

Female Narration in Gannan Hakka Folk Songs

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ABSTRACT

Gannan Hakka folk songs are rich in themes and diverse in content, including women's narration of beautiful love stories, field work, and daily life records, which shows Hakka women's characteristics of daring to love, daring to hate, and not being bound, and also reflects their yearning for a better life. With the development of society, the female narrative content and theme in Gannan Hakka folk songs are also changing, recording the changes of the times. Based on this, this paper will take Gannan Hakka folk songs as the starting point, and make an objective analysis and cognition of the female images in Gannan Hakka folk songs from a new perspective. Finally, based on this premise, this paper analyzes the historical changes of Gannan Hakka folk songs against the female narrative background.

Keywords: Gannan, Hakka folk songs, Female, Narration.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chinese domestic academic research on Gannan Hakka folk songs mainly focuses on the analysis and elaboration of skills, singing, education, inheritance and other aspects. The academic community also has a more in-depth discussion on the comparison of Gannan Hakka folk songs with other local folk songs, as well as the discussion of Gannan Hakka folk song art and culture. However, Chinese domestic scholars rarely involve in the interpretation of "female" narration and the changing process of "female" narrative content in Gannan Hakka folk songs. Therefore, this study takes the folk songs selected in the book "Research on Jiangxi Hakka Folk Songs" as examples for analysis. This book comprehensively collects and collates Jiangxi Hakka folk songs, publicizes and promotes Hakka music, and expands the influence of Jiangxi Hakka folk songs in China and abroad. This paper will select the representative folk songs in the book, discuss and interpret the female images at the content level, study how Gannan Hakka folk songs are inherited and embodied through "female", and reveal the unique position of Hakka women in Gannan Hakka folk songs from ancient times to the present. Studying the female narrative in Gannan Hakka folk songs is conducive to shaping the female image in the folk songs when singers sing Hakka folk songs,

promoting the understanding of Gannan Hakka women's daily life narrative, and also conducive to the inheritance and development of Gannan Hakka folk songs in China.

2. INTERPRETATION OF THE FEMALE THEME IN GANNAN HAKKA FOLK SONGS

Gannan Hakka folk songs can be said to be a wealth of folk songs. Hakka people use the form of folk songs to record life, family, love, etc. They are true and beautiful. Hakka folk songs reflect the images of Hakka women, which are soft, tough, tough and beautiful. They are also the most authentic and unmodified images, and discover the unique charm of Hakka women. The female images in Gannan Hakka folk songs are the concentrated embodiment of Hakka women's soft, tenacious, tough and beautiful images.

2.1 *The Image of the Women Who Love Work and Work Hard*

Female singers have their own interpretation and understanding of portraying and publicizing Hakka female images. Since Hakka women moved to the south, their living conditions and surrounding environment have undergone tremendous changes, so their family status and cultural status have

changed, resulting in higher social status of local women, but this is only compared with other regions. Hakka women like to work while singing, and most Hakka folk songs are about Hakka women and their images in life. For example, as recorded in the folk song "Research on Jiangxi Hakka Folk Songs", in the folk song "Shovel the Grass", "Get up in the morning, shovel the grass, shovel the grass, and it will be a good fertile field." This folk song describes the daily work of Hakka people. From this, people can get the information that many Hakka men work outside to make a living or support their families. As a result, women naturally become the backbone of the family. While taking care of the family, they also need to give consideration to farming. The song simply describes a feeling that getting up in the morning, when feeling tired during working, women sing a few words to amuse themselves. For example, in the folk song "Make a Pair of Inlaid Shoes for My Love", it is said that "The newly-made inlaid shoes have four corners, and the girl made a pair of shoes for her loving man. They two need to love each other, and she'd rather to be barefoot. The newly-made shirt has four corners, and the shirt is for his loving girl. They two need to love each other, and the man would rather to be barearms." It tells the story of Hakka women who work for their sweetheart and make selfless contributions in love. From the "making a pair of inlaid shoes", we can see that women are dexterous and diligent in expressing their love in details. Hakka women are singing to express themselves and to record a better life. Hakka women singing folk songs while working has become an indispensable part of life. Their fatigue can also be reduced while singing folk songs. The lyrics are short but sentence by sentence. It tells the story of women's active response to work, never flinching, and love work. Rhythm and parallelism in the lyrics strengthen the communication of women's images and give the audience a deeper impression.[7]

Hakka women have lived in the environment since childhood, and the local living habits have continued under the influence of folk customs. In the Hakka ethnic group, Hakka people have formed a kind of inertial thinking and a framework for family education, which has become a common feature of Hakka people, with the same recognition, life and aesthetics. For example, Hakka women are relatively "strong", which is caused by her living environment. Hakka women not only have to take care of their husbands, educate their children, but also take care of household chores, leading to

strong personality and broad mind of Hakka women. When such a strong mother educates her children, she must instill that the children are strong and become the pillars of the country. Hakka women also think of "family and country". Hakka people themselves are the earliest Han people in Central Plains. They retain so much traditional culture in Hakka people, which is also reflected in folk customs. Although many people are Han people, some customs have not been passed on or lost, but they are still passed on in Hakka areas. So until today, the characteristics of Hakka people are still obvious, which forms the different characteristics between Hakka women and other women.[2][5]

2.2 The Image of the Women Who Love Life and Are Good at Keeping House

Through Hakka folk songs, a vivid image of Hakka women leaps onto the paper, among which the most shocking is the female consciousness conveyed in these grounded songs. This part of spiritual connotation is unique in combination with specific historical background and local customs. Because most Hakka women are the backbone of their families, many family affairs and decision-making power naturally fall on them. In this process, they gradually began to record their lives, express their feelings and pursue life with songs. For example, in "A Good Ship Is Hard to Turn", "My dear, you are going far away. When you can go back? I wait for you the whole year. Remember to go back home on holidays in case that I will suffer losses. A good ship is hard to turn. The bamboo fence fall in the middle of river and the one who did it is me, hoping you to come back home soon." [11]This folk song is about the image of Haka women who are husbands who go out to make a living at home. The lyrics of the song show that the Hakka women in the words of female singers are good at housekeeping. It is common for Hakka men to go out to make a living. A small number of men have not returned home for decades, but women who stay at home still insist on taking care of their families and will never betray their husbands. Women in folk songs hope their husbands go home more and don't make themselves wait too long. "A good ship is hard to turn" means it's easy to go out to work, but difficult to return home. The lyrics of this song are the sentiments of Hakka men due to their going out to make a living. "You need to turn back in the holidays" means that they should come back for the New Year and the holidays, which is the advice of Hakka women to their husbands. Hakka women have been taking

care of their families and undertaking various farm work for many years without changing their original intention. This shows that Hakka women are good at housekeeping.

The daily work of Hakka women is trivial and complicated, and their interpersonal communication is relatively extensive. Thus, Hakka folk songs become the spiritual food for Hakka women to encourage and comfort each other in the process of bearing all kinds of complicated labor. For example, the following two folk songs are closely related to Hakka women's life. "A Flower Blooms Underwater": "The man supports bamboo rafts in the river, and the girl washes clothes and goes down the river. A figure falls into the river, and a flower blooms underwater." The lyrics mainly describe women. It can be seen from the girl's washing clothes in the river that women care for men very carefully. At the same time, the song describes the man's bamboo rafting in the river to reflect the daily life of men and women. At last, the girl's image is a metaphor for a flower, which reflects the beauty of women's housekeeping in men's minds. "The Man Is Going to Ningdu": "When you go to Ningdu, with one bellows and one stove, you need to cook three meals by yourself, and you need to rest on the floor at night." In the song, the female expresses her concern for her love when he goes out to Ningdu, which conveys the image of Gannan Hakka women who love life very much and are good at housekeeping in detail.

2.3 The Image of the Women Who Are Loyal to Love and Brave

In Gannan folk songs, there are also some folk songs that are widely spread, that is, folk songs that play up the images of women who are loyal to love and brave and bold. These folk songs have also become the unique components of Gannan folk songs. They use the most popular language to sing love, creating the unique charm of Hakka love songs; They like to express their feelings by singing.

The natural law of all things can be used to describe Hakka women's desire for love, which is simple but beautiful. For example, Xie Shuilian, an old mother in Xingguo County, southern Jiangxi Province, lived to be over 80 years old. On the third day of marriage, her husband joined the army. Her husband sent her a comb. He said that she would come back next year if he didn't come back this year. If he didn't come back next year, he would come back the next year. Xie Shuilian had been

waiting for her husband. She looked through her eyes every day and stands at the door. She combed her hair with the comb her husband gave her. Until the threshold of her house was flat and she hadn't seen her husband return. Xie Shuilian waited for her husband all her life. She said that she would do it. She kept her promise, stuck to the family, and maintained her own small family, which also reflected the image and characteristics of Hakka women who were loyal to love.

The following two songs are typical folk songs of Gannan Hakka women who are loyal to love and brave. The lyrics of a folk song "Do You Want To Fall in Love with Me" reflect the courage and boldness of Gannan Hakka women: "We two are single, you don't have a girlfriend and I don't have a boyfriend. I want to ask you, do you want to fall in love with me? Hey!" Women's interjections and direct comparison of each other's thoughts to mandarin ducks and direct questions to men express women's simplicity, straightforward personality and inner desire for love, which also reflects the beautiful image of local women who are not afraid of difficulties and brave to pursue.

For example, the folk song "Long Lasting Love Between Two", a duet of male and female love songs, uses easy to understand words to express the image of Hakka women who bravely express their feelings. In the song, "It's like a tree in the mountain intertwined with a vine. The vine lives and the tree dies, and the vine dies and the tree dies." "The two are married together. They grow leeks on September 9, and have a long-lasting love." It is Hakka men and women who express that they want to live with each other forever. The whole folk song, although there is not a word of love, expresses the sincere and beautiful love between Hakka men and women vividly. For example, "The Flower Pin Needle on the Shoulder" Pole aptly shows the true feelings between the couple. Through the way of dialogue and singing, it reflects the image of women who are brave and brave when they face love.[11]

Because of the special status of Hakka women, they are different from women in other regions and have more right to speak. Under the influence of Hakka thought, most Hakka women become the pillar and ruler of the family. In addition to playing a series of roles of traditional women, Hakka women also have to shoulder the family responsibilities. In addition, compared with other regions, Hakka women have more independent choice when choosing a spouse. Some people think

that Hakka women enjoy unequal treatment in marriage; Some scholars also pointed out that Hakka women have the virtue of simplicity and kindness. Hakka women also play an important role in Hakka culture. Their kindness, simplicity, generosity and enthusiasm are all derived from their own culture. From these signs, it is not difficult to see that Hakka women and Hakka culture in Gannan have been integrated and occupy an important position. Naturally, this also led to the continuous inheritance of Hakka folk songs in Gannan. Women became the most extensive audience group of Hakka folk songs because of their high empathy and musical talent higher than men.[8]

3. THE CHANGES OF FEMALE NARRATION IN GANNAN HAKKA FOLK SONGS

Folk songs are songs about people's life, symbolizing the value orientation of the people. Gannan folk songs were formed under the specific historical background for generations, representing the mature art of the local customs of the people in Gannan. Gannan folk songs are good at revealing the true feelings from the heart, and do not need ornate rhetoric. They are the most honest voice of Hakka ancestors. Gannan is the main historical birthplace of Hakka people in China, with unique historical and cultural heritage. From the feudal period to the revolutionary period, and then to the modern and contemporary period, the female narration of Gannan Hakka folk songs is also changing constantly.[1]

3.1 Female Singing Narration in the Feudal Period

Love runs through ancient and modern times, and there are countless forms of love sung in songs. Hakka folk songs are one of them. As women, they bear not only heavy labor, but also traditional society's views and evaluations on them. The best way to express their feelings and express their hearts is folk songs, which are huge spiritual food for mutual encouragement. For example, in "Thinking of My Man", the lyrics are like this, "When I yawn, the tears are full in my eyes. I can't stop thinking about you today. Yesterday, I couldn't stop thinking about you, and today I keep thinking of you until I feel hurt. When the tears dry, I start to think of you again." People can feel the description of love sung by women in the feudal period.

From the perspective of geographical location, most of the Hakka ethnic groups live far away from the centralized rule of imperial power. Feudal rule has relatively little influence and restraint on them. Hakka women have more room for self-development and less dependence on men.¹[13] Under this special historical background, Gannan Hakka has provided a wider space for the development of women's personality and gradually formed their independent and simple ideology.²[12]

3.2 Female Singing Narration in the Revolutionary Period

The Long March of the Red Army started from Ruijin, during which there appeared many folk songs praising the Red Army in southern Jiangxi. Hakka women are brave and are not afraid of sacrifice. They should not only take care of their families, but also actively participate in the revolution. Although they are women, they are no inferior to men. They provided the Red Army with straw sandals, dry food, food and other necessary materials. In the peasant uprising of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, Hakka women really showed their bravery. "The Sound of Gunfire Coming to Battle": "(Woman) The sound of gunfire is coming and the war has begun. I can just sing a folk song for my families. Come and fight, the young Red Army will catch Jiang Jieshi and He Yingqin alive. (Man) The folk song is from Xingguo. Every sentence is touched. I will remember your care, the young girl."[4][6] In the lyrics of this folk song, people can feel the bravery of Hakka women. This folk song is a folk song sung by Hakka women when they send the Red Army to the battlefield. Although the conditions in the special period were very difficult, people rarely saw Hakka women wash their faces with tears and fear, but they bravely stood out to participate in the revolution with hope in their hearts. [9]Gannan Hakka women have always been very reasonable. They support their own men to participate in the revolution, and will not have the idea of small women. In the face of various changes in life, Hakka women have

1. He Chao, The Feminine Consciousness of Hakka folk songs in Gannan Area [J]. Journal of Qiqihar University (Philosophy and Social Sciences), 2005(01): 2.

2. Han Yu, A Study of Female Consciousness in Gannan Hakka Folk Songs [J]. Modern Economic Information, 2017(21): 380.

shown perseverance, which is also moving and unforgettable.³[11]

3.3 Female Singing Narration in Contemporary Times

In modern and contemporary times, the narrative content of folk songs starts to sing about the new life, and the content of female singing narrative has also changed. It is no longer the love of couples, but the propaganda and yearning for the new life. The form of songs echoes the singing of men and women.

In recent years, the Agricultural Insurance Bureau of Xingguo County has taken folk songs as a powerful propaganda tool, and newly compiled Xingguo folk songs, making them well-known and popular. With the help of diversified activities, they went deep into the countryside and began to tour. The "New Rural Insurance, New Environment", written against the background of the development of New China, sings about the new life in the form of male and female duets. In the part of female lyrics, people can see her unique singing form and artistic style. The song shows the hard-working and simple virtue of the local farmers and the local distinctive cultural customs. At the same time, under the influence of the unique improvisation of the Xingguo folk song, they can sing the content and significance of the new rural insurance policy in a way that goes deeper into the hearts of the people, making the policy deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. In the folk songs, Hakka women express their beautiful vision of New China and their panic about how to deal with the current situation. Although they can't be the main force of the family, they silently cooperate with the country and their husbands to do what they can, to be a member of the propagandist, which also reflects the advanced ideas of contemporary women and their expectations for a new life.

In addition, Xingguo also sang the theory of policy interpretation in the form of folk songs. Xingguo folk song is different from other ethnic folk customs inheritance methods. It integrates speaking, singing and performing into a whole, in which local folk customs and folk characteristics are poured. It has strong communication and interaction. On this basis, Xingguo County has built a professional folk song policy and theory

preaching team, and compiled many popular folk songs, such as "New Chapters of the 'Four Comprehensions'", "Folk Songs Singing the Chinese Dream", and "True Feelings of Targeted Poverty Alleviation". The "Collection of Songs for the Promotion of the Theory of Xingguo Folk Songs" and the "Songbook for the Promotion of the Xingguo Folk Songs Team", which the county took the lead in compiling, were more warmly received by the people. From the early love theme to the modern and contemporary singing new life, we can see the changes in the narrative content of Gannan Hakka women.[3]

4. CONCLUSION

The female images in Gannan Hakka folk songs are relatively full, with women who love labor and work hard; There are female images who love life and are good at housekeeping; There are also images of women who are loyal to love and brave. With the changes of the times, women's narrative forms are also changing with the times. In the feudal period, the women in Gannan Hakka folk songs dared to speak, challenged the secular world with the help of folk narration, and were not afraid of feudal ethics, which is also the best proof of the bravery of Hakka women. During the revolutionary period, folk songs recorded that Hakka women made straw sandals to give to the Red Army to support the fifth anti "encirclement and suppression" campaign of the Red Army, all of which reflected the diligence and bravery of Hakka women. Although they could not reach the Red Army soldiers who fought on the front line, they silently did what they could for the Red Army at home and became a solid backing for the soldiers. In modern times, in order to further improve the social awareness of the new rural insurance reform policy and firmly promote the new rural and urban residents' social endowment insurance in the county, Xingguo County Agricultural Insurance Bureau has strengthened the policy and information publicity. Hakka women make full use of Gannan Hakka folk songs to carry out policy publicity work by brochures, bulletin boards, WeChat official account and other publicity methods, and they also pay special attention to the use of Xingguo folk songs for publicity. Although Gannan Hakka folk song seems to be a narrative of the daily life of Hakka women, it actually reflects the valuable qualities of women in different periods. It has very far-reaching value and meaning both for the development of folk songs and for the interpretation of Hakka women's consciousness.

3. Huang Yuying, Research on Jiangxi Hakka Folk Songs [M]. China Federation of Literary and Art Circles Publishing House, 2006.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Dongqing Liu is responsible for experimental design, Xiaolin Zhou analysed data, Yan Xiong wrote the manuscript, and Miao Huang contributed to revising and editing.

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