

## The Musical Style and Creative Elements of Shaanxi Erhu Works

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**Abstract:** As one of the representatives of folk musical instruments, Erhu is deeply loved by the general public. Affected by different geographical environments, Erhu has a strong local character in its musical style and performance techniques. These factors not only make the erhu expressive, but also make the music of the erhu more understandable. The material of Shaanxi Erhu music mainly comes from Shaanxi folk music. It not only has the commonality of general erhu music, but also has special local music personality in Shaanxi. This paper explores its artistic features through a brief analysis of the musical style and creative elements of Shaanxi erhu works. This summarizes the artistic value of the music creation and performance of Shaanxi erhu works, clarifies the positive influence of Shaanxi erhu works on the development of erhu art, and provides a direction for future erhu music creation.

### 1. Introduction

As an outstanding representative of Chinese national musical instruments, Erhu has not been able to erase her brilliance after the changes of the times [1]. Nowadays, it has a certain influence in domestic instrumental music performance and even on the international stage, so it must have its extraordinary significance. Most of the erhu works are created or adapted and transplanted by erhu performers, and there are many pieces of music with strong regional style [2]. After the addition of professional composers, both the song structure and the quality of art have created a good start for the erhu works. Similarly, these works also have local music as the material. The regional characteristics of the erhu works are in line with the "traditional aesthetics" [3]. From the perspective of creation, ethnic folk music and opera music materials are extremely rich, and it is one of the sources of creative inspiration. From the perspective of performance, drawing on the playing techniques of other Huqin-like instruments enriches the erhu's playing style and musical expression.

The style erhu works have formed a strong regional character after the efforts of generations of performers and composers [4]. In-depth folk music materials are deeply loved by the public. A large number of experts and scholars across the country have conducted in-depth research on the creation of regional erhu works [5]. At present, foreign scholars are still not very rich in the study of Chinese erhu art [6]. Of course, as the erhu instrument gradually became a worldwide instrument, as China's political, economic, and cultural forces gradually strengthened, more and more foreign scholars began to pay attention to the development of erhu art. Related literatures include "A Bing, Liu Tianhua, Sun Wenming and His Erhu Qu" by Japan's Masahiro [7]. There are few foreign literatures devoted to erhu research, and more scholars from foreign scholars have expressed their views on erhu art. The questions they raised from different angles also provided a good help to the development of domestic erhu art. Nowadays, the traditional erhu works are somewhat thin in terms of playing style and skills, and can no longer meet people's needs [8]. The integration of Chinese and Western cultures and the use of foreign languages is an inevitable trend in the creation of erhu works. The erhu itself is a very inclusive instrument that can play different styles of works. Related composers have said that the music of the erhu playing the violin is sometimes more touching than the violin [9]. In the creation of erhu music, "diversity" and "inclusiveness" are its core elements. It can be concluded that the diversified development of erhu music must be infiltrated and organically combined with Western music culture on the basis of preserving the original national sentiment. Such works are in

line with today's aesthetic standards for erhu works.

From the above analysis and summary, we can see that in order to do a good job in the study of erhu music creation, we must master the four aspects of knowledge reserves. First, we must look at historical development and be familiar with the background of the times. Second, we need to be familiar with the experiences and achievements of famous composers in different periods. Again, we must be familiar with the representative works that can represent a certain form of creation. Finally, we must understand the requirements of the development of erhu art in a certain period. In this way, it is possible to effectively prevent the emergence of problems such as incomplete research, incompleteness, and incorrect thinking.

## 2. The musical style of Shaanxi erhu works

### 2.1 Style features

The influence of opera music on Shaanxi Erhu music style is quite large, and among the many opera dramas, Qin chamber is the most representative. The Qin dynasty originated in the Guanzhong Plain. Since the Zhou Dynasty, the plain has been called "Qin", so the aria is also called "Qin dynasty". Its musical style has had more or less influence on many local dramas in China. Due to the different evolution of local dialects and intonations, the Qin dynasty formed the genre of Tongzhou, Xi'an, Xifu, Qin and Han, and its performances were simple, rough, delicate and profound, with emotion and exaggeration.

The accompaniment of the Qin dynasty is divided into fields and martial arts. The instruments used in the place include Banhu, Erxianzi, Erhu, flute, Sanxian, dulcimer, cymbal, sea flute, pipe, large (horn), etc.; the martial arts have tyrannical drums, dry drums, church drums, sentences, small cymbals, scorpions, etc. The most important instrument in the Qin dynasty is Banhu. Its pronunciation is sharp and crisp, and it can best reflect the characteristics of the changes of the Qin cavity plate. Therefore, many erhu works of Shaanxi style have learned the playing techniques of Banhu. The analysis of Shaanxi Erhu art culture space is shown in Figure 1.

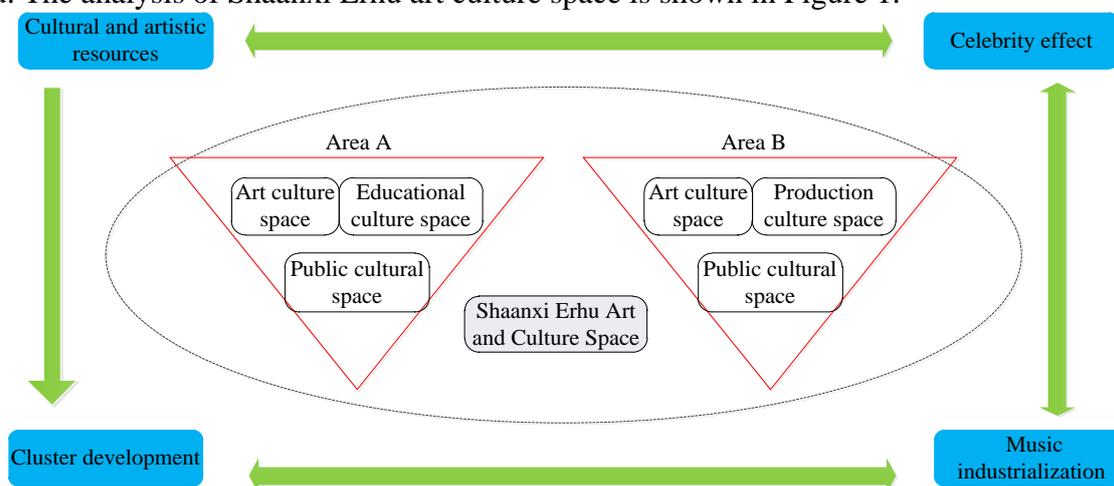


Figure 1 Analysis of the artistic space of the erhu art in Shaanxi

### 2.2 Style of harmony and harmony

In the creation of Shaanxi Erhu, it is good at writing with the national music melody as the main motive. Some are authentic folk music, some are the music materials in the traditional mode, and constitute the whole work through the development and variation of the main motives. The composers of Erhu in Shaanxi use their own accurate understanding of the national music style, adopting the corresponding traditional national style and performance techniques, so that the created melody is very characteristic of national music.

In the process of creation, Shaanxi Erhu is good at using the ethnic melody with reasonable harmony and using the appropriate chords to lay the erhu melody, and often transforms the theme

melody between the erhu and the accompaniment to create a full-fledged musical image.

In the lyric music section, after the theme melody has been developed to some extent, it is handed over to the piano, and the high and low sound parts use the octave to perform the melody in the form of the alignment. The erhu part is based on the chord of the chord, which forms a full and rich harmonizing effect.

### **2.3 Rhythm and speed style**

Rhythm is the most important means of continuous melody. In the process of creation, Shaanxi Erhu takes the rhythm as the entry point of integrating western music elements, and uses the rhythm characteristics of western music elements to combine with the national music melody to form a new musical language. Shaanxi Erhu uses continuous sounds of the same pitch to emphasize the change of rhythm, cleverly arrange the accent, give the impression of accent, and combine the piano accompaniment to emphasize the accent in the melody, creating a bold, strong and powerful character image.

The segmentation rhythm is a rhythm type that breaks the original rhythm pattern and makes the strong beat and the weak beat change when the melody progresses. It is widely used in jazz and has appeared many times in the works of erhu in Shaanxi, and it has certain signs.

In the fast two-tone part, the theme melody is handed to the piano part, and the erhu accented the main voice of the melody with the accent mark, corresponding to the continuous segmentation rhythm of the piano bass, forming a strong rhythm of alternating rhythm, giving a strong hearing. This kind of rhythm similar to the dance of the river is corresponding to the heroic character of Shaanxi, and the combination of the two is extremely natural and ingenious.

### **2.4 Change sound and arpeggio style**

The erhu was originally played only one by one, and Mr. Zhou Shaomei created three positions. On the basis of this, Mr. Liu Tianhua developed into five positions. Each position has its traditional finger pitch. The creation of Shaanxi Erhu is not limited to the traditional position and finger distance. He draws on the combination of the western string instruments, uses a sound as a position, and has many unconventional finger distances. This breakthrough tradition has used the use of position and finger distance multiple times in the work.

Shaanxi Erhu composers incorporate Western music culture elements into their works in a rhythmic form with skillful and professional composition techniques and creative ideas. Through the presentation and change of motives, new melody material is inserted, and finally the theme melody is dynamically reproduced, echoing back and forth, so that the structure of the work is clear and coherent.

## **3. Creation elements of Shaanxi erhu works**

### **3.1 National music elements**

Language and music are important media for expressing people's inner feelings. Both are based on sound and are closely related to each other. Each nation has its own dialect, forming a diversity of dialects. The sound, rhyme, tone and sentence teas of dialects are important basis for producing local music style.

Although Shaanxi and Henan belong to the northern dialect, the tone of the two places is completely different. For example, the Guanzhong dialect in Shaanxi is the oldest language in China. Since the Western Zhou Dynasty, it has been called the Yayan, so the modern dialect also retains a large number of the meaning and grammar of ancient Chinese. Qin is based on the Guanzhong dialect, so the erhu music processing is often sharp and angular. The tone of the Yuzhong area is mostly up, sometimes giving people a feeling of singing, so in the erhu performance, the processing of the portamento is partial and smooth. However, the dialects of Shaanxi and parts of Henan belong to the Central Plains dialect area in history. Due to historical origins, certain words or titles also have similarities.

### 3.2 Western instrumental music elements

"The Song of the Wanderer" shows the poor wandering life of the Gypsy people, and the erhu is a musical instrument that can express sadness. This has some room for performance.

Through such exchanges, while searching for the best performance skills, it enriches the artistic expression of the erhu. While drawing on the violin playing method, it also makes up for the deficiencies in the erhu's skills. Although this song "The Song of the Wanderer" is not specially made for the erhu, it is also difficult to play the skills, but in terms of the acoustic color change of the music and its delicate emotional connotation, it is very consistent with the mellow and soft characteristics of the erhu. The unique musical appeal to express the song can be said to be easy.

### 3.3 Environmental elements

Erhu's music melody is strong, and the range of performance is large. The music style is mainly wild and handsome. During the performance, the bow is smooth, free and easy, and the degree of relaxation is very passionate, giving a kind of unrestrained emotional experience. Emphasis on the use of exaggerated contrast techniques, the performance of the music content is often characterized by heroic spirit, majestic emotions, thick tone and so on. The melody in the Erhu songs in Shaanxi is also strong and undulating, but the tone is brighter and the music style is not lost. In terms of timbre, it has the characteristics of "clear, transparent, static, empty, and bright". Therefore, in the erhu performance, the way of transporting the bow is very stretched, the movement is smooth and beautiful, and the music content of the performance is often beautiful, smart, smooth and relaxed. The difference in the influence of ten different regions of Shaanxi on the erhu works is shown in Figure 2.

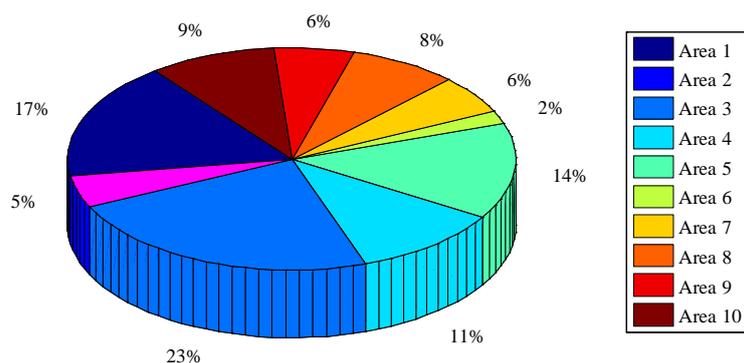


Figure 2 Difference in the influence of ten different regions of Shaanxi on erhu works

## 4. Summary

As a traditional Chinese national musical instrument, Erhu is very national in character and can fully demonstrate the tonal characteristics of national music. It shows not only national music, but also the customs and customs of all ethnic groups in China. This paper analyzes the music style and creative elements of Shaanxi Erhu's works, aiming to help the performers understand the erhu works in Shaanxi and better display their artistic charm. Erhu constantly integrates into diversified musical elements. A large number of transplanted works and new and difficult works have emerged. The erhu performance techniques and creative concepts have the aesthetic characteristics of modern people, and the level of performers is getting higher and higher. However, mastering regional style works is the basis for learning and playing large works. There are indeed many creative forms about erhu music. While arranging and summarizing in the vertical direction, we must do a good job of horizontal analysis and find the relationship between various creative forms to further clarify the future development direction of erhu art.

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