

Exploration of the Communication Pathways for the Inheritance of Traditional Music Culture in the Context of New Media Convergence: A Case Study of the Dong Grand Chant in Guizhou

Ziyan Liang

School of Music, The Chinese University of HongKong (Shenzhen), Shenzhen, Guangdong, China

Abstract: In the era of deep digitalization, the cultural field is undergoing profound changes. Traditional music culture, as a treasure of national culture, has encountered unprecedented opportunities and challenges on the path of dissemination. This research takes the Dong Grand Song of Guizhou as a typical case, and adopts the case analysis method and the qualitative and quantitative research method of multi-platform communication practice to systematically analyze its current communication status on new media platforms, summarize successful experiences and construct a universal theoretical framework. It finds that new media has effectively enhanced the popularity and influence of the Dong Grand Song. Therefore, it is concluded that the integration of new media can bring new possibilities for the inheritance of traditional music culture. By constructing a theoretical framework, other traditional music cultures can also combine their own characteristics, fully utilize the advantages of new media, and achieve innovative development and inheritance. This not only helps to promote the development of the traditional music culture industry and create new economic growth points, but also enhances the sense of identity and pride in national culture.

Keywords: New Media Integration; Inheritance of Traditional Music Culture; Dong Grand Song; Precision Marketing; New Approaches

1. Introduction

With the rise of the digital wave, new media, leveraging advantages such as interactivity and immediacy, are accelerating their integration with traditional media, reshaping the landscape of information dissemination. In the new media era, traditional Chinese music culture is highly

vulnerable to the impact of popular culture. How can traditional music culture find an innovative strategic path? In recent years, the academic community at home and abroad has conducted a series of studies on new media and cultural dissemination, but there are still deficiencies: first, there is a lack of theoretical model construction for the integrated dissemination of minority traditional music in new media, and a systematic theoretical framework to guide dissemination practice is lacking; second, existing research mostly focuses on dissemination phenomena and strategies, with less attention paid to the quantitative assessment of dissemination effects and the quality assurance of cultural inheritance; third, most studies on the Dong Grand Chant of Guizhou focus on historical, artistic, and cultural values, with a lack of empirical and case analyses.

Therefore, this paper focuses on a qualitative perspective, based on the case of the Dong Grand Chant, to construct a universal theoretical framework, fill the gap in the existing theoretical system at the application level of new media, and deeply explore its dissemination path, providing a reference for enriching the theory of traditional music culture inheritance and promoting the inheritance and development of the Dong Grand Chant.

2. The Impact of the New Media Convergence Era on Traditional Music Culture

2.1 The Current Situation of New Media Convergence

In the digital age, 5G, big data, artificial intelligence, and other technologies have become the core driving forces of new media convergence, reshaping the music dissemination ecosystem. Big data analyzes user music preferences, playback history, and other behavioral data to precisely push personalized

playlists to users, while helping creators understand market trends and optimize music creation. Artificial intelligence assists creators in generating melody frameworks; VR/AR technologies can also build immersive music experiences such as virtual concert venues.

At the practical level, traditional media and new media complement each other to expand the boundaries of music dissemination. The collaboration among various sectors has produced new music art models, and through the interactive functions of new media, such as comments, voting, and topic discussions, it enhances audience participation. Combined with big data analysis, it interprets music culture and improves the audience's appreciation level.

2.2 Opportunities for Traditional Music Culture

The rapid development of new media has brought revolutionary changes to the dissemination of traditional music culture, breaking the geographical limitations of traditional music dissemination and enabling music to reach a broader audience. Take the Dong Grand Chant of Guizhou as an example. Its performance venues are usually in the drum towers of Dong ethnic settlements, making it difficult for audiences from other places to appreciate this unique music art. However, the emergence of new media platforms, such as video websites, social media, and live streaming platforms, has opened up new channels for the dissemination of traditional music. Through these platforms, traditional music can be disseminated in various forms such as videos, audio, and images. Audiences can enjoy traditional music from all over the world anytime and anywhere through the Internet. This has greatly expanded the audience base of traditional music, especially among young people. Through social media, attracting many young audiences also cultivates new groups for the inheritance and dissemination of traditional music.

2.3 Challenges Faced by Traditional Music Culture

First, the main reason why traditional music is still at risk of being lost even in the era of rapid development of new media is that traditional music strictly adheres to the styles and structures passed down from history, which helps maintain its cultural purity but greatly

limits its ability to attract modern audiences. With the development of science, people's consumption habits and expectations for music have changed significantly, especially among young people who tend to pursue trendy music and are accustomed to fast-paced, visually rich music works. Compared to these popular music, traditional music appears very monotonous. This is why the dissemination potential of traditional music inheritance is greatly restricted, making it difficult to gain an advantageous position in the competitive music market. Secondly, compared with modern music, traditional music relies more on oral transmission and heart-to-heart teaching. This mode of dissemination is deeply rooted in the national culture. As the most direct and unique way of communication, it is also a form of interpersonal and cultural transmission. This method has achieved remarkable results in regional dissemination. However, in the context of a global digital environment, it has significant drawbacks. New media platforms usually prioritize the promotion of music with commercial value. Most traditional music lacks the immediate appeal and market value of commercial music. Therefore, on the Internet, traditional music is much harder to gain promotion and attention compared to popular music. Thirdly, the inheritance of traditional music is confronted with the dual problems of talent shortage and resource insufficiency. With the influence of modern education and current market demands on vocational skills, young people tend to choose jobs with better employment prospects, such as those in the Internet and marketing operations. For the inheritance of traditional music, it is a long-term, high-skill, and low-return task. Take the Dong Grand Song as an example. Learning the Dong Grand Song not only requires mastering multi-part singing techniques but also, when necessary, learning the unique dance forms of the Dong people. Therefore, the inheritance of traditional music lacks appeal to young people, not only in terms of economic returns but also because the market has no demand for traditional music. The music market on new media platforms is already relatively saturated, further intensifying the competition among different music styles. In terms of resources, the current government and society invest relatively little in traditional music, leading to a shortage of funds and outdated facilities and equipment for traditional music. In some regions, the

recording and video equipment for traditional music is old, and the quality of recorded music is not high, which is not conducive to the preservation and dissemination of traditional music. Moreover, due to the lack of a digital music resource library, the resources of traditional music are difficult to integrate and share, which also restricts the research and inheritance of traditional music.

3. Case Study of Guizhou Dong Grand Song

3.1 Overview of Dong Grand Song

Originated by the Dong people during their long-term production and daily life, Guizhou Dong Grand Song has a history of more than 2,500 years. Lu You, a poet in the Southern Song Dynasty, described in "Old Scholar's Studio Notes" the scene of Dong ancestors singing in groups: "Hundreds of people form a group, holding hands and singing," reflecting the collective singing tradition in ancient Dong communities.

As a multi-voice folk chorus without conductors or accompaniment, Dong Grand Song boasts unique artistic characteristics. Its lyrics are mostly inspired by nature, labor, love, and other aspects of daily life. Structurally, its complex composition creates a distinct musical experience. Beyond being a folk art, Dong Grand Song embodies the social and cultural values of the Dong ethnic group. However, with social development, its survival environment has become increasingly vulnerable, urgently requiring protective measures.

3.2 Communication Practices of Dong Grand Song

3.2.1 Promoting Dong Grand Song Culture via Social Media Platforms

Social media platforms, with their massive user bases and strong dissemination power, have provided a broad channel for spreading Dong Grand Song. For example, many accounts focusing on Dong Grand Song on Weibo regularly share high-definition performance videos, accompanied by graphic and textual interpretations of its historical origins, cultural connotations, and singing techniques. These contents attract music enthusiasts, cultural scholars, and ethnic studies experts, sparking heated discussions and widespread sharing.

WeChat official accounts also play a vital role. Accounts like "Dong Township Ambiance" and

"Inheritance of Dong Culture" delve into the essence of Dong Grand Song through articles, such as stories of inheritors like Wu Naiyuan, an 80-year-old national-level inheritor who has taught children to sing Grand Songs for over 60 years. Video platforms like Douyin and Bilibili showcase innovative fusions of Dong Grand Song with modern music, such as performances integrated with contemporary dance and stage lighting, appealing to younger audiences. For instance, Douyin user @DongGrandSongAduo (1.56 million followers), a post-95 Dong singer named Yang Aduo, released a short video in 2024 titled "Drum Tower Grand Song × Electronic Drumbeat", where she sang "Ancestors Settle in the Stockade" with electronic drumbeats in front of a traditional drum tower, incorporating the sound of Miao silver ornaments in the chorus. The video received 1.28 million likes, was included in Douyin's official "Intangible Cultural Heritage New Sounds" collection, and based on the full user search data statistics of the Douyin platform in 2024, that is, the official Douyin collects the search behavior records of all users on the platform within a week (from 00:00 last Monday to 23:59 Sunday) through its big data analysis system. During the data collection process, the system monitors and records in real time the keywords entered by users in the search bar and related search operations, covering various user groups such as different regions, age groups, and genders. It was found that the search volume for "Dong Grand Song" increased by 230% weekly.

3.2.2 Policy Support for Inheriting and Spreading Dong Grand Song

With the loss of traditional music cultures, the state has taken proactive measures. Driven by relevant policies, unique spaces for spreading Dong Grand Song have been created. In recent years, the state has attached great importance to intangible cultural heritage inheritance and introduced policies to encourage the integration of traditional culture with new media, such as "Opinions on Promoting the National Cultural Digitization Strategy", which emphasizes using digital technology to inherit and promote excellent traditional culture. In this context, many creators have produced science videos on Dong Grand Song.

For example, UP host "Cultural New Forces," supported by the National Art Fund's "Training Program for New Media Communication

Talents of Dong Grand Song," launched the series "Exploring Dong Grand Song: Natural Sounds from Deep in the Mountains". The videos use animations, on-site filming, and expert interviews to vividly present the origins and development of Dong Grand Song. On-site filming captures daily singing scenes in Dong villages, while expert interviews invite ethnomusicologists to analyze its musical structure, explain the uniqueness of its multi-voice a cappella form in the global musical system, and decode the cultural meanings behind different singing styles.

In addition to funding and talent investment, the government has also created a cultural brand for the Dong ethnic group by collaborating with tourism departments to integrate Dong Grand Song with Guizhou's urban image, developing high-end tourism products that promote cultural exchange and tourism development.

3.2.3 Promotion via Music Platforms

QQ Music leverages personalized recommendation algorithms to precisely promote Dong Grand Song. For users interested in traditional Chinese ethnic music, it pushes playlists like "Selected Traditional Chinese Folk Songs," featuring classic tracks such as "Song of Cicadas" and "Beautiful Mountains". The song covers incorporate traditional Dong patterns and colors, accompanied by detailed introductions of the background, singing styles, and cultural connotations, leading to continuous growth in playback volume and positive comments. The platform also collaborates with inheritors and music institutions to hold online events. In 2024, for example, a joint online concert with Dong Grand Song inheritors attracted thousands of live viewers, enhancing public understanding and appreciation of the art form.

4. Theoretical Framework for Empowering Traditional Music Culture Via New Media

4.1 Specific Communication Channels

This model categorizes traditional music's communication channels into three types:

(1) Core Platforms: These achieve mass communication coverage, such as Douyin, Weibo, and Xiaohongshu. With huge user bases, these platforms feature instant and fragmented content, suitable for reaching mass audiences through accessible and engaging content. High-quality content can quickly cross cultural circles. For example, after the release of "Ne

Zha 2", Mongolian throat singing went viral with platform traffic support and user-generated sharing, achieving over 100 million views and bringing niche traditional music to the mainstream.

(2) Vertical Platforms: These target specific audiences, such as QQ Music and NetEase Cloud Music, which focus on users with dedicated interests in traditional music.

(3) Cross-Industry Platforms: These enable diversified value transformation by emphasizing integration across fields. For example, the collaboration between the Central Conservatory of Music and Douyin Live combines traditional instruments with e-commerce sales, achieving both cultural dissemination and commercial value. Such platforms are suitable for expanding traditional music's application scenarios through innovative cooperation models, realizing multiple goals of cultural communication, brand promotion, and commercial monetization.

4.2 Practical Application: Taking Suzhou Pingtan as an Example

Su Zhou Pingtan (a traditional storytelling and singing art in Suzhou dialect) once faced challenges like aging audiences and shrinking influence due to limited communication channels. Using this model, we can analyze its application as follows:

Step 1: Clarify Communication Goals

Before applying the model, define the objectives: commercial monetization or increased visibility. For Suzhou Pingtan, Suzhou aimed to pursue both: achieving profitability through commercial cooperation and product sales to ensure sustainability, while expanding cultural influence to promote intangible cultural heritage inheritance.

Step 2: Develop Platform-Specific Strategies

Core Platforms: Leverage high-traffic platforms for broad dissemination. For example, Youku's "Qiangqiang Travel the World", a cultural travel show hosted by Dou Wentao, featured a 30-minute Suzhou Pingtan appreciation segment. By showcasing artistic highlights and explaining its history and genres, the program utilized the platform's reach to introduce Pingtan to more viewers, aligning with the core platform's role of attracting audiences through quality content.

Cross-Industry Platforms: Pursue commercial collaboration and immersive experiences. In Suzhou's Pingjiang Road Historic District, "Pingtan Live Story Theaters" integrated

performances into night tours of the ancient street. Most tourists learned about Suzhou's cheongsam culture via Xiaohongshu, and almost every cheongsam shop recommended photo spots with Pingtan performances, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the charm of "Pingtan intoxicating the South." In 2024, the city received over 181 million tourists, with tourism revenue reaching 204.11 billion yuan. Collaborations with celebrities for intangible cultural heritage popularization and incorporating Pingtan costumes and instruments into magazine posters further boosted the local economy.

Today, Suzhou Pingtan has not only gained domestic popularity but also become a shining symbol of Chinese traditional culture through overseas cultural exchange activities.

5. Conclusion

In the context of new media integration, the inheritance and dissemination of traditional music culture face new opportunities and challenges. To address this, it is crucial to establish a communication channel ecosystem model of "core platforms + vertical platforms + cross-industry platforms." This model broadens the dissemination pathways for traditional music culture, enhances communication efficiency, and strengthens audience participation and cultural identity. It is hoped that in the future, we can continue to leverage the trend of new media integration, continuously improve and apply this model, deeply explore innovative communication models for traditional music culture, and enable traditional music culture to endure and thrive in the waves of the new era, maximizing its cultural and social values.

References

- [1] Zhao Li. (2023). Research on innovative approaches to traditional culture communication in the new media era. *Journalism and Communication Studies*, 30(5), 102–110.
- [2] Qian Ming. (2022). Research on the inheritance and development of Dong Grand Song in the new media environment. *Cultural Heritage*, (6), 120–128.
- [3] Sun Yang. (2021). Application of short videos and live streaming in the dissemination of ethnic minority music culture: A case study of Guizhou Dong Grand Song. *Media*, (20), 98–100.
- [4] Li Hua. (2020). Practice and exploration of new media technologies in the inheritance of Dong Grand Song. *Ethnic Art Studies*, 33(4), 130–138.
- [5] Zheng Baifan. (2023). Exploring the inheritance and development of traditional music culture in the new media context. *Writer's World*, 2023(24), 135–137.
- [6] Pan Yonghua. (2009). Analysis of the current inheritance status of Dong Grand Song. *Ethnic Music*.
- [7] Brown, A. (2021). Digital Technologies and the Experience of Traditional Music. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 27(6), 650–665.
- [8] Williams, M. (2022). The Global Dissemination of Ethnic Music via Social Media. *Journal of Cultural Studies*, 26(3), 201–220.
- [9] Statistical data of the Suzhou Municipal People's Government. <https://www.suzhou.gov.cn>