

Analysis of Yang Yaluo's Contribution to Yunnan National Vocal Music Education

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ABSTRACT

Yang Yaluo is an educator of national vocal music in Yunnan Province of China. She devoted all her life to the collection of materials, music education and music activities related to Yunnan national vocal music, and made extraordinary achievements. This paper will review Yang Yaluo's life and her artistic path, and elaborate on her contributions to vocal music education and textbooks compilation in Yunnan.

Keywords: *Yunnan vocal music, Yang Yaluo, National vocal music education.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Yunnan national vocal music has distinct characteristics, and older singers such as Huang Hong and Du Lihua have promoted Yunnan folk songs to the whole country. For many years, the professional schools and departments of music education established in Yunnan have mainly engaged in related education and performance, and have trained a large number of national vocal music talents. Many excellent teachers have successfully offered relevant courses and lectures, which have achieved remarkable results in the teaching of Yunnan national vocal music. [1] Yang Yaluo is one of many national vocal music teachers. She was born in Tongliang, Chongqing, but devoted her life to the national vocal music education in Yunnan. In 1952, Yang Yaluo graduated from the Music Department of Chongqing Normal University and worked as a singer at the Yunnan Song and Dance Troupe. In the past 70 years of work in Yunnan, Yang Yaluo has learned and mastered the essence of Yunnan national vocal music, and has become an advocate for the scientific and distinctive development of Yunnan national vocal music. Yang Yaluo devoted all her life to collecting folk music, music education and music activities. It can be said that Yang Yaluo devoted her life selflessly to Yunnan and made outstanding contributions to the vocal music industry, especially the education of Yunnan national vocal music. This article will

review Yang Yaluo's artistic path and reveal her contribution to vocal music education in Yunnan.

2. YANG YALUO'S ART CAREER

Yang Yaluo was born in Tongliang County, Chongqing, China in 1930. Her love for national vocal music is closely related to her exposure to music and love for vocal music. Yang Yaluo's music enlightenment teacher is Zou Chengfeng. She appreciated Yang Yaluo's talent in music and gave her the lead role in musical dramas, which cultivated her abilities. As a result, Yang Yaluo understood the connotation of music, learned the functions of vocal music, and how to become an excellent vocal music teacher. Ye Zhengchang, the principal of Jianyi Normal School, attached great importance to the cultivation of students' practical ability and greatly appreciated Yang Yaluo's musical talent and singing temperament. He also created opportunities for her to learn and improve skills, leading Yang Yaluo to attend a concert of tenor Cai Shaoxu, which has an impact on Yang Yaluo's career transformation. [2] Cai Shaoxu combined bel canto with Sichuan pronunciation and intonation, singing the Sichuan folk song "The Sun Comes Out in Joy", which shocked Yang Yaluo. She learned that music is a special language that can express human emotions of joy, anger and sorrow.

As the saying goes, "Talents are everywhere, however seldom can they be recognized." Fortunately, Yang Yaluo met several good teachers, and with her diligence and eagerness to learn. Her musical ability was fully displayed and her singing was constantly improved. From the enlightenment teacher, she discovered her own interests and continued to learn vocal music with the support and encouragement of the teachers. In 1952, Yang Yaluo was assigned to Yunnan Cultural and Art Work Troupe (now known as the Yunnan Provincial Song and Dance Ensemble) after graduation, which became an opportunity for her to work for Yunnan national music. Yang Yaluo's concept of vocal music is not unchanging. She participated in the Chongqing Communist Youth League Congress and the audience wanted to listen to the folk song "Daoqing on Emancipation". As she studied bel canto and couldn't sing folk songs well, the members were very disappointed. This was the first milestone in Yang Yaluo's concept transformation, which prompted her to start thinking about the relationship between the national singing and Bel Canto singing. In her work, Yang Yaluo lacked understanding and experience of minority life and vocal music, and felt uncomfortable when singing "Liu Hulan", with bel canto, so she hoped to experience life in minority areas and learned national singing. She realized that she wanted to sing for the people, to sing songs that they liked to listen to, that could express their thoughts, and inspire them to unite and strive forward.

Yang Yaluo went to Dehong, Honghe and Nannuo Mountain of Yunnan to learn from folk singers, apprentice to folk artists, and diligently study folk songs. After conducting research on folk music, Yang Yaluo realized the truth: singers shall have sincere and profound emotions, learn and master the performance techniques of folk singers, in order to sing songs well. [2] After studying, her role in "Liu Hulan" achieved successfully. Yang Yaluo realized that the change in singing style had a significant impact on her own vocal music development, and was also recognized by folk singers and superior. Yang Yaluo has a keen insight into national music. After investigation and study in the countryside, and continuous practice, she successfully completed the transformation from bel canto to national singing. She used her own ideas to carry out national vocal music education, teaching at Yunnan Opera School (now Yunnan Literature and Arts School) and Nie'er Music School (now Kunming Professional College of Arts), and made

significant contributions to the establishment of the Music Department at Yunnan Opera School.

3. INNOVATING THE VOCALIZATION OF YUNNAN NATIONAL VOCAL MUSIC

In the 1950s and 1960s, bel canto was dominant in music colleges and stages in China. It is difficult for folk songs, national singers and national singing to achieve good development. The schools, textbooks and teachers of national vocal music were deficient. The teaching mode was oral teaching, with inner understanding, and the singers lacked scientific and systematic guidance. In this case, Yang Yaluo attempted to innovate vocal music education and promote the scientific development of education. Under the leadership of Yunnan Provincial Song and Dance Ensemble, she participated in collecting folk music and compiled them into teaching materials, thus making her own contribution to the development of Yunnan national vocal music education.

After becoming a member of Yunnan Provincial Song and Dance Ensemble, Yang Yaluo actively participated in the investigation of national vocal music. She went to Dehong and other places to learn from national singers. During the process of learning, Yang Yaluo and colleagues collected and sorted out hundreds of excellent folk songs. Among them, "Happy Days" was performed by singer Du Lihua at the National Music Week in Beijing, which made the whole country know Dai folk songs and attracted widespread attention in the music industry. In order to enable Yunnan folk songs to be sung by more people and enable actors to sing Yunnan songs with authentic style, Yang Yaluo, as the deputy captain of the singing team, compiled Yunnan Provincial Song and Dance Ensemble's Vocalization and Vocal Music Textbook of the singing team in 1960 based on investigation of folk music. When serving as the deputy director of the Music Department of Yunnan Literature and Arts School, she compiled Yunnan National Tune Practice Song. These vocalization and vocal music textbooks are mainly Yunnan style tunes, with some other ethnic tones from other regions. The types can be divided into the following two categories: one is based on Yunnan folk songs and lantern tunes, absorbing elements of traditional opera, which can help practitioners master more Yunnan folk song styles, such as Midu Folk Song, Yunnan Flower Lantern "Ten Sisters" and some segments with elements of Beijing Opera. The

other is based on folk materials that editors have come into contact with in Shanghai, Wuhan and other places, such as the vocalization adapted from the Chongyang folk song "Wanglang" in the textbook, which can broaden the practitioners' horizons and experience diverse folk elements.

Yang Yaluo followed the principle of "different students are suitable for different teaching methods" when compiling textbooks. She made a detailed classification of vocal training songs, providing suitable practice segments for singers with different phonemes and foundations. For example, the spoken parts in the dramas "Su-San Under Police Escort" are suitable for male, "Dali is a Good Place" is suitable for female, and Lahu folk song "Like Bees Picking Nectar" is suitable for junior students to sing. Almost every song has detailed singing requirements, singing movements, as well as key and difficult points that need to be paid attention to when singing. In addition, in the Western vocalization section, Yang Yaluo added lyrics to the exercises of progression, jump, interval and arpeggio, which embodied the concept of "making foreign things serve China". Textbooks reflect the characteristics of "making the past serve the present" and "all flowers bloom together". Because folk songs of many minorities in Yunnan are included, such as Dai's "Spring Blossoms", Bulang's "The Sun Shines on Bulang Mountain", Naxi's "Ali Li", Yang Yaluo indicated the nationality of the vocal training song, and particularly emphasized the style and emotions of singing. Finally, those textbooks also contain songs with unique Yunnan tone, such as the Yi people's Haicai Tune and the Yunnan lantern "Inverted Paddle".

Yang Yaluo's selection of songs has scientific character and popularity. Some songs in the textbooks still exist in the music textbooks of primary and secondary schools, which enables students to receive the influence of their national music from an early age, and become familiar with and love Yunnan folk songs. Many songs are widely spread and often used in today's artistic performances. At the same time, the public also like listening to them. For example, the Midu folk song "Little River Flows" and Yunnan folk song and the Yunnan folk song "Embroidered Pocked". There are some tunes that are frequently played in scenic spots in Yunnan, which expand Yunnan's popularity and reflects the unique ethnic customs, such as the song "Horse Bells Sing and Jade Birds Sing" in the Stone Forest.

4. PUTTING FORWARD THE UNIQUE NATIONAL VOCAL MUSIC THEORY

During her student years, Yang Yaluo mainly practiced bel canto singing and did not systematically learn national singing. There are two ways for Yang Yaluo to learn and master national vocal music: the first is to learn and sing national opera, listen to Guo Lanying's performance of "Liu Hulan", and pay attention to articulation and melody; the second is to learn and sing folk songs.

Yang Yaluo's theoretical study of national vocal music is mainly contained in the survey reports, articles, and textbooks, such as "Investigation and Association of Hani Folk Songs in Honghe" and "Talking about National Vocal Music with Mass Dance Cadres". In her investigation, it is found that the formation of various singing methods are closely related to the social function of the song, and the change of occasions and locations leads to the change of expression and vocal color. Secondly, the place of articulation is closely related to language, and the particularity of languages in various minority areas determines the particularity of folk song melodies and singing techniques. Therefore, in order to master national singing, it is necessary to get familiar with and master the language characteristics of minorities. Secondly, the place of articulation is closely related to language, and the particularity of languages in various minority areas determines the particularity of folk song melodies and singing techniques. Therefore, in order to master national singing, it is necessary to get familiar with and master the language characteristics of minorities. Finally, it is found that folk singers have their own vocal skills, and the statement that "folk singing is not scientific" is incorrect. [3] Yang Yaluo's analysis of Hani national vocal music is also applicable to other ethnic areas, and this research and summary has guided significance for the development of Yunnan national vocal music.

In her exploration of national vocal music, Yang Yaluo summarized the characteristics of national vocal music. In terms of singing skills, national vocal music pays attention to "the clear pronunciation and mellow voice", emphasizing the use of pronunciation and intonation, as well as the use of four tones; in terms of singing style, Yang Yaluo combined the performances of singers such as Guo Lanying and Huang Hong, and found that national vocal music emphasizes the importance of "combining voice and emotion" and "conveying

emotions through sound". In terms of performance, national vocal music is often combined with dance, and there are strict requirements for the occasion; in terms of vocal characteristics, minority vocal music needs to combine true and false voices. Finally, the imparting of national vocal music is characterized by oral teaching, [3] this randomness is an important reason for the colorful vocal music of Chinese ethnic minorities, and it also encourages Yang Yaluo to improve notional music teaching methods in the future.

On the issue of inheritance and reference of singing methods, Yang Yaluo pointed out that Chairman Mao's policy of "making foreign things serve China" is also applicable to the vocal music industry. First of all, Chinese singers and audiences need to have a correct understanding of bel canto singing, that is, it cannot be directly applied or completely denied. In addition, the two singing methods need to complement each other and promote their integration. National vocal music singers shall not only learn from the basic vocal methods and technical skills of Western bel canto, but also retain the style and charm of national singing. After systematically studying bel canto and national singing, Yang Yaluo pointed out that the essence of the combination of Western bel canto and Chinese national singing is to solve the problem of how to learn from scientific Western vocal methods and organically combine them with the articulation of Chinese language and the expression of national style. Finally, national vocal music shall also be combined with traditional Chinese opera and recitation. [4] Yang Yaluo learned traditional opera, combined their common and special laws, and mastered the aesthetic habits of national singing.

In addition to studying national vocal music, Yang Yaluo also pays special attention to the development of the theater troupe. She deems that members of the Chuxiong Yi Opera Troupe shall not only have a perfect voice, but also maintain rich style of the Yi people. It is suggested that vocal performers learn folk songs and operas of various nationalities in Yunnan, as well as combine and learn from bel canto; The creator takes Yi folk songs as the material, connecting the structure of traditional Chinese opera music with the musical form of national opera, in order to establish a unique singing system and musical structure of Yi opera.

5. PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF YUNNAN NATIONAL VOCAL MUSIC TEACHING

In 1964, Yang Yaluo went to Yunnan Opera School to teach national vocal music courses, striving to solve the problem of scientific vocal skills in traditional vocal arts such as Beijing Opera, Yunnan Opera, and the lantern drama in Yunnan Province. During the research in Honghe, Yang Yaluo learned about the problems existing in the preservation and dissemination of Yunnan vocal music, so she combined sight-singing with music theory, requiring students to sing with beautiful voices, clear language, sincere emotions, and rich style. After the Cultural Revolution, Yang Yaluo returned to Yunnan Literature and Arts School to teach and set up the Music Department, making national vocal music become an independent discipline. In order to achieve good teaching results, Yang Yaluo, along with Xu Shoulian and Zhao Lifen, carefully compiled textbooks and patiently imparted knowledge, making the music department become an excellent team in the school. Yang Yaluo was not only responsible for coordinating the basic work of the music department, but also responsible for teaching the vocal music and piano. Yi singer Lanni Xizhi, soprano singer Deng Guiping, and Fang Xin of Yunnan Arts University are all outstanding disciples of Yang Yaluo. After becoming singers or university teachers, they make contributions to the cause of Yunnan national vocal music in their respective posts, as well as inherit and develop Yang Yaluo's vocal music art concepts. In 1996, Yang Yaluo served as the vice president of Kunming Professional College of Arts, and she formed an expert committee with Zhao Luzhu, Huang Hong, Du Lihua to train national vocal music talents.

Tao Xingzhi said, training and educating students is the same as planting flowers and trees. The first step is to understand the characteristics of flowers and trees, and to fertilize and water according to different situations, which is called "teaching students in accordance with their aptitude". Yang Yaluo has her unique views on training excellent talents in national vocal music. Firstly, she proposed that vocal music teaching should "lay a foundation on commonalities and protect individual characteristics". [4] That is to say, teachers can learn from scientific Western methods and technical skills to help students build a solid foundation, then follow the principle of "teaching

students in accordance with their aptitude", so that students with different conditions and characteristics can maintain their unique features and protect their individual timbre. When students have voice problems, it is also necessary to clarify the crux, analyze specific problems, and observe whether students have problems with the vocal concepts and methods. In addition, when guiding bel canto actors to sing Chinese style songs, it is necessary to guide students to articulate clearly and showcase the style of Chinese vocal music. When enunciating, students should pay attention to three steps: pronouncing the beginning of the character clearly (initial consonant), controlling the central part of the character (final vowel), and returning to rhyme smoothly. [5] Secondly, Yang Yaluo attaches great importance to students' internship and performance activities, which are divided into four categories: grass-roots performances, teaching reports, major performances, and foreign affairs performances. [2] As a vocal music teacher in the second half of the 20th century, Yang Yaluo was acutely aware of the importance of internships. Through internships, she tested students' learning outcomes, improved their singing skills, and promoted their growth.

In teaching, Yang Yaluo values the quality of the teaching staff. After interviewing music teacher Yang Ning, it is shown that Yang Yaluo is a leader of integrity, and she loves and cares for her subordinates. She selected outstanding talents as teachers and tried her best to create conditions to improve their professional skills.[6] She organized teachers to go to colleges and universities for further study, and hired outstanding musicians to conduct academic exchanges.

6. CONCLUSION

As a pioneer and devotee, although Yang Yaluo was not born in Yunnan, she devoted all her energy and efforts to the cause of vocal music education in Yunnan. She studied national vocal music all her life and imparted the knowledge and experience to the next generation of vocal music workers without reservation. During more than 60 years of engaging in music activities and national vocal music education, Yang Yaluo actively founded education institutions, explored and summarized the theory, and also trained a large number of excellent students.

Chuang Tzu said: "Life between heaven and earth, if fleeting, and suddenly it." Our beloved teacher Yang Yaluo has lived such a wonderful and

fulfilling life. She gained the respect of other teachers with her straightforward and sincere attitude, and helped Yunnan vocal music students to enter a larger stage with her profound knowledge. Her great achievements in the field of national vocal music education in Yunnan have been recognized by her peers. She has contributed her strength to the development of Chinese national vocal music. Her mature vocal music theory, successful teaching experience, and teaching ideas will bring us profound influence. In the process of inheriting and developing Yunnan vocal music, we will maintain the characteristics of folk songs, inherit the essence of national culture, and make Yunnan folk songs resound throughout the country.

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