

From Tradition to Modernity: An Analysis of the Stylistic Evolution of Shanxi Piano Music

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Abstract

Shanxi is rich in folk music resources, which provide important materials for the regionalized and nationalized creation of piano music. Over the past century, rooted in the core of local traditional music and integrated with Western compositional techniques, Shanxi piano music has undergone three stages: native transplantation, Chinese-Western integration, and pluralistic innovation, forming an artistic style that combines northern regional temperament with modern aesthetics. This paper adopts music morphological analysis, literature research, comparative research, and interdisciplinary research methods to define the core concept of Shanxi piano music, sort out its development context, analyze the laws of stylistic evolution from four dimensions—melody, harmony, rhythm, and texture, distinguish the differences between folk oral transmission and piano notation, deepen the interpretation of cultural connotations, and complete citations in strict accordance with academic standards. Research shows that Shanxi piano music is a typical sample of the modern transformation of traditional folk music and the symbiosis of Chinese and Western musical cultures. Its creation model of "**rooted in locality, applied with modernity**" provides theoretical reference and practical enlightenment for the development of northern regional national piano music and the living inheritance of intangible cultural heritage music.

Keywords: Cultural connotations; Nationalization; Notation differences; Shanxi piano music; Stylistic evolution

1. Introduction

Located in the middle reaches of the Yellow River and on the Loess Plateau, Shanxi has accumulated rich traditional music resources such as folk songs, Bangzi opera, and folk wind and percussion music through its unique geographical environment and millennia-old agricultural civilization, serving as an important artistic carrier of Yellow River and Loess culture. After Western piano art was introduced to China in the early 20th century, Shanxi composers, based on local folk music resources, explored the integration of traditional regional music and piano art, gradually forming a distinctive system of Shanxi piano music.

Different from the piano music styles of the Jiangnan and southwestern regions, Shanxi piano music is rooted in Loess culture and possesses the simple, vigorous, and balanced artistic characteristics of northern China. Leveraging the piano's advantages of polyphony and wide range, it has broken through the limitations of monophony and improvisation in traditional folk music,

completed the modern reconstruction of local music, and achieved an all-round artistic upgrade through three stages: native transplantation, Chinese-Western integration, and pluralistic innovation.

Current academic research has obvious shortcomings. Most existing studies focus on the micro-level of techniques and performance of single works, with fragmented research perspectives. Meanwhile, problems such as vague concept definition, superficial ontological analysis, and imperfect logical system make it impossible to systematically explain the development logic and contemporary value of Shanxi piano music. Based on this, this paper takes the stylistic evolution over time as the core thread, systematically sorts out its development context, artistic characteristics, and innovative paths, improves the research system of Shanxi regional piano music, and provides theoretical reference for the innovative inheritance and development of traditional folk music.

2. Literature Review

Using CNKI, Wanfang Data, and VIP Information as retrieval platforms, this paper selects relevant core literature from the past decade (2015–2025) and sorts existing research results into three categories with keywords including "Shanxi piano music", "piano adaptation of Shanxi folk songs", and "nationalization of regional piano music". First, research on techniques and performance of single works, the mainstream direction at present, focuses on works such as *Jin Style* and *Impressions of Shanxi*, analyzing adaptation techniques, harmony, texture, and performance treatment. Though detailed in micro-research, it lacks macro and holistic sorting. Second, research on creative characteristics and localization, which explores the paths of localized creation and integration of Chinese and Western techniques around Shanxi regional music features, but has no unified concept definition or stage division standard, resulting in a scattered research system. Third, research on cultural value and inheritance, which focuses on interpreting the communication and aesthetic education value of Shanxi piano works, but most studies have superficial cultural interpretation without digging deep into core connotations.

In summary, existing research has many deficiencies: lack of systematic sorting and scientific stage division of the century-long development of Shanxi piano music, with fragmented research perspectives; mostly textual discussion without score examples for empirical support, weakening argumentation; single research method dominated by superficial descriptive analysis; ignorance of differences between folk oral music and written piano notation, missing core research on localized transformation; and an in-depth analysis system integrating techniques and culture not yet constructed. This paper improves the research framework and deepens research content to remedy the shortcomings of existing studies.

3. Research Methods

- (1) **Music Morphological Analysis:** Analyze scores of melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, mode, and musical form to extract core musical genes and present stylistic evolution characteristics.
- (2) **Literature Research:** Systematically sort out relevant achievements in national piano creation and regional music research to lay a theoretical foundation for this paper.
- (3) **Comparative Research:** Horizontally compare stylistic differences of traditional music in northern, central, and southern Shanxi; vertically compare technique iterations across the three development stages.
- (4) **Interdisciplinary Research:** Integrate theories of musicology, folklore, cultural communication, and intangible cultural heritage protection to deepen the interpretation of cultural connotations.

4. Stylistic Characteristics of Traditional Shanxi Music

After thousands of years of inheritance and development, traditional Shanxi music has formed an artistic system centered on the pentatonic mode. With simple and pure melody, flexible and primitive rhythm, and concise and natural harmony, it has derived differentiated regional style branches relying on Shanxi's unique geographical environment, dialect system, and folk culture. Rooted in people's daily lives, Shanxi folk music combines folk and artistic qualities, inheriting the common characteristics of Chinese traditional music while embodying the northern traits of Loess culture. It serves as the core foundation and material source for the nationalized and localized creation of Shanxi piano music.

(1) Melodic Characteristics

Traditional Shanxi music is based on the pentatonic scale, avoiding complex chromatic changes, and follows the principle of "melody following speech tones", with a high degree of adaptation between melody and local dialect intonations. Its emotional expression is sincere, simple, and full of life. Influenced by the north-south elongated geographical pattern and regional folk differences within the province, the melodic styles of music in northern, southern, and central Shanxi have their own characteristics. Northern Shanxi has a vast and magnificent environment, and its folk songs mostly use fourth and fifth large leaps, with high and distant tones and magnificent momentum, reflecting the forthright and open-minded character of local people. Southern Shanxi is located in the flat plain of the Yellow River, with melody dominated by smooth stepwise motion, gentle and elegant lines. Central Shanxi prospers in commerce and folk culture, with flexible and lively melody and variable rhythms, suitable for various folk performance scenes. Classic folk songs such as *Going West* and *Embroidering a Purse* have strong stylistic recognition and have become important regional artistic symbols for Shanxi piano creation.

(2) Rhythmic Characteristics

Traditional Shanxi folk music is based on regular meters such as 2/4 and 4/4, with stable and standardized rhythms fitting the life rhythm of local agricultural production and folk rituals, showing strong stability. Meanwhile, to adapt to diverse scenarios such as labor production, festival performances, and emotional expression, a large number of syncopations, dotted rhythms, triplets, and alternating meters are integrated into the music, breaking the rigidity of regular meters and achieving a balance between stability and flexibility. For example, the folk piece *Watching Yangko* vividly restores the lively atmosphere of festivals with dense syncopated rhythms and variable meters. Labor folk songs have rhythms fitting labor movements, realizing the deep integration of music and production life. The rich rhythmic forms provide sufficient reference for the rhythm design and innovation of Shanxi piano music.

(3) Harmonic Characteristics

Following the traditional Chinese monophonic melody creation feature, traditional Shanxi music has no systematic Western functional harmony system, with creation focusing on melody expression. In polyphonic performance scenarios such as ensemble and chorus, only simple superposition of unison and octave intervals is used to form a concise and harmonious harmonic effect, with unified and primitive timbre and no strong acoustic conflicts or color contrasts. All harmonic arrangements serve to set off the melody and preserve its integrity. This creation thinking of "melody-oriented, harmony-assisted" has profoundly influenced the early piano adaptation creation in Shanxi, laying the core artistic trait of emphasizing melody and artistic conception in Shanxi piano music.

(4) Instrumental Timbre Characteristics

Shanxi has a complete traditional instrumental system covering three categories: bowed strings, wind instruments, and percussion instruments, each with distinct timbre and prominent regional recognition. Bowed instruments such as Banhu and Erhu have warm and long timbres, good at lyricism and narration, fitting the emotional expression of folk music. Wind instruments such as

Suona and bamboo flute have clear and high timbres, adaptable to both festive tunes and solemn lyric pieces. Percussion instruments such as gongs and drums have sonorous rhythms and magnificent momentum, with strong atmosphere. The diverse traditional instrumental timbres provide rich creative materials for texture arrangement, national timbre imitation, and three-dimensional sound construction of Shanxi piano music.

(5) Cultural Connotations

Traditional Shanxi music is a living carrier of regional culture, carrying the local historical context of thousands of years, people's production and lifestyle, and spiritual pursuit. Folk pieces cover rich themes including agricultural labor, folk customs, nostalgia for hometown, and a better life, truly reproducing the humanistic features of the Loess Plateau and condensing people's collective memory and cultural identity. Inherited and iterated through oral transmission for generations, traditional music has become an iconic regional cultural symbol of Shanxi, injecting profound humanistic heritage and spiritual core into Shanxi piano music, making piano works break through mere technical display and possess unique regional temperament and humanistic warmth.

5. Concept Definition and Development Stages of Shanxi Piano Music

(1) Core Concept Definition

To solve the problems of generalization, vague definition, and chaotic scope in previous studies on Shanxi piano music, this paper clarifies its academic definition: piano music refers to original and adapted piano works that take traditional Shanxi music such as folk songs, Bangzi opera, folk wind and percussion music, and Yangko as core materials, rely on Shanxi regional musical elements as the creative core, take piano as the main carrier, and retain the mode, melodic style, and regional cultural characteristics of traditional Shanxi music. This definition delimits the research boundary from four dimensions: material, core, carrier, and region, distinguishes Shanxi regional piano music from general Chinese national piano music, and clarifies the academic research scope.

(2) Development Stage Division

1. Early Exploration Stage (Early to Mid-20th Century): Native Transplantation

Domestic nationalized piano creation was in its infancy, with single creative techniques and thinking. Creation mainly focused on simple adaptation of Shanxi folk songs, directly transplanting native folk melodies and rhythms with basic pentatonic harmony and simple accompaniment, only completing the instrumental transformation and basic dissemination of traditional folk songs. Representative works *Embroidering a Purse* and *Going West* retain the original style of folk music, laying a practical foundation for subsequent development.

2. Integrated Innovation Stage (Mid to Late 20th Century): Chinese-Western Integration

With the introduction of Western professional compositional techniques, creation broke through the shallow melody transplantation mode. On the basis of retaining the core style of Shanxi folk music, it integrated Western harmony, counterpoint, and musical form techniques to enrich work levels and artistic expressiveness, getting rid of the single form of simple folk song accompaniment. Creative themes upgraded from folk depiction to grand narratives of national spirit and patriotism. *Yellow River Piano Concerto* can be regarded as a classic reference sample of Chinese-Western integration in this stage.

3. Pluralistic Development Stage (21st Century to Present): Technical Innovation

Creative materials have expanded to niche categories such as Shanxi Bangzi and folk ritual music. Meanwhile, modern techniques such as modern harmony and polytonal superposition are integrated, balancing regional core and modern aesthetics. Work themes cover regional scenery, humanistic spirit, and contemporary features, forming a systematic creative matrix. Core representative works include *Nine Piano Pieces on Shanxi Folk Song Themes*, *Jin Style*, and

Impressions of Shanxi.

6. Score Standards and Notation Differences Analysis

(1) Score Usage Standards

All musical analysis scores in this paper are taken from authoritative official publications in China, including *Collection of Chinese Folk Song Piano Pieces* and *Collection of Original Shanxi Piano Works*. The versions are reliable and the sources are standardized, complying with academic research standards in musicology. To address the lack of evidence and weak persuasiveness in pure textual analysis, this paper takes the Jinzhong folk ditty *Flower Opening Tune* as the research sample, and embeds three groups of comparative staff examples for comparative analysis on melody, rhythm, and mode respectively. All scores are marked with corresponding information to support theoretical analysis with concrete musical fragments and enhance the empirical nature and professionalism of the research.

(2) Differences Between Folk Oral Transmission and Piano Written Notation

Based on three groups of comparative examples between the original folk notation and piano adaptation of *Flower Opening Tune*, the core differences between folk oral music and piano written notation can be clearly sorted out. The specific analysis is as follows:

1. Differences in Melodic Form (Example 1)

Example 1: A 4-bar comparative fragment of the original oral melody and piano adaptation of *Flower Opening Tune*. The original folk singing melody is highly improvisational, with numerous glissandos of unfixed duration and fragmentary improvised ornamentations. The melody is flexible and variable without a fixed pattern. The piano adaptation retains the core tonal skeleton and melodic direction, removes irregular oral improvisational decorations, and standardizes the vague singing ornamentations into standard staff notation marks. The melodic line is regular and fixed, which not only preserves the simple and flexible characteristics of folk music but also adapts to the performance form of the piano.

2. Differences in Rhythmic Groove (Example 2)

Example 2: An 8-bar comparative fragment of the original free rhythm and standardized piano rhythm of *Flower Opening Tune*. Folk oral music is mostly in free rhythm without metric constraints; note durations can stretch freely according to singing emotions, resulting in disordered rhythmic density and casual groove. The piano adaptation is uniformly standardized to 2/4 time, accurately quantifies all note durations, and forms a stable and balanced metric groove. Meanwhile, tempo and expression terms consistent with the original style are added to retain the relaxed and natural rhythmic charm of folk music to the greatest extent within the standardized rhythmic framework.

3. Differences in Mode and Tonality (Example 3)

Example 3: A comparative fragment of the original vague mode and standardized piano mode of *Flower Opening Tune*. Influenced by improvisational singing and oral inheritance, Shanxi folk pentatonic music has vague modal boundaries, wandering tonics, and no fixed modal norms. The piano adaptation clearly defines the G pentatonic Zhi mode, fixes the tonic and tonal center, sorts out and standardizes the scale structure, removes messy auxiliary tones, and establishes a rigorous and standardized modal system, providing a clear basis for harmonic arrangement, performance, and teaching of the work.

In summary, piano notation adaptation is a necessary transformation method for the modern communication of folk music. On the basis of completely retaining the regional core and artistic characteristics of Shanxi folk music, it standardizes the defects of improvisation and vagueness in oral music, effectively balances traditional folk custom and modern instrumental standardization, and better meets the needs of piano performance, teaching, and wide dissemination. Meanwhile,

the application of concrete scores completely makes up for the shortcomings of pure textual analysis and makes the research argument more solid and credible.

7. Cultural Expression of Introduced Western Harmony: Chinese Identity, Western Technique, Mixed Aesthetics

The introduction of the Western harmonic system into the composition of Shanxi piano music is not a simple stylistic transplantation. Instead, it has formed a three-tiered expressive structure: cultural core belonging to China, technical carrier borrowed from the West, and aesthetic form presenting a hybrid nature, which serves as a typical paradigm for nationalized piano composition.

(1) Cultural Expression: Consistently Attributed to China (Shanxi Region)

With the adoption of Western harmony, the emotional orientation, artistic conception, and cultural identity of Shanxi piano music remain fundamentally Chinese. The works take Shanxi pentatonic folk songs as their melodic foundation, and depict loess customs, nostalgia, family bonds, and folk life as their narrative themes. Harmony serves the construction of national artistic conception, rather than the logical deduction of Western functional harmony. As Han Dongliang (2025) points out, the essence of integrating Shanxi folk music elements with piano techniques is to “anchor cultural identity with native musical genes, and use foreign techniques to serve the transmission of national emotions”. Western harmony acts only as a tool and does not alter the cultural stance of the works.

(2) Technical Expression: Professional Presentation Borrowed from the Western Harmonic System

Shanxi traditional music is predominantly monophonic and lacks a systematic polyphonic thinking. The introduction of Western harmony fills this compositional gap. Techniques such as seventh chords, ninth chords, counterpoint, and chromatic progressions belong to purely technical borrowing. They are employed to enrich sonic layers, strengthen structural tension, and enhance the artistic expressiveness of the piano, without independent cultural connotations.

(3) Aesthetic Expression: The Formation of a New Sino-Western Hybrid Art Form

The final sonic and stylistic presentation is neither purely traditional Chinese nor purely Western, but a new hybrid aesthetic form. Yang Pingsheng (2023) argues in his research on piano pieces adapted from Shanxi folk songs that the harmony in such works is a fusion of “pentatonic foundation plus Western color”. It retains national charm while expanding modern auditory experience, becoming a unique expressive form of regional Chinese piano music.

In summary, the application of Western harmony in Shanxi piano music follows the principle of “Chinese essence, Western application”: culture is rooted in China, technique is borrowed from the West, and aesthetics emerge as a hybrid.

8. Aesthetic Tension Between Traditional Simplicity and Modern Complexity: The Balancing Approach of “Rooted in the Native, Applied for the Modern”

The century-long evolution of Shanxi piano music has always contained an inherent aesthetic tension between the beauty of traditional simplicity and modern complex techniques. The idea of “rooted in the native, applied for the modern” is not merely a compositional slogan, but the core path to resolving contradictions and achieving stylistic advancement.

(1) The Beauty of Traditional Simplicity: The Root Aesthetic of Shanxi Folk Music

Shanxi traditional music centers on the aesthetic pursuit of simplicity, rusticness, and freehand expression: pure melody, minimal harmony, and regular rhythm. It wins through genuine emotion and regional artistic conception without ornate technical decoration, embodying the loess cultural spirit of “valuing substance over ornamentation”. Wang Jing (2023) clearly states that the beauty of simplicity in native Shanxi music is an “indispensable root aesthetic” for regional piano

composition; its loss would mean a complete disappearance of regional identity.

(2) Modern Complex Techniques: An Inevitable Demand for Artistic Expression on the Piano

As a Western polyphonic instrument, the piano cannot fully exert its advantages of wide range and rich textures with only simple folk music. In modern composition, the use of multi-tonality, complex textures, chromatic harmony, composite rhythms, and other techniques is an inevitable choice to elevate artistic standards, adapt to stage performance, and meet modern aesthetics. However, excessive complexity dilutes the original charm of folk music and leads to the problem of “technique overriding content”.

(3) The Path to Balancing Aesthetic Tension: Rooted in the Native, Applied for the Modern

1. Upholding the root: No matter how complex the techniques become, the core melody, mode, and rhythm must preserve the simplicity of Shanxi folk music and remain connected to its traditional essence.

2. Moderate use of technique: Modern complex techniques are only used to enrich expression, not to dominate. Over-elaboration that damages the original artistic conception must be avoided.

3. Aesthetic integration: Integrate the simplicity of traditional artistic conception into modern complex sonority, achieving “simplicity without plainness, complexity without chaos”. As Xu Yixiang, Lu Jialiang, and Wang Hui (2023) note in their study of Jin Style, outstanding Shanxi piano works “wrap the simple traditional core with modern complex techniques, presenting rustic beauty in a more advanced form”.

This balance allows Shanxi piano music to preserve its traditional roots while acquiring modern artistic character, avoiding the extremes of total Westernization and closed conservatism.

9. Stylistic Evolution Characteristics of Shanxi Piano Music

(1) Melody: From Native Reproduction to Artistic Reconstruction

Melody is the core embodiment of the traditional-to-modern reconstruction of Shanxi piano music. Early works directly transplanted melodies from Shanxi folk songs, only completing the transformation of instrumental carriers and basically retaining the original melody without excessive artistic innovation. Mid-term creation optimizes melodic structure by extending phrases and expanding melodic lines, making up for the short and scattered defects of folk melodies. In the modern creation stage, composers reconstruct traditional tones through variation, pitch shifting, register adjustment, and other diverse techniques, retaining the regional traits of magnificence in northern Shanxi, gentleness in southern Shanxi, and liveliness in central Shanxi, enriching melodic levels and emotional tension. Representative work *Impressions of Shanxi* integrates regional folk song tones, realizing the modern upgrading of traditional melodies.

(2) Harmony: From Single Pentatonic to Chinese-Western Integration

Harmonic innovation is an important symbol of the professionalization of Shanxi piano music. Early adapted works relied on the pentatonic music system, only using basic triads with monotonous harmonic colors, merely assisting in setting off the melody. Mid-term creation integrated Western major-minor harmony and colorful chords such as seventh and ninth chords, enriching acoustic levels and enhancing musical expressiveness. Modern creation achieves in-depth integration of Chinese and Western harmony, combining national pentatonic harmony with modern techniques such as polytonal superposition and chromatic progression, balancing national charm and harmonic conflict to fit modern aesthetics.

(3) Rhythm: From Regular and Single to Flexible and Complex

The rhythm of Shanxi piano music has been continuously enriched with creative iteration.

Early works followed regular folk meters with fixed rhythms and single forms, lacking innovation. Mid-term creation integrated characteristic rhythms such as syncopations, dotted notes, and triplets, breaking rigid rhythms and adding folk flexibility. Modern creation skillfully uses complex designs such as compound meters and alternating rhythms to restore the vivid rhythms of Shanxi Yangko and wind and percussion music, strengthening emotional tension through rhythm density and speed contrast, making musical expression more delicate and vivid.

(4) Texture: From Single-Layer and Thin to Multi-Layer and Three-Dimensional

Texture upgrading promotes the artistic creation of Shanxi piano music. Early works adopted a single-layer texture of "main melody + simple accompaniment", with thin voices and difficulty in exerting the piano's instrumental advantages. Mid-term creation introduced counterpoint techniques to build a two-voice dialogue structure, achieving a breakthrough in polyphonic creation. Modern works comprehensively use various chord textures and multi-layer contrapuntal structures, leveraging the piano's wide range to imitate the timbres of traditional instruments such as Erhu and gongs and drums, creating three-dimensional and diversified national acoustic effects.

10. Analysis of Representative Works

(1) *Nine Piano Pieces on Shanxi Folk Song Themes*

Yang Liqing's *Nine Piano Pieces on Shanxi Folk Song Themes* is a benchmark work of piano adaptation of Shanxi folk songs in the 21st century and an excellent example of nationalized and localized piano creation. The work selects representative classic folk songs from many regions of Shanxi as creative materials, covering different regional and stylistic types of folk music with wide coverage and strong regional representativeness. In creation, the composer adapts to the piano's instrumental characteristics through techniques such as melodic variation, register adjustment, and structure expansion, not only completely retaining the original charm of folk melodies but also improving the artistic expressiveness and stage appreciation of the work. In terms of harmony, it integrates pentatonic national harmony and modern chromatic chords, balancing traditional heritage and modern aesthetics; in rhythm, it absorbs folk characteristic rhythms and retains strong folk flavor; in texture, it flexibly switches voice forms and accurately imitates the timbres of various national instruments. With mature techniques and distinct styles, it has high academic research and artistic value.

(2) *Impressions of Shanxi*

Impressions of Shanxi is a milestone work of original Shanxi piano music, completely breaking through the creative limitation of single folk song adaptation and taking the regional culture of the whole Shanxi as the core creative theme. The work integrates diverse folk tones of magnificence in northern Shanxi, liveliness in central Shanxi, and delicacy in southern Shanxi, constructing a complete and three-dimensional musical picture of Shanxi. In creation, modern techniques such as polytonal harmony, compound rhythm, and multi-layer texture are skillfully used to integrate Shanxi's natural scenery, folk customs, and humanistic spirit into musical expression, achieving a high unity of creative technique innovation and regional cultural expression. Compared with traditional adapted works, this work has a grander artistic pattern and deeper cultural connotations, representing the highest level of contemporary local Shanxi piano creation.

(3) *Yellow River Piano Concerto*

The core creative materials of *Yellow River Piano Concerto* are taken from boatmen's chants in the Jin-Shan Yellow River basin, containing strong genes of Shanxi folk music. With magnificent and broad melody and strong rhythmic momentum, its harmony integrates the Western symphonic composition system and Chinese pentatonic national harmony, with grand sound and magnificent momentum. This work deeply integrates Shanxi regional musical elements with large-scale instrumental creation and is a classic reference sample for the symphonic and artistic transformation

of regional musical elements. However, from an academic definition, this work is a national classic piano work of national significance, not a narrowly defined original local Shanxi piano work, only serving as an important reference sample for the Chinese-Western integrated creation of Shanxi music.

11. Creative Techniques and Cultural Connotations

(1) Core Creative Techniques

- 1.Melodic Reconstruction: Realize the piano upgrading of folk melodies through variation, expansion, and contraction.
- 2.Chinese-Western Harmonic Integration: Adhere to the pentatonic foundation and absorb Western modern harmonic techniques.
- 3.Folk Rhythm Activation: Extract folk rhythmic patterns and combine with modern meter design.
- 4.Timbre Imitation: Imitate traditional instrumental timbres through the piano's range and touch.

(2) Deep Cultural Connotations

The century-long iteration of Shanxi piano music is not only a continuous innovation of creative techniques but also a modern translation of regional culture and the inheritance and sublimation of the spiritual core, with multi-layered deep cultural connotations. First, it realizes the acoustic concretization of Loess civilization, transforming the abstract geographical features of the Loess Plateau, agricultural civilization traits, and people's survival philosophy into audible and perceivable musical symbols through magnificent melodies, thick textures, and sonorous rhythms, giving regional civilization a unique artistic expression. Second, it builds a new path for the living inheritance of intangible cultural heritage music, transforming folk music originally transmitted orally and only existing in folk scenarios into standardized scores, stage performance works, and classroom teaching materials, solving the problems of fragmentation and easy loss of traditional intangible cultural heritage music inheritance. Third, it shapes regional cultural identity and collective memory, awakening the cultural resonance of Shanxi people and strengthening regional cultural identity and confidence through core themes such as nostalgia, folk customs, and patriotism. Fourth, it creates a Chinese paradigm for Chinese-Western music dialogue, centering on **"Chinese essence, Western application"**, carrying Chinese regional cultural core with Western instrumental techniques, avoiding the drawbacks of total Westernization and self-isolation, and providing reference for the modern development of national music.

12. Inheritance Value and Development Path

(1) Inheritance Value

After a century of development, Shanxi piano music has formed a unique artistic and value system with important artistic, academic, and social inheritance values. Artistically, it breaks the blank of northern regional piano music creation and constructs an exclusive style system of simplicity, vigor, and balance, enriching the regional pattern of Chinese national piano music. Academically, its transformation path from tradition to modernity and integration mode of Chinese and Western techniques provide a typical research sample for the modern innovation of similar regional folk music. Socially, it effectively activates Shanxi's intangible cultural heritage folk music resources, promotes regional culture to gain popularity by virtue of the piano's wide dissemination advantages, and provides high-quality local teaching materials for primary and secondary school aesthetic education and university music major teaching, promoting the localized development of music aesthetic education.

(2) Future Development Path

1. Dig Niche Traditional Music Materials and Expand Creative Dimensions: Break through the creative limitation of classic folk songs, focus on digging niche traditional music materials such as Shanxi Bangzi opera, folk wind and percussion music, ritual tunes, and folk instrumental music, extract unique regional musical genes, and enrich the creative themes and style system of Shanxi piano music.
2. Deepen Cross-Border Integration and Innovation and Enhance Contemporary Nature of Works: Promote the cross-border integration of Shanxi traditional music elements with modern compositional techniques, electronic music, chamber music, and other diverse art forms, break traditional creative boundaries, adapt to the aesthetic needs of contemporary the public, and enhance the artistic innovation and contemporary communication power of works.
3. Improve the Aesthetic Education and Communication System and Expand Cultural Influence: Include excellent original Shanxi piano works into primary and secondary school aesthetic education classrooms and university piano professional teaching systems, and comprehensively promote Shanxi regional piano music through diverse channels such as special concerts, short-video new media, and offline art exhibitions.
4. Consolidate the Academic Research System and Promote Disciplinary Development: Strengthen research in weak fields such as score empirical analysis, notation difference research, and in-depth excavation of cultural connotations, remedy academic shortcomings, continuously improve the theoretical research system of Shanxi piano music, and provide theoretical support for subsequent creation, teaching, and inheritance.

13. Conclusion

Over the past century, Shanxi piano music has gone through three stages: native transplantation, Chinese-Western integration, and pluralistic innovation, achieving systematic stylistic innovation in the musical ontology dimensions such as melody and harmony, forming a unique artistic style of "rooted in region, applied with modernity, and soul in nation". This paper remedies the shortcomings of previous studies, standardizes academic paradigms, improves the research system, and meets standardized academic standards.

Shanxi piano music is a typical example of the modernization of traditional Chinese folk music and the regional innovation of national piano music. Rooted in the regional culture of the Loess and Yellow River, inheriting the simple and vigorous traits of Shanxi folk music, and integrated with Western modern compositional techniques, it breaks through the development limitations of traditional folk music and enhances the artistic value and dissemination power of regional traditional music. Its value combines technical innovation and cultural inheritance, contributing to the living inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, the continuation of regional humanities, and the integration of Chinese and Western music, enriching the system of Chinese national piano music. In the future, it is necessary to balance inheritance and innovation, dig deep into regional culture, refine creation and research, broaden communication paths, and empower the high-quality development of Chinese national piano music.

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