

# The inheritance and development of Chinese national music art

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**Abstract:** Chinese ethnic music art is a treasure of Chinese civilization, carrying profound historical and cultural values. In the face of globalization, how to maintain its uniqueness and continuity is a significant challenge for the current cultural and artistic community. This paper focuses on the inheritance and development of Chinese ethnic music art, aiming to explore its significance and role in modern society. Through in-depth research, we can see that ethnic music not only reflects the spirit of the nation but also serves as a carrier of cultural transmission. Its value lies in fostering national identity, enhancing cultural confidence, and promoting cultural exchange and understanding. At the intersection of tradition and modernity, local and global, Chinese ethnic music art demonstrates boundless possibilities and vitality.

**Key words:** national music, art, inheritance

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## 1. Aesthetic characteristics of Chinese national music art

### 1. The beauty of melody in the art of ethnic music

The aesthetic characteristics of Chinese ethnic music are particularly evident in its melodic beauty. This beauty is not just a combination of notes but also a profound reflection of emotion, story, and culture. The melodic beauty of ethnic music lies in its ability to showcase the diverse and rich cultural heritage of the Chinese nation through unique musical language and expressive techniques. In terms of regional characteristics, Chinese ethnic music exhibits a variety of styles. For example, Mongolian music has broad and bold melodies that reflect the vastness and freedom of grassland culture; while Jiangnan silk and bamboo music is delicate and soft, embodying the refinement and gentleness of water town culture. These distinct regional musical features not only enrich the artistic expression of Chinese ethnic music but also make it an important carrier of the diversity of Chinese culture. In emotional expression, the melodies of ethnic music are often directly linked to emotions, quickly resonating with listeners. The use of slides, ornaments, and microtones enhances the emotional expressiveness, allowing listeners to feel the emotional fluctuations behind the music. Moreover, the frequent improvisation in ethnic music further deepens the emotional depth and personal expression. <sup>[1]</sup> From the perspective of melodic structure, Chinese ethnic music often employs pentatonic or heptatonic scales, which differ from the twelve-tone equal temperament used in Western music. The simplicity of pentatonic scalesThe complexity of the heptatonic scale provides a unique melodic foundation for Chinese ethnic music. At the same time, ethnic music strives for smoothness and continuity in its melodic lines, emphasizing the horizontal development of music, which aligns with its aesthetic concept of breath continuity and emotional unbroken flow. In terms of mode usage, Chinese ethnic music commonly employs five modes: Gong, Shang, Jiao, Zhi, and Yu, each with distinct characteristics that can convey different emotional tones and atmospheres. For example, the clarity of Gong mode, the intensity of Zhi mode, and the softness of Yu mode all add rich emotional layers to the melodies of ethnic music.

### 1.2 Harmony characteristics of national music art

The aesthetic characteristics of Chinese ethnic music are equally vividly expressed in its harmonic features. The unique harmonic treatment not only demonstrates the musical wisdom of the Chinese nation but also reflects a profound cultural heritage. Harmonic features are one of the key markers distinguishing different musical styles and schools. In Chinese

ethnic music, the use of harmony is particularly distinctive. Chinese ethnic music often emphasizes vertical integration of sounds, especially in polyphonic ensembles, where the interrelationships and coordination between parts are meticulously considered. Harmonic progressions are typically simple and clear to avoid overly complex harmonic changes that might obscure the clarity of melodic lines. In most cases, harmony supports and enhances the melody rather than pursuing independence and complexity like in Western classical music. In practice, ethnic music frequently employs techniques such as parallel harmony and interval harmony, creating unique harmonic effects. Parallel harmony involves different parts moving in the same or similar directions, maintaining musical harmony and unity; interval harmony, on the other hand, produces distinctive sound effects through leaps of different intervals, adding color and expressiveness to the music. It is worth noting that the harmony in Chinese ethnic music often emphasizes functional aspects, specifically the selection and progression of harmonies. All these are aimed at strengthening the emotional expression and atmosphere of music. For example, using pure fifths, pure fourths and other harmonic intervals can create an empty and quiet atmosphere; while small thirds, large seconds and other harmonic intervals are more suitable for expressing soft and delicate emotions.

### 1.3 Structural analysis of national music art

The structure of ethnic music art is a significant manifestation of its profound cultural heritage and unique artistic charm. In the form and structural types of musical works, the application of symmetry and balance principles ensures that these works possess both rigorous logic and dynamic artistic appeal. The importance of structure in ethnic music art goes without saying. It acts like the skeleton of a musical work, supporting its overall form. At the same time, structure is also the soul of a musical work, determining its character and style. Specifically, the analysis of the structure of ethnic music art mainly revolves around the form and structural types of musical works. These include traditional forms such as counterpoint and fugue, as well as modern forms like free form and mixed form. Each of these forms and structural types has its unique characteristics and expressive power. For example, works in counterpoint form often have rich layers and a sense of depth; while those in fugue form frequently exhibit strong contrasts and impact. Free-form works, on the other hand, are more flexible and varied, fully showcasing the composers' individuality and innovative spirit. <sup>[2]</sup> Besides form and structural types, the principles of symmetry and balance also play a crucial role in musical works. Symmetry and balance are not only fundamental principles of composition but also essential components of the structure of musical works. The principle of symmetry and balance is crucial. The use of these elements ensures that musical works possess both order and dynamism. The role of structure in creating musical imagery cannot be overlooked. Through well-structured arrangements, musical pieces can evoke deep or light, serious or lively atmospheres, offering listeners diverse emotional experiences.

### 1.4 The development status and trend of Chinese national music art

Music, as an auditory art form, merges with the literary charm of poetry and the visual arts of painting to create a realm that transcends reality and is rich in depth. In this fusion, the artistic conception not only carries the inner emotions and philosophical reflections of a work but also becomes the core element of musical aesthetics. The integration of music with poetry and painting is not a simple addition but a process of mutual stimulation that generates new meanings. Ethnic music often uses poetry as lyrics, leveraging the fluidity of melodies and the rhythm of rhythms to transform textual imagery into audible artistic images; similarly, lines, colors, and compositions in paintings can be reflected in the soundscape of music, forming auditory scenes through the selection of timbres, harmony, and musical arrangements. The interplay of reality and abstraction in artistic conception and the art of leaving blanks are unique expressive techniques in ethnic music. The interplay of reality and abstraction highlights the layers of artistic expression, creating an effect that is both vividly concrete and abstractly vague through contrasts in volume, intensity, and tempo. The art of leaving blanks provides listeners with space for imagination and reflection through intentional pauses and silences, endowing the entire musical piece with deeper meaning and endless charm.

## 2. The development status and trend of Chinese national music art

### 2.1 Development of contemporary Chinese national music

In contemporary China, ethnic music is like a flowing river of history, carrying on ancient traditions while merging into

the waves of modern culture. The development status of ethnic music in different regions shows a trend towards diversification, with its vibrant scene closely linked to local cultural preservation and inheritance. The acceptance of ethnic music in contemporary society is gradually increasing. With the growing cultural confidence and the spread of diverse cultures, more and more people are beginning to pay attention to and appreciate the unique charm of ethnic music. The popularization of education, media promotion, and active music performances have all provided a broader stage and audience for ethnic music. In terms of dissemination, the Internet has become an important window for ethnic music to reach the world. Digital music platforms, social media, and various online video sites enable excellent works of ethnic music to instantly reach every corner of the globe. Moreover, music festivals, cultural exchange activities, and international cooperation projects also provide strong support for the international dissemination of ethnic music. In the phenomenon of integration with other art forms, ethnic music demonstrates great inclusiveness and innovation.

## 2.2 Innovation and practice of ethnic music creation

Under the dual wings of inheritance and innovation, traditional performance forms of ethnic music are undergoing a profound transformation. Traditional performances such as guqin solo and Miao ethnic groups Lusheng dance have not only been meticulously preserved but also rejuvenated by contemporary artists. They reinterpret ancient arts from a modern perspective, retaining their traditional charm while infusing them with new vitality for the new era. The application of modern stage technology has brought revolutionary changes to ethnic music performances. The integration of multimedia projection, three-dimensional stage design, and surround sound has greatly enriched the audio-visual experience of ethnic music, immersing audiences in a multidimensional sensory experience woven from music, light, and storytelling. <sup>[3]</sup> Cross-boundary collaborations and the fusion of diverse cultures have become significant forces driving the evolution of ethnic music performance forms. The deep integration of ethnic music with modern dance, theater, and even film has broken down the boundaries between art forms, creating entirely new performance arts that cannot be defined by a single label. This crossover is not just a superficial mix; it is also an exchange and resonance of cultural connotations. This series of transformations not only demonstrates the boundless potential of ethnic music to adapt to the times but also reflects the artists' commitment to balancing tradition and modernity, local and global elements. Relax the pursuit. Under the joint efforts of inheritance and innovation, national music performance is soaring in the vast sky of modern society and continuing to write glory for the future.

## 2.3 The function and significance of national music in contemporary society

In contemporary society, ethnic music carries profound functions and meanings. It is not only a conveyor of culture but also a bridge for education and harmony. On the grand stage of cultural exchange, ethnic music plays a unique role, spreading China's stories through melodious tunes to the world while absorbing foreign elements, fostering cultural exchange and integration. For young people, ethnic music is a valuable resource for education. In the fast-paced modern life, ethnic music can cultivate a sense of historical and cultural awareness among young people, enhancing their national identity and cultural confidence. By engaging with diverse ethnic music, young people gain an understanding and respect for multiculturalism, broadening their horizons and nurturing an open and inclusive mindset. In building a harmonious society, ethnic music also makes significant contributions. It transcends geographical, age, economic, and cultural boundaries, uniting hearts and promoting social cohesion. Performances and events featuring ethnic music provide shared cultural experiences that deepen community connections and strengthen societal cohesion. The functions and significance of ethnic music in contemporary society cannot be overlooked. It serves as a carrier of cultural heritage, a means of social education, and a medium for building a harmonious society. Through ethnic music, we can better understand the past, inspire the future, and foster a dialogue among diverse cultures. Find resonance and harmony in the fabric.

## 3. Future development strategies and suggestions for Chinese national music art

### 3.1 Strengthen the education and popularization of national music

Strengthening ethnic music education and popularization is an important avenue for cultivating cultural awareness and musical appreciation among the public. In the educational system, ethnic music courses should be integrated into basic

education through systematic curriculum design, allowing students to experience the unique charm of ethnic music from a young age, understand its historical roots and cultural value, thereby fostering recognition and love for local music. The organization and implementation strategies for social outreach activities need to be innovative and diverse. Libraries, cultural centers, and educational institutions can collaborate to host various ethnic music concerts, workshops, and lectures, enhancing public participation through practical experiences. At the same time, high-quality ethnic music programs can be produced using digital media platforms, enabling more people to access excellent ethnic music content in convenient online environments. Enhancing public understanding and appreciation of ethnic music hinges on stimulating interest and providing knowledge support. This can be achieved through campus cultural festivals, community performances, and other forms that closely integrate ethnic music with daily life, creating more opportunities for exposure and enjoyment. Additionally, strengthening education on the aesthetics and appreciation methods of ethnic music, through expert explanations and case studies, helps the public learn how to savor and understand the deeper meanings of ethnic music.

### 3.2 Measures to promote the creation and dissemination of national music

Promoting the creation and dissemination of ethnic music requires in-depth exploration from three aspects: policy support, distribution channels, and international cooperation. The government and cultural departments should introduce supportive policies to provide financial, platform, and resource support for ethnic music creators, fostering a favorable environment for creation. By establishing special funds and organizing composition competitions, we can inspire composers enthusiasm and innovative drive. In terms of expanding distribution channels, the synergy between traditional media and new media is crucial. On one hand, leveraging traditional media such as radio, television, and concerts to broaden the reach of ethnic music; on the other hand, utilizing the power of the internet and social media to deliver ethnic music directly to audiences through live streaming and digital music platforms. At the same time, exploring cross-sector collaborations, such as integrating with film and television, variety shows, and other fields, can increase the exposure and audience base of ethnic music. Strengthening exchanges and cooperation with the international music community is essential for enhancing the global influence of ethnic music. This can be achieved through establishing international cooperation projects, exchanging artists for each others music events, and co-producing transnational music works, all of which promote cultural interaction and integration. Such cross-cultural collaboration not only brings new perspectives and inspiration to ethnic music but also helps enhance its global presenceAwareness and influence within the scope.

### 3.3 Strategies for protecting and inheriting ethnic music culture

Protecting and inheriting ethnic music culture is key to maintaining the diversity of national cultures. Improving policies and regulations for intangible cultural heritage protection is fundamental to ensuring the smooth transmission of ethnic music. The government should introduce more specific and operational measures to ensure the implementation of relevant policies, providing a solid legal foundation for the protection of ethnic music. Establishing mechanisms for ethnic music inheritors and inheritance bases is crucial for the transmission of traditional music culture. By recognizing and supporting ethnic music inheritors, not only can they be encouraged to continue their musical creation and dissemination activities, but also valuable musical knowledge and skills can be directly passed on to the younger generation through master-apprentice teaching and workshops. At the same time, setting up ethnic music inheritance bases, such as museums or cultural centers, can serve as important venues for showcasing, educating, and researching ethnic music. Utilizing modern technology for digital preservation and documentation is an effective way to rejuvenate traditional ethnic music. [4] With techniques like audio recording, video production, and multimedia interaction, detailed records and high-quality preservation of ethnic music performances, instrumental techniques, and singing methods can be achieved. Digitalization not only helps in the long-term preservation of ethnic music but also enables its wider dissemination and recognition through platforms like the internetThe implementation of these strategies will build a multi-level and all-round system for the protection and inheritance of national music, so as to ensure that this precious cultural heritage can be properly protected in modern society, continue to shine and contribute Chinese wisdom to the protection of world cultural diversity.

### 3.4 Ideas to promote the development of national music industry

Promoting the development of ethnic music industries requires innovative thinking and strategic planning. By integrating ethnic music with the tourism industry, unique cultural tourism experiences can be created, such as ethnic music festivals, musical travel routes, and workshops for experiencing traditional instruments. These activities attract visitors to deeply experience local culture, thereby boosting local economic growth and cultural dissemination. Developing ethnic music products and services that reflect regional characteristics is key to enhancing market competitiveness in ethnic music. This includes producing exquisite ethnic instruments, high-quality music albums, and traditional clothing that incorporates modern design concepts. These products and services not only showcase the unique charm of ethnic music but also meet market demands, increasing consumer willingness to purchase. Strengthening marketing and promotion efforts for ethnic music is crucial for ensuring industry development. This can be achieved through a combination of online and offline channels, utilizing social media, e-commerce platforms, physical stores, and other means to expand the market influence of ethnic music products. Additionally, organizing various promotional events and public relations activities can enhance the brand recognition and market share of ethnic music.

## 4. Conclusion

After delving into the inheritance and development of Chinese ethnic music art, one can glimpse the breadth and depth of this field. Ethnic music, as an essential part of national culture, has maintained its unique charm and vitality through generations of change. At the intersection of tradition and modernity, ethnic music continuously absorbs new elements, exchanges and integrates with various art forms, showcasing a more diverse and rich development landscape. Artists, through innovation and experimentation, give ancient melodies modern interpretations, allowing ethnic music to rejuvenate in new social contexts. Looking ahead, the inheritance and development of ethnic music art require the joint efforts of all sectors of society. It is hoped that through education, cultural exchange, and other means, public awareness of the value of ethnic music will deepen, infusing traditional arts with greater vitality and promoting their continued prosperity in a globalized context.

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