

Aesthetic Culture of Vocal Music Works "Chile Song" Adapted from Ancient Poetry

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ABSTRACT

The Northern Dynasty poem "Chile Song" depicts the magnificent and fertile scenery of the northern grasslands, while also expressing the fervent love of the Chile people for their homeland and life. The poem exhibits a broad scope, a heroic tone, clear language, and strong artistic summarization ability. Against the backdrop of promoting traditional Chinese culture, "Chile Song" has been integrated with modern songs to yield new characteristics. This paper focuses on the original text and creative background of "Chile Song", analyzes its adaptation's writing techniques, and further explores the fusion between ancient poetry and song composition. It aims to provide insights into creating art songs based on ancient poetry.

KEYWORDS

"Chile Song"; Second creation; Narrative characteristics; Aesthetic implication

1 Introduction

According to research, "Chilechuan" originates from the north foothills of the Tianshan Mountains in present-day Jimusaer County, also known as Hanhai during the Han and Tang dynasties. "Yinshan" refers to the foothills of the Tianshan Mountains. The line "The sky is like a Mongolian yurt, and it shrouds the meadow everywhere." directs one's gaze from the grasslands up to the sky. "Mongolian yurt" represents the round tent dwellings of nomadic peoples and "it shrouds the meadow everywhere" shows the vastness of the grassland and the inclusive spirit of the entire nation. "Sky is blue, wilderness is boundless" further deepens the description of "The sky is like a Mongolian yurt, and it shrouds the meadow everywhere", shifting people's vision from the sky to the entire expanse of the sky and earth, depicting the vastness of the sky and the grassland. "Cattle and sheep are visible as wind bends grass" is a dynamic description, provides dynamic imagery with implying visibility due to wind action.

This portrayal brings vitality to life on these plains. While the poem "Chile Song" conveys an immensely grand atmosphere, its poet takes a macro perspective providing a static depiction overall. It expresses Northern Dynasty people's simple yet unadorned style directly conveying their thoughts and expressions. Whether it is "long song" or "wolf howl", it is very consistent with the rugged and robust temperament of the Chile tribe and is a very suitable work that reflects the personality of the Chile people^[1]. The poem "Chile Song" has been highly regarded by future generations. This article aims to analyze the modern adaptation features and techniques of this poem, as well as to compare them with the original version in order to further explore its aesthetic cultural significance.

2 Modern Adaptation of "Chile Song"

In modern times, Mr. Xue Baoqin undertook a comprehensive reworking of the poem "Chile Song" presenting the vast and boundless expanse of the Northern Dynasties' grasslands, as well as the simplicity of its people and the purity of its young girls in a visually captivating manner. This new rendition retains Chinese national stylistic elements while aligning with modern aesthetic sensibilities. It also embodies key principles of classical Chinese aesthetics such as "harmony between man and nature," "the circle of life" and "qi yun". In the first sentence of Section A, "The heart follows the heavens and earth, the will is led by cows and sheep," embodies the Taoist principle of unification with nature, exemplifying a transcendent spiritual state. The will is captivated by the allure of nature and the presence of livestock on the grassland, symbolizing an amalgamation with celestial and natural elements. In the second sentence, "The solitary smoke of the desert embraces round sunset," shifts visual focus from grasslands to deserts with a melancholic undertone but also conveys embracing the setting sun as an expression of inherent beauty in transitioning from day to night — a concept akin to Xunzi's advocacy for harmonizing human existence with natural laws. In line three, "Chatting with moon at edge of sky," signifies that poet's thoughts have become increasingly distant and are beginning to unite with cosmic forces.

Section B: Chile plain is below Mount Yin, The sky is like a Mongolian yurt, and it shrouds the meadow everywhere, Sky is blue, wilderness is boundless, Cattle and sheep are visible as wind bends grass. "Sky is blue, wilderness is boundless, Cattle and sheep are visible as wind bends grass" "The sky is like a Mongolian yurt, and it shrouds the meadow everywhere" serves as an introduction to depict the vastness of the sky in subsequent verses. The color is described as "Sky is blue", representing expansiveness with "wilderness is boundless", The boundless expanse of greenery against a hazy blue backdrop creates an image akin to a grand landscape painting of endless plains and skies. With only green and blue hues dominating this scene, it sets a foundation for what follows "life". Suddenly amidst this desolation, cattle and sheep emerge from deep within the grasslands infusing vitality and dynamism into this expansive yet desolate world, symbolizing vigor characteristic of nomadic tribes. In summary, by repeating this beautiful scenery twice in its lyrics elevates its impact further showcasing life's rhythm alongside nature's vitality through a blend of motion and stillness.

Reproducing Section A: The heart follows the heavens and earth, the will is led by cows and sheep. The solitary smoke of the desert embraces round sunset, Chatting with moon at edge of sky, The bonfire reflects on the face, and the man who tames horses is drunk. The heart follows the heavens and earth, seeking enlightenment, the girl asks the heavens where her love is, At the end of the sky, she shares a drink with the moon, the bonfire glow reflecting on her face as she traverses Chilechuan on horseback.

In the modern adaptation, from "The heart follows the heavens and earth" to "the man who tames horses is drunk", depicts the scene of returning home at sunset from the perspective of a grassland herdsman. It is like a beautiful painting that gradually transports one's heart to the grassland, while drinking and riding horses. The reader's emotions are as free as cattle and sheep, with their hearts feeling vast and boundless. As their eyes behold scenes like those of the expansive desert and meandering river at dusk, there emerges a fusion where "heart," "mind," and "eyes" coalesce into an integrated state embodying a harmonious coexistence with the natural world. In addition, with the vast expanse of the universe at your fingertips, you can immerse yourself in the intricate web of life. Engaging in conversations with the moon above and sitting by the campfire below evokes a sense of tranquility. This accurately portrays a painting that transports individuals from the complexities of modern society to the grasslands, where they feel at one with "heaven and earth." The vitality of people is instantly awakened. "human" "emotions" and "scenery" become

unified, building upon the foundation of achieving harmony between man and nature. The love of grassland people and maidens is further depicted in this unity. "where her love is, At the end of the sky, she shares a drink with the moon, the bonfire glow reflecting on her face as she traverses Chilechuan on horseback." This portrays pure affection but also reflects their deep love for this land. If poetry describes longing for one's homeland, this new adaptation takes us to this mystical land, allowing us to traverse time back to Northern and Southern Dynasties era where we witness pure beauty as well as emotions, intentions, and life among nomadic peoples.

3 Aesthetic Concept Comparison between Original and Updated Versions

Modern composers and lyricists have been re-creating and modifying ancient poetry, positively impacting the preservation and dissemination of traditional Chinese culture. However, accurately capturing the original emotions and ideas expressed in ancient poetry has proven to be a significant challenge.

The creator directly utilizes the original lines of ancient poetry as the basis for the secondary song composition. The lyrics of the refrain section of the song "Chile Song" are the original poetry. At the beginning, the lyricist engaged in a second creation in accordance with the aesthetic conception of the original poetry, using the lyrics in the form of narrative as a bedding. The original lines of the poem "Chile Song" are presented in the climax section of the song, pushing people's emotions to the highest point and giving rise to a significant outbreak of emotions. Regarding the narration, it encompasses both straightforward exposition and poetic narration. In the poem "Chile Song", the line "Cattle and sheep are visible as wind bends grass" acts as the consummate stroke. It not only delineates the living scene but also conveys the poetic essence incisively and thoroughly. The song "Chile Song" employs narration and exposition to escalate emotions gradually. Upon reaching the second section "The heart follows the heaven and earth", the sentiment expressed by the song undergoes a transition. A maiden of the grassland is confiding her innermost emotions to the mountains and the grassland. In the refrain section, the gentle woman converts into an enthusiastic, unrestrained and magnanimous one. When it reaches "Sky is blue, wilderness is boundless" the emotion peaks, and then gradually reverts to calm when it gets to "Cattle and sheep are visible as wind bends grass". Emotionally, the song "Chile Song" intensifies the contrast through new processing of the original sentiment. The poem "Chile Song" conveys the robust and genuine lifestyle of the Northern Dynasty grassland ethnic group through concise and lucid descriptions, emphasizing a solemn, lofty, and grand aesthetic. The inhabitants exhibit a far-reaching vision and have cultivated a bold and unrestrained character over time. However, the newly adapted the song "Chile Song" integrates love depictions alongside its original portrayal of solemnity, loftiness, and grandeur.

Modern adaptations of the song "Chile Song" have made new changes in the aspects of meaning, existence, and spirit. The most direct awareness of life consciousness lies in the recognition and experience of life and death. It can be said that once human beings realize the existence and disappearance of individual life, they develop a sense of life consciousness. However, when this life consciousness first emerged remains a question for anthropologists to explore. Zhuangzi believed that the "Dao" does not personally display its own characteristics and functions, but should lead the operation of all things through the forms of "immortality" "living forever" "heartless" "unjust". "Life," "life-giving," "renewal," and "the heart of the universe" all express the "purposiveness" of the universe^[2]. No matter in the original poem or in the current adaptation, the author has not deviated from the aesthetics of life. For example, "Sky is blue, wilderness is boundless, Cattle and sheep are visible as wind bends grass." began with a desolate world, only

with the vastness of the sky, the "Dao" permeated in the middle, later the appearance of cows and sheep brought vibrant life, and the world came alive, in accordance with the "purposiveness" of the universe.

"Qi" is the essence of Chinese aesthetics and philosophy, and it has been a longstanding pursuit for artists to embody "Qi" in their artistic creations. Laozi first introduced the concept of "Dao" stating: "The Dao gives birth to One, One gives birth to Two, Two gives birth to Three, and Three gives birth to all things. All things which have negative yin-yang, and the harmony is created by Qi"^[3]. The "Dao" represents the origin of the universe, with all things being the vitality of the cosmos. Artistic works are expected to manifest this "Dao." Subsequently, Zhuangzi and successive generations of philosophers and aestheticians have largely interpreted the "Dao" based on Laozi's explanation. The concept of "Dao" as an aesthetic consciousness is rooted in metaphysical principles, representing the ultimate, original, and profound sense of life and the universe experienced through human spirituality. It presents the subject's certain metaphysical life experience of the universe and life. In art works, there should be the flow of "Qi" for there to be a sense of life and the universe. The song "Chile Song", more accurately described as a painting, the vivid depiction transports individuals from the complexities of contemporary society to the grasslands, uniting them with heaven and earth and awakening their vitality. This journey allows us to traverse time back to the Northern and Southern Dynasties period, where we encounter pure beauty and witness the nuanced "emotions," "intentions," and "life" of nomadic peoples.

Ancient Chinese poetry represents the most precious artistic and spiritual wealth of the Chinese nation, while modern songs that incorporate or adapt ancient poetry serve to further disseminate and promote its cultural heritage. In the process of adaptation, particular attention should be paid to the aesthetic culture of the original lyrics, deepening and developing their aesthetic connotations. The song "Chile Song" integrates new era features and the emotional values of its author based on the aesthetic culture and atmosphere of the original poem. Furthermore, it effectively incorporates philosophical thoughts related to intention, life, and "Qi" into its composition. The gradual progression of emotions, successive emotional climaxes, as well as themes centered around a young girl's innocence are all integral components in this exemplary adaptation.

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