" and "Guan Zhong Gu Ge," offer a blend of Huayin Laoqiang's distinctive characteristics, bold vocal style, syncopated rhythms, and unique melodic progressions—infused with modern music's rhythmic and harmonic complexity. Fusing traditional instruments like the yueqin with electric guitars and other contemporary instruments adds depth to the compositions, while lyrical themes in songs such as "Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan" convey philosophical reflections on life, heroism, and cultural continuity. The incorporation of modern production techniques and performance styles, like those seen in the song "Give You a Little Color," demonstrates how traditional forms can be innovatively reimaged for younger audiences. Ultimately, this chapter emphasizes the importance of preserving cultural identity through musical fusion, suggesting that adapting traditional music to modern contexts ensures its continued vitality and relevance.



CHAPTER VI

Conclusion Discussion and Suggestions

1. Conclusion

The current status of Huayin Laoqiang in Chinese music reflects its remarkable journey from traditional folk performance to a globally recognized cultural treasure. Originating from Huayin City in Shaanxi Province, Huayin Laoqiang has a history deeply intertwined with local traditions, shadow puppetry, and labor chants, characterized by its rugged, intense vocal style and use of unique musical instruments such as the yueqin and percussion. The Zhang family is a prime example of how family-based inheritance has allowed the art form to evolve over the years while preserving the abilities and spirit of Laoqiang. Despite facing periods of decline, Huayin Laoqiang experienced a resurgence in recent decades, owing to reforms in performance formats and increased exposure through national media platforms and international collaborations. Artists like Tan Weiwei have played a pivotal role in popularising the form by blending it with contemporary music, showcasing its versatility and appeal to modern audiences. Moreover, education and preservation efforts, such as establishing training centers and university programs, have helped to instill new life into Huayin Laoqiang. Although the art form faces challenges, particularly in engaging younger generations, its continued presence on prestigious stages at home and abroad reflects its resilience. The performance of Huayin Laoqiang on platforms like the CCTV Spring Festival Gala and its participation in international festivals underscore its growing cultural significance. Furthermore, the inclusion of Huayin Laoqiang in academic curricula and its integration into cultural exchanges demonstrate how traditional folk arts can adapt and thrive in a contemporary setting. As it continues to receive accolades and capture the imagination of new audiences, Huayin Laoqiang serves as a vibrant example of how historical cultural forms can evolve while maintaining their original artistic essence, ensuring their survival and relevance for future generations.

The fusion of Huayin Laoqiang with contemporary music, as explored in this chapter, demonstrates the transformative potential of blending traditional folk music

with modern genres. Huayin Laoqiang, a traditional folk opera from Shaanxi Province, is deeply rooted in Chinese cultural heritage, characterized by its powerful vocals, bold melodies, and historical themes. By integrating these elements with contemporary music styles such as rock and electronica, this fusion not only preserves the essence of Huayin Laoqiang but also revitalizes it for modern audiences. Through a detailed analysis of five representative Huayin Laoqiang pieces ranging from "Qing Qiong Da Liang," which tells the heroic story of Tang Dynasty general Qin Qiong, to "Give You a Little Color," which incorporates popular music elements the chapter highlights the ways in which traditional music can adapt to contemporary cultural trends while retaining its core identity. Each piece demonstrates how Huayin Laoqiang's unique musical aspects, such as its distinctive structure, syncopated rhythms, and emotionally charged lyrics, can be interwoven with modern music to create a fresh and dynamic sound. For instance, in "Life and Death Are but a Passing Fancy," the lyrics' philosophical contemplation of life and death is expressed through bold singing and dramatic rhythms, while in "A Pearl in the Sea," a powerful combination of traditional opera-style vocals and modern instrumentation evokes themes of perseverance and heroism. Similarly, "Song of Guanzhong" reflects the rich cultural history of the Guanzhong region through mythological and natural imagery, while introducing more fluid and modern melodic structures. The fusion of these traditional songs with popular music exemplifies a broader trend of integrating folk traditions into modern performance contexts, preserving their cultural significance while making them more accessible to contemporary audiences. Moreover, this integration highlights a key cultural challenge: balancing the authenticity of traditional music with the demands of modern entertainment, ensuring that the unique identity of Huayin Laoqiang is not diluted by commercial pressures. By analyzing the structural, rhythmic, melodic, and lyrical elements of these pieces, the chapter underscores the importance of innovation in cultural preservation. The collaboration between traditional Huayin Laoqiang artists and modern musicians, as seen in "Give You a Little Color," presents an exciting pathway for the future of folk music, enabling ancient art forms to resonate with younger generations. Ultimately, the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang and contemporary music serves as a compelling model for the preservation and evolution of traditional cultural practices, offering a way forward

for folk traditions to remain relevant in an increasingly globalized and digital age. This synresearch of the old and the new not only ensures the survival of Huayin Laoqiang but also enriches the global cultural landscape. It demonstrates how traditional music can thrive in a modern context while continuing to inspire and connect people across generations.

2. Discussion

The results of this study are consistent with the conclusions drawn by several scholars regarding the challenges of preserving traditional folk music in the face of modernization. Ji Xuxuan (2021) highlights the complexities involved in blending Huayin Laoqiang with popular music, particularly the tension between maintaining its traditional characteristics and adapting to the tastes of modern audiences. The findings in this study support this perspective, showing that while Huayin Laoqiang has gained new audiences through collaborations with contemporary artists like Tan Weiwei, these adaptations sometimes risk diluting the essence of the traditional art form.

Furthermore, the ethnomusicological framework proposed by Merriam (1964), which emphasizes the cultural context of music and its social functions, was critical in analyzing the transformation of Huayin Laoqiang. Merriam's theory that music reflects the culture from which it originates is evident in the findings. Huayin Laoqiang's roots in the labor and folk traditions of Shaanxi are preserved in its rhythmic and melodic structures, even as it is adapted for contemporary pop audiences. The study confirms that the traditional elements of the music, such as its pentatonic scale and vocal style, are still central to its identity, aligning with the preservation principles outlined by scholars like Cheng et al. (2018).

Another key finding that is consistent with existing literature is the role of local communities in preserving Huayin Laoqiang. The results show that key informants, such as Zhang Ximin and Zhang Xiangling, play a crucial role in the transmission of this folk tradition. This echoes Zhang Zhongqing's (2019) argument that individual artists and cultural bearers are indispensable in the preservation of traditional arts. The case of Zhang Ximin, in particular, demonstrates how a single artist can be a driving force behind the survival and transformation of a folk genre (Zhang Zhongqing, 2019).

However, the study also highlights some tensions that arise when traditional folk music is adapted to modern contexts. The fusion of Huayin Laoqiang with contemporary music, especially pop and rock, has sparked debate among scholars and practitioners. Yao Donglai (2023) discusses how the integration of folk music into contemporary forms can sometimes result in a loss of authenticity, a concern shared by traditionalists who fear that essential elements of Huayin Laoqiang are being compromised. The results of this study reveal similar concerns, as some practitioners worry that the infusion of Western musical elements, such as pop rhythms and electronic instrumentation, could overshadow the unique qualities of Huayin Laoqiang's traditional vocal techniques and narrative depth.

This tension is particularly evident in the analysis of the song "Give You a Little Color," which incorporates Huayin Laoqiang elements into a pop structure. While the song was successful in introducing the genre to a broader audience, traditionalists argue that such adaptations risk losing the cultural and emotional depth of Huayin Laoqiang. Theoretical frameworks from ethnomusicology, particularly those relating to cultural preservation, suggest that while modernization can breathe new life into traditional forms, it can also create a disconnect between the music's original cultural context and its new forms of expression (Seeger, 1983). The study's findings are consistent with this view, showing both the positive and negative impacts of fusion on the genre's preservation.

The study's contribution to the field of ethnomusicology lies in its detailed examination of how traditional music adapts in the context of globalization. Ethnomusicological theory, which focuses on the relationship between music and culture, was key in understanding the evolving role of Huayin Laoqiang in modern Chinese society. As highlighted by Wu (2018), the evolution of folk music is inevitable in the face of cultural and technological change. This study's findings support this theory, showing that while Huayin Laoqiang is undergoing transformation, these changes are necessary for its survival in a rapidly modernizing world.

Moreover, the application of communication theory in this study helps explain how Huayin Laoqiang has been disseminated through modern media channels. As Wang Xiaoyan (2019) argues, the use of multimedia and digital platforms is essential

for bringing traditional music to new audiences. The findings show that Huayin Laoqiang has benefited from these new platforms, reaching younger audiences who might not have otherwise been exposed to the genre. However, this dissemination also raises questions about the authenticity and integrity of the music in its new forms.

The study's results have important implications for the future preservation of Huayin Laoqiang. As noted by Wei (2017), balancing innovation with tradition is crucial for the survival of traditional arts. The findings suggest that while fusion with contemporary music offers opportunities for Huayin Laoqiang to reach new audiences, efforts must be made to preserve its core elements. Cultural heritage organizations and policymakers must continue to support traditional performances and provide platforms for artists like Zhang Ximin to teach and pass on their knowledge to future generations.

3. Suggestions for the future

3.1 Suggestions for Applying This Research

3.1.1 Introduce Huayin Laoqiang into school and university curriculums, especially in Shaanxi Province, to help preserve and pass down the tradition. Workshops led by experienced artists could enhance learning.

3.1.2 Utilize platforms like YouTube, WeChat, and other social media to share Huayin Laoqiang performances and tutorials, making the music accessible to a wider audience.

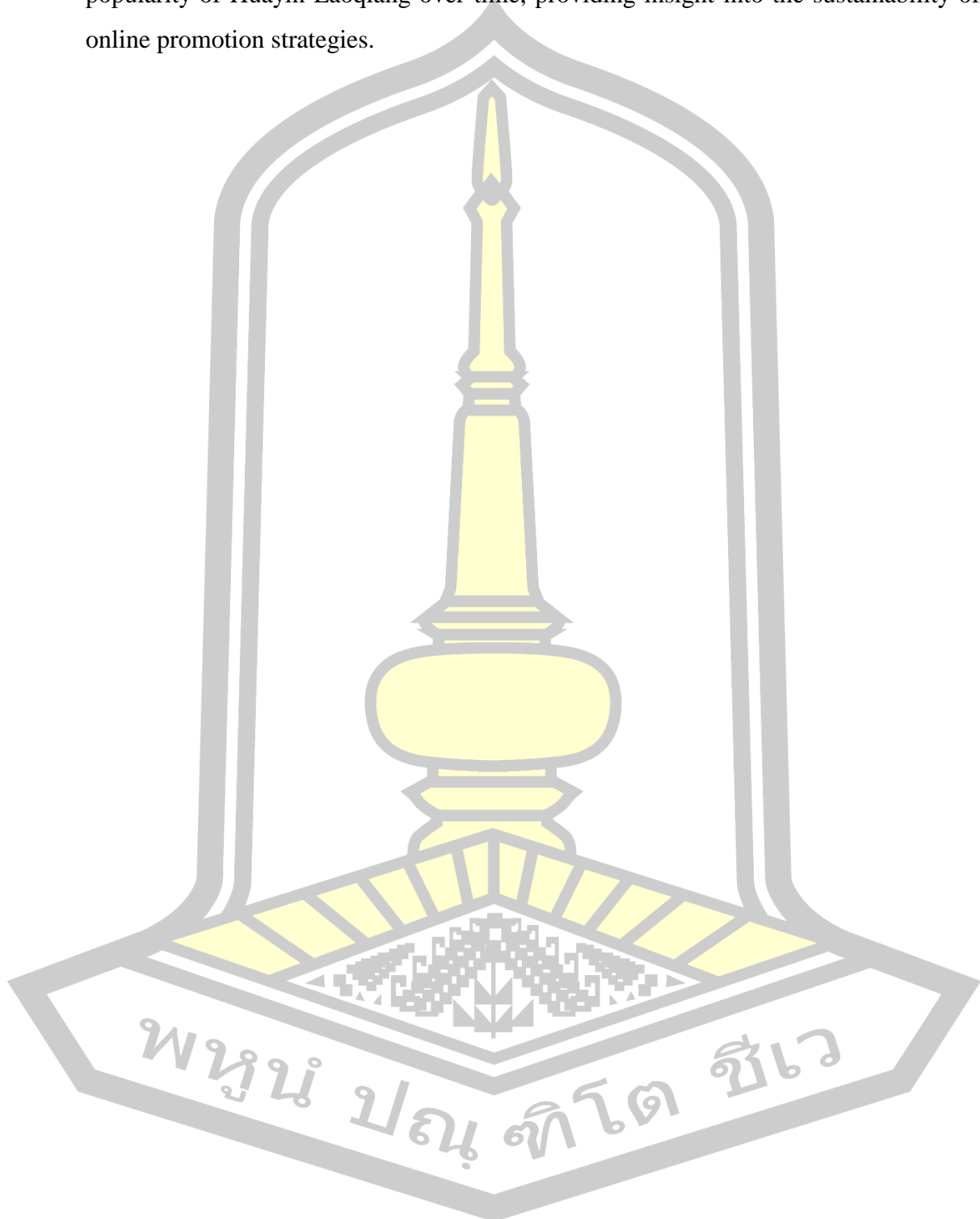
3.1.3 Promote collaborations between traditional folk musicians and contemporary artists to keep Huayin Laoqiang relevant and expose it to diverse audiences.

3.2 Suggestions for Further Research

3.2.1 Conduct comparative studies between Huayin Laoqiang and other folk traditions that have integrated into modern music, examining successful preservation strategies.

3.2.2 Research how different audience groups respond to traditional versus modernized Huayin Laoqiang to tailor promotion strategies effectively.

3.2.3 Investigate how digital platforms impact the preservation and popularity of Huayin Laoqiang over time, providing insight into the sustainability of online promotion strategies.



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พหุบัณฑิต ชีเว

APPENDIX

Appendix I: Full score of Qin Qiong Da Liang


秦琼打粮

Qin Qiong Da Liang

Shaanxi Folk Music

Transcribed by Yanya Zhu

Moderato




上 阵 哎 杀 得 人 几 个
shang zhen ai sha de ren_ ji ge

7



堂 主 爷 圣 旨 降 下 来 大 小 哎
tang zhu ye sheng zhi_ jiang xia lai da xiao ai

12



封 个 乌 砂 戴 好 方 显 秦 琼
feng ge wu sha dai hao fang xian qin qiong

16



有 奇 才 啊 啊 嘿 啊 嘿 啊 哎
youqi cai a a hei a hei a ai

25



啊 嘿 啊 啊 嘿 啊 嘿
a hei a a hei hei

34



啊 嘿 啊 啊 嘿 啊
a hei a a a

Appendix II: Full score of Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan

把生死只当着过眼云烟

Ba Sheng Si Zhi Dang Zhuo Guo Yan Yun Yan

Shaanxi Folk Music

Transcribed by Yanya Zhu

Moderato

北边有河叫黄河 南边有山是华山
 bei bian you he jiao huang he. nan bian you shan shi hua shan
 8 黄河 到华山拐了个弯 弯出
 huang he dao hua shan guai liao ge wan wan chu
 17 个村庄叫双泉 双泉
 ge cun zhuang jiao shuang quan shuang quan
 27 村里唱老腔 一嗓子吼了几千年
 cun li chang lao qiang yi sang zi hou liao ji qian nian
 36 唱尽人间事 诉说悲
 chang jin ren jian shi su shuo bei
 45 与欢 北边是黄河南边
 yu huan bei bian shi huang he nan bian
 52 是华山 华山检邪正 黄河
 shi hua shan huashan jian xie zheng huang he
 61 论扁圆 且放下 荣与辱 没论金
 lun bian yuan qie fang xia rong yu ru mo lun jin

2
 70 钱 把生死 只当着
 qian ba sheng si zhi dang zhuo
 75 过眼 云烟
 guo yan yun yan

Appendix III: Full score of Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai

一颗明珠卧沧海

Yi Ke Ming Zhu Wo Cang Hai

Shaanxi Folk Music

Transcribed by Yanya Zhu

Moderato

Voice

一颗明珠卧沧海 浮云遮盖

yi ke ming zhu wo cang hai fu yunzhe gai

月琴 (Yue Qin)

7

Voice

栋梁才

— dong liang- cai —

Y.Q.

14

Voice

灵芝草

ling zhi cao

Y.Q.

21

Voice

倒被高蓬盖 聚宝盆

dao bei hao peng gai — ju bao pen —

Y.Q.

2

29

Voice

千年土内埋

qian nian tu nei mai

Y.Q.

34

Voice

Y.Q.

Appendix IV: Full score of Guan Zhong Gu Ge

关 中 古 歌

Guan Zhong Gu Ge

Shaanxi Folk Music

Transcribed by Yanya Zhu

Allegro

Voice

女 媧 啊 娘 娘 补 了 天
nv wa a niang niang bu le tian

月 琴 (Yue Qin)

9

Voice

剩 块 石 头 成 华 山 啊
sheng kuai shi tou cheng hua shan a

Y.Q.

17

Voice

Y.Q.

24

Voice

鸟 儿 啊 背 着 太 阳 飞
niao er a bei zhe tai yang fei

Y.Q.

2

33

Voice

东边飞到西那边啊嘿 嘿啊
dong bian fei dao_ xi na bian a hei hei a_____

Y.Q.

40

Voice

Y.Q.

47

Voice

天黑了 又亮了 人睡了 又醒了 啊嘿
tian hei le you liang le ren shui le you xing le a hei

Y.Q.

57

Voice

嘿 啊
hei a_____

Y.Q.

64 3

Voice

太上老
tai shang lao

Y.Q.

71

Voice

老君犁了地 豁条犁沟成黄河
lao jun li le di huo tiao li gouheng huang he

Y.Q.

79

Voice

啊嘿嘿啊
a hei hei a

Y.Q.

86

Voice

风儿吹月亮
feng er chui yue liang

Y.Q.

พหุมนั ปณฺ ทิโต ชีเว

4

94

Voice

弯 东岸转到西岸边啊嘿嘿
wan dong an zhuan dao xi an bian a hei hei

Y.Q.

102

Voice

Y.Q.

109

Voice

麦青了又黄了人兴了又张
mai qing le you huang le ren xing le you zhang

Y.Q.

118

Voice

了啊嘿嘿 啊嘿啊嘿 嘿嘿 嘿嘿
le a hei hei a hei a hei hei hei

Y.Q.

พหุมนั ปณฺ ทิโต ชีเว

129

Voice

嘿 啊 嘿 嘿 嘿 嘿 啊啊啊
hei_a hei_ hei_ hei_ hei_ a a a_

Y.Q.

138

Voice

啊 嘿 啊
a hei_ a_

Y.Q.

144

Voice

啊
a

Y.Q.



Appendix V : Full score of Give You a Little Color

给你一点颜色 Give You a Little Color

作词: 谭维维/陈忠安/路柯军
Lyrics: Weiwei Tan, Zhongshi Chen, Shujun Lu
作曲: 刘洲
Composer: Zhou Liu

Rubato

Soprano Solo

Tenor Solo
伙 伙 抄 家 伙 伙 伙
huo ji ai chao jia huo ai ai

Choir

Hu Qin 1

Hu Qin 2

YU Qin

Electric Guitar

Electric Bass

Keyboard (Pad)

Piano

Percussion 1 (Bell)

Percussion 2 (Nao Bo)


Percussion 3 (Ban Gu)

Percussion 4 (Da Gu)

Percussion 5 (Bench)

Rubato

Drum Set



2

12

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q. 1

H.Q. 2

Y.Q.

E. Ctr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

他 大 男
ta da ju

他 二 男
ta er ju

26 ♩ = 136 3

S. Solo

T. Solo
 那是他男 哎 高 梁 子 低 板 凳 都 是 木 头 哎 哎 哎 哎 哎 哎
 dou shi ta nǚ ai gao zhuo zi di ban... deng dou shi mu tou ai ai ai ai ai ai

Choir

H.Q. 1

H.Q. 2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

4

20

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

45 5

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

6

29

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q. 1

H.Q. 2

Y.Q.

E. Ctr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pho.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

55 7

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

女媧 媧 媧 补 了 天 啊
nv wa... niang niang bu liao tian a

8

67

S. Solo

剩下块石头是华山 鸟儿背着那

sheng xia kuai shi tou shi hua shan niao er bei zhe na

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

The musical score is arranged in a standard Western format with multiple staves. At the top, the vocal parts are labeled 'S. Solo' and 'T. Solo', with lyrics in Chinese and Pinyin. Below them is a 'Choir' staff. The instrumental section includes 'H.Q.1' and 'H.Q.2' (likely Horns), 'Y.Q.' (Violins), 'E. Gtr.' (Electric Guitar), 'E. Bass' (Electric Bass), 'Kbd.' (Keyboard), 'Pno.' (Piano), and a drum set consisting of 'Perc. 1' through 'Perc. 5' and 'Dr.'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

67 9

S. Solo
 太阳飞呀 _____ 东边飞到西那边 _____ 为什么天空
 tai yang fei ya _____ dong bian fei dao xi na bian _____ wei shen me tian kong

T. Solo

Choir
 _____ 为什么天空
 wei shen me tian kong

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.




10

75

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

变成灰色 为什么大地没有绿色 为什么人心不是红色 为什么雪山
 bian cheng hui se... wei shen me da di mei you lv se... wei shen me ren xin bu shi hong se... wei shen me xue shan

变成灰色 为什么大地没有绿色 为什么人心不是红色 为什么雪山
 bian cheng hui se... wei shen me da di mei you lv se... wei shen me ren xin bu shi hong se... wei shen me xue shan

87 11

S. Solo
成了黑色—— 为什么犀牛 没有了角—— 为什么大象 没有了牙—— 为什么鲨鱼
cheng le hei se... wei shen me xi niu mei you le jiao... wei shen me da xiang mei you le ya... wei shen me sha yu

T. Solo

Choir
成了黑色—— 为什么犀牛 没有了角—— 为什么大象 没有了牙—— 为什么鲨鱼
cheng le hei se... wei shen me xi niu mei you le jiao... wei shen me da xiang mei you le ya... wei shen me sha yu

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

12

87

S. Solo

没有了睛 为什么鸟儿 没有了翅膀 啊 a 啊 a

mei you le qi— wei shen me niao er mei you le chi bang a a

T. Solo

Choir

没有了睛 为什么鸟儿 没有了翅膀 啊 a 啊 a

mei you le qi— wei shen me niao er mei you le chi bang a a

H.Q. 1

H.Q. 2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

13

S. Solo
T. Solo
Choir
H.Q.1
H.Q.2
Y.Q.
E. Gtr.
E. Bass
Kbd.
Pno.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Perc. 4
Perc. 5
Dr.

啊
啊
啊
啊
太
阳
yang

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score, page 13. It features a variety of instruments and vocal parts. At the top, there are staves for S. Solo (Soprano Soloist), T. Solo (Tenor Soloist), and Choir. The S. Solo and Choir parts have lyrics in Chinese characters: '啊' (A) and '太 阳 yang' (Tai Yang). Below these are staves for H.Q.1, H.Q.2, and Y.Q., which appear to be empty. The next section includes E. Gtr. (Electric Guitar), E. Bass, Kbd. (Keyboard), and Pno. (Piano). The bottom section contains five Percussion (Perc.) staves and a Drums (Dr.) staff. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The vocal parts are in a melodic line, while the instrumental parts provide accompaniment. The percussion parts are marked with rhythmic patterns and dynamics.

14

100

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

圆
yuan

月亮弯都在天上
yue liang wan dou zai tian shang

The musical score is arranged in a standard Western format with multiple staves. The vocal parts (S. Solo, T. Solo, and Choir) are at the top, with lyrics in Chinese and Pinyin. The piano accompaniment includes Horns (H.Q.1, H.Q.2), Trumpets (Y.Q.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. Bass), Keyboard (Kbd.), and Piano (Pno.). The percussion section consists of five different percussion parts (Perc. 1-5) and a Drum set (Dr.). The score is in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as 100. The lyrics are: '圆 yuan' and '月亮弯都在天上 yue liang wan dou zai tian shang'.

107 15

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

16

177

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

天空和大地做了伴
tian kong he da di zuo liao ban.



116 17

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q. 1

H.Q. 2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

鸟几围着那太阳转 华山和黄河做了伴那
 miao er wei zhe na tai yang zhuan. hua shan he huang he zuo liao ban na

18

125

S. Solo

田 里 的 谷 子 笑 得 甜
 tian li de gu zi xiao wan yao—

为 什 么 沙 漠 没 有 绿 洲
 wei shen me sha mo mei you lv zhou

T. Solo

Choir

为 什 么 沙 漠 没 有 绿 洲
 wei shen me sha mo mei you lv zhou

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Ctr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

132 19

S. Solo
 为什么星星不再闪烁 为什么花儿不再开了 为什么世界
 wei shen me xing xing bu zai shan shuo wei shen me hua er bu zai kai le wei shen me shi jie

T. Solo

Choir
 为什么星星不再闪烁 为什么花儿不再开了 为什么世界
 wei shen me xing xing bu zai shan shuo wei shen me hua er bu zai kai le wei shen me shi jie

H.Q. 1

H.Q. 2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

20

117

S. Solo

没有了颜色 为什么我们 知道结果 为什么我们 还在挥罪。

mei you le yan. se wei shen me wo men zhi dao jie guo. wei shen me wo men hai zai hui huo.

T. Solo

Choir

没有了颜色 为什么我们 知道结果 为什么我们 还在挥罪。

mei you le yan. se wei shen me wo men zhi dao jie guo. wei shen me wo men hai zai hui huo.

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

142 21

S. Solo
 我们需 要 你 下 脚 步... 还 还 世 界 一 点 颜 色 啊
 wo men xv yao ting xia jiao bu... gai huan shi jie yi dian yan se a

T. Solo

Choir
 我 们 需 要 你 下 脚 步... 还 还 世 界 一 点 颜 色 啊
 wo men xv yao ting xia jiao bu... gai huan shi jie yi dian yan se a

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

22

145

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q. 1

H.Q. 2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

153 23

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q. 1

H.Q. 2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd

Pno

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

24

750

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

呀 嘿 娃 娃 一 片 片 黑 都 在
ya hei wa wa yi pian pian hei dou zai

269 25

S. Solo

T. Solo
原 上 转 哪 娃 娃 一 片 片 哪 都 在 原 上 转
yuan_shang zhuan hei wa wa yi pian pian hei dou zai yuan_shang zhuan

Choir

H.Q.1

H.Q.2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

26

187

S. Solo

T. Solo

Choir

H.Q. 1

H.Q. 2

Y.Q.

E. Gtr.

E. Bass

Kbd.

Pno.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Perc. 5

Dr.

啊

嘿 嘿

Appendix VI: Interview and on-site pictures from Shuangquan Village, Huayin City, Shaanxi Province



Figure 75. Key Informant Zhang Ximin interview
Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 76. Key Informant Zhang Ximin and The researcher
Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 77. Certificate of Zhang Ximin, a national-level inheritor
Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 78. Key Informant Zhang Xiangling interview
Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

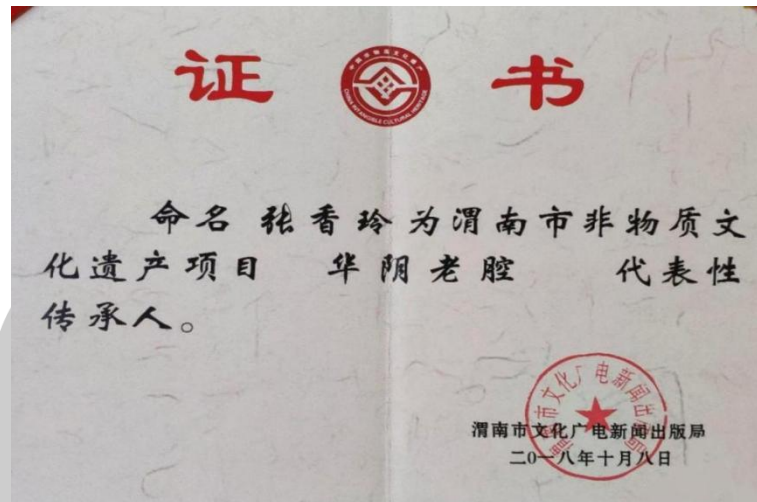


Figure 79. Certificate of Zhang Xiangling, municipal inheritor

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 80. Key Informant Zhang Fuben interview

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

พหุคูณ ปณฺ ทิโต ชิว

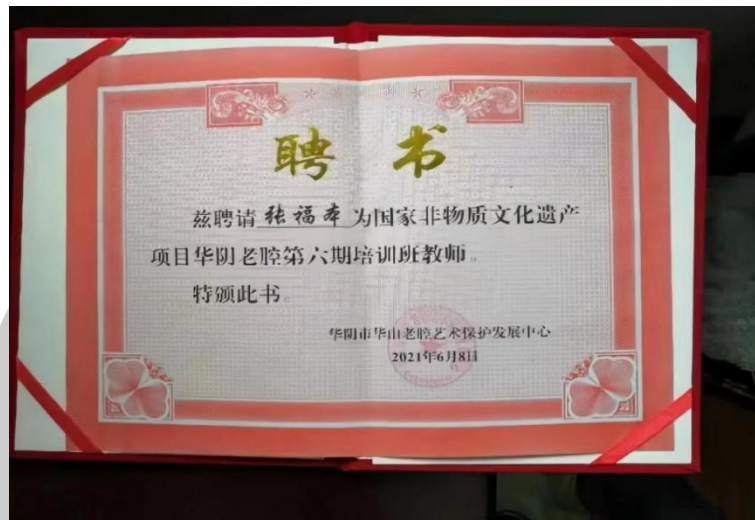


Figure 81. Certificate of Zhang Fubun, a teacher in the sixth phase of training at
Huayin Laoqiang

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 82. The researchers conducted field research in Shuangquan Village I .

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 83. The researchers conducted field research in Shuangquan Village II .

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 84. The researchers conducted field research in Shuangquan Village III .

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 85. The researchers conducted field research in Shuangquan Village IV.

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 86. The researchers conducted field research in Shuangquan Village V.

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 87. The researchers conducted field research in Shuangquan Village VI.

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024



Figure 88. The researchers conducted field research in Shuangquan Village VII.

Source: Yanya Zhu, from fieldwork in March 2024

Appendix VII
Interview form 1

Interviewees: Key informants

Interview date: March 2024

Interview location: Shuangquan Village, Huayin City, Shaanxi Province, China

Interview method: Face-to-face interview during field trip

Name	Question	Result
Zhang Ximin	1. How long have you been singing 'Huayin Laoqiang'?	1. 60 years
	2. What are the main characteristics of Huayin Laoqiang, a Chinese folk music genre?	2. Six
	3. How many types of traditional Huayin Laoqiang are there?	3. Five
	4. Is the origin of Huayin Laoqiang, a Chinese folk music genre, very ancient?	4. Yes
	5. Do you think it is a trend for Huayin Laoqiang to be combined with contemporary pop music?	5. Yes
	6. Do you like the performance mode of combining Huayin Laoqiang with contemporary pop music?	6. Yes
	7. How is Huayin Laoqiang passed on?	7. Six
	8. How do you think Huayin Laoqiang can be developed?	8. Three
	9. What are the singing techniques of Huayin Laoqiang?	9. Six
	10. Do you think environmental factors limit the development of Huayin Laoqiang?	10. Yes
Zhang Xiangling	1. How long have you been singing Huayin Laoqiang?	1. 30 years
	2. How many forms of performance do you think	2. Two

	<p>there are for Huayin Laoqiang?</p> <p>3.What are the linguistic characteristics of traditional Huayin Laoqiang?</p> <p>4.As the first female Huayin Laoqiang performer, is there a difference between your performance and that of a man?</p> <p>5.What are the characteristics of the lyrics of Huayin Laoqiang, a Chinese folk music?</p> <p>6.Can you accept the performance mode of combining Huayin Laoqiang with contemporary pop music?</p> <p>7.Do you think there is a difference between contemporary Huayin Laoqiang and tradition?</p> <p>8.Traditional Huayin Laoqiang transmission methods?</p> <p>9.Are there many people learning Huayin Laoqiang from you now?</p> <p>10.Do you think there are social and cultural factors in the development and transformation of Huayin Laoqiang?</p>	<p>3. Huayin dialect</p> <p>4.Yes</p> <p>5.Stories, legends and folk life</p> <p>6.Yes</p> <p>7.Yes</p> <p>8.Oral transmission</p> <p>9.Not many</p> <p>10.Yes</p>
Zhang Fuben	<p>1.How long have you been singing Huayin Laoqiang?</p> <p>2.How long has the Huayin Laoqiang training centre in Shuangquan Village, Huayin City, Shaanxi Province been in existence?</p> <p>3.How many people attend the Huayin Laoqiang training centre in Shuangquan Village?</p> <p>4.What age group is most represented among those who attend Huayin Laoqiang training?</p> <p>5.How widespread is Huayin Laoqiang in other</p>	<p>1.25 years</p> <p>2.7 years</p> <p>3.Around 80</p> <p>4.Older people</p> <p>5.Yes, but</p>

schools and universities?	not
6.Can you accept the performance mode of Huayin Laoqiang combined with contemporary pop music?	consistently
7.Do you think Huayin Laoqiang's integration and transformation is a trend?	6.Yes
8.How many roles does the lead singer of Huayin Laoqiang play?	7.Yes
9.Are there many people learning Huayin Laoqiang with you now?	8.Five
10.What do you think are the biggest challenges facing Huayin Laoqiang education at the moment?	9.Not many
	10.Lack of young people learning and creating new works

Interview form 2

Interviewee: Casual informants and Huayin Laoqiang Audience

Interview period: March 2024 – July 2024

Interview method: face-to-face, video interview, telephone interview

Question

How did you first come to know about Huayin Laoqiang?

What was your first impression of Huayin Laoqiang?

Which elements of Huayin Laoqiang attract you the most?

How do you see the fusion of Huayin Laoqiang with contemporary music? Such as the song 'Give You a Little Colour' to give you a feeling?

5. What are your expectations for the future development of Huayin Laoqiang?

Name	Age	Occupation	Place of residence	Result
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1.Zhang Congming	26	Vocal teacher	Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China	<p>1.I first heard Huayin Laoqiang at a local cultural festival.</p> <p>2.Powerful and very passionate. I was surprised by the raw feeling of the performance.</p> <p>3.Powerful singing techniques and fast-paced percussion.</p> <p>4.I think this is a great way to introduce traditional music to a younger audience. I really liked ‘Give You a Little Colour’, which is a good example of fusion.</p> <p>5.I hope to see more collaborations between traditional and modern artists to keep this form alive.</p>
2.Yi Xiaobing	45	Museum staff	Huayin City in Shaanxi Province, China	<p>1. I grew up listening to it as part of local celebrations in my hometown.</p> <p>2. It's very nostalgic for me. It reminds me of my childhood and the festivals we used to</p>

				attend.
				3. The combination of rough singing and Yueqin playing has always fascinated me.
				4. It's interesting, but I still prefer the traditional form. The new songs, like 'Give You a Little Colour,' are good, but not the same.
				5. I hope it can be preserved in its purest form while still being introduced to new audiences.
3.Xu xiaowei	17	High school student	Huayin City in Shaanxi Province, China	1. I found a video on social media that featured it.
				2. It was very different from what I usually listen to. It felt old and unfamiliar, but also really cool.
				3.The raw power in the vocals and how loud everything is! It's unlike anything else.
				4. I like how they mix the old with the new. 'Give You a Little Colour' is a

				<p>fun song, and it makes traditional music seem more relatable.</p> <p>5. I'm interested in learning about it. I think more people should learn about it.</p>
4.Li Shanying	22	University student	Lanzhou City, Gansu Province, China	<p>1. I saw a live performance during a university event.</p> <p>2. The performance was intense and full of emotion. I had never seen anything like it before.</p> <p>3. The powerful, emotional singing style and the unique percussion rhythms.</p> <p>4. I think it's really innovative. 'Give You a Little Colour' does a great job of blending old and new styles.</p> <p>5. I hope it continues to evolve and collaborate with more modern genres.</p>
5.Wang Liang	58	Restaurateur	Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China	<p>1. I learned about it when I was young through local opera troupes.</p> <p>2. It felt like a deep connection to my cultural</p>

				<p>heritage. Very traditional and powerful.</p> <p>3. The intensity of the vocals and the storytelling through the music.</p> <p>4. I find it fascinating, but sometimes I feel it loses a bit of its authenticity. Songs like ‘Give You a Little Colour’ are still acceptable to me.</p> <p>5. I hope the traditional aspects are preserved and taught to younger generations, even as it changes.</p>
6.Pan Haokai	20	University student	Nanning City, Guangxi Province, China	<p>1. A friend introduced me to it through a playlist.</p> <p>2. It was really loud and expressive. Definitely not something I had heard before.</p> <p>3. The way the singer’s voice cuts through the music and the heavy drum beats.</p> <p>4. I like how they modernized it in songs like ‘Give You a Little Colour.’ It’s a fun mix of styles.</p>

				5. I'd like to see more collaborations with pop or electronic music.
7.Song Quan	44	Associate University Professor	Nanning City, Guangxi Province, China	<p>1. I attended a traditional Chinese opera show that featured Huayin Laoqiang.</p> <p>2. It was very powerful and seemed to carry a lot of history.</p> <p>3. The strength of the vocals and the use of traditional percussion instruments.</p> <p>4. I think it's a great way to keep the tradition alive while making it more accessible to younger generations.</p> <p>5. I hope it continues to be passed down and performed, even with modern influences.</p>
8.Qin Na	41	Director of Guangxi Radio	Nanning City, Guangxi Province, China	<p>1. I first learnt about Shaanxi Huayin Laoqiang through a CCTV news report.</p> <p>2. The music was loud and energetic, and the performers were very engaged.</p>

				<p>3. The energy and emotion in the performance, especially in the singing.</p> <p>4. I think it's an interesting blend, and songs like 'Give You a Little Colour' really highlight how old and new can come together.</p> <p>5. I'd like to see it featured more in mainstream music while still keeping its cultural roots.</p>
9.Zhao Jia	15	Junior high school student	Xiangtan City, Hunan Province, China	<p>1. I found out about Huayin Laoqiang when I saw the song 'Give You Some Colour' on WeChat videos.</p> <p>2. It was very different from what I usually listen to, but it was interesting.</p> <p>3. The high-pitched vocals and the fast rhythm.</p> <p>4. I think it's a good idea because it makes traditional music more fun and relatable.</p> <p>5. I hope it can be taught</p>

				in schools and more young people will get involved.
10. Yang Huan	31	University piano teacher	Changsha, Hunan Province, China	<p>1. I first encountered it at a concert showcasing traditional music.</p> <p>2. It felt very raw and emotional, unlike anything else I had heard.</p> <p>3. The intensity of the vocals and the strong, driving rhythm.</p> <p>4. I think it's an exciting fusion. Songs like 'Give You a Little Colour' show how versatile traditional music can be.</p> <p>5. I hope to see more cross-genre collaborations in the future.</p>



BIOGRAPHY

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