

Brief Analysis of the Artistic Style of the Song "Yellow River Grievance"

Yingying An*

Philippine Women's University, Manila, Philippines

* Corresponding author: Yingying An (Email: 78417125@qq.com)

Abstract: Purpose: Depth understanding of the meaning of the lyrics, accurately grasp the song's inner feelings, better shape the music image, singing the same theme for the future, the same artistic style of the songs provide a theoretical basis. Content: On the song "Yellow resentment" creative background, music structure, melody and language to deal with a combination of composed and performed an analysis of four aspects. Methods: (1) Providing the theoretical foundation for the papers by searching lots of literature; (2) Understanding the characteristics of age, creation and singing style deeply by the expert interview; (3) Concluding the artistic style by using inductive analysis method. Conclusion: (1) "Yellow River Grievance" to show a Chinese woman whose son is pass away and insulted their. She want to die, but she not close her eyes; (2) "Yellow River Grievance" is a paragraph of four musicians constitute a body of more than music; (3) Thought the four parts are difference feeling, but they all revolve around a "tragedy" is used.

Keywords: Musicals Structure a Nalysis, Background, A Rtistic Style.

1. Introduction

"Yellow River Grievance" is a soprano solo piece in the sixth movement of "Yellow River Cantata". The melody is simple and the emotions are dramatic. It expresses the painful mood of a woman whose husband was away and whose children were brutally killed. After being ravaged and humiliated by the Japanese devils, she was extremely sad and humiliated, and made up her mind to resist with death. Xian Xinghai pointed out: "The Yellow River Grievance" represents the voices of oppressed and humiliated women. The tone is tragic and lingering, and it is a sad song sung with tears. The composer used changes in form and rhythm to strengthen the lingering and sad melody and exaggerate the hero's grief and anger. As a classic art song in China in the 20th century, it has rich cultural connotations and multiple cultural significances. The Yellow River Lament shows perfect musical image conception and artistic expression, and has important dramatic significance and structural function in the masterpiece "Yellow River Cantata". Although the time of its creation is far away from us, the unrestrained, heroic, sonorous and powerful lyrics and strong emotions can still resonate with us today.

This paper will analyze the work "Yellow River Grievance" in four aspects: creative background, form structure, combination of melody and language, and singing process.

2. Background

"Yellow River Grievance" is a soprano solo piece in the sixth movement of "Yellow River Cantata". The melody is simple and the emotions are dramatic. It expresses the painful mood of a woman whose husband was away and whose children were brutally killed. After being ravaged and humiliated by the Japanese devils, she was extremely sad and humiliated, and made up her mind to resist with death. Xian Xinghai pointed out: "The Yellow River Grievance" represents the voices of oppressed and humiliated women. The tone is tragic and lingering, and it is a sad song sung with

tears. The composer used changes in form and rhythm to strengthen the lingering and sad melody and to exaggerate the hero's grief and anger. As a classic Chinese art song in the 20th century, it has rich cultural connotations and multiple cultural significances. The "Yellow River Grievance" displays perfect musical image conception and artistic expression, and has important dramatic significance and structural function in the masterpiece "Yellow River Cantata". Although the time of its creation is far away from us, the unrestrained, heroic, sonorous lyrics and strong emotions can still resonate with us today.

This work exposes the brutality of the Japanese invaders and laments the profound disaster of our nation through the tragic experience and painful accusation of a woman in the occupied area. It is to use blood and tears to arouse people to take up arms and join the anti-Japanese and national salvation movement. Therefore, the emotional tone of the song is miserable and resentful, but it expresses more than just simple sorrow and pain. The song has experienced several strong emotional waves of sorrow, misery, resentment, hatred and anger, and interprets a vivid artistic image. It is very important to accurately grasp the emotional development of the character in singing. As a song with strong tragedy, it has the aesthetic characteristics and cultural significance of Western "tragedy" and Chinese tragedy. Among them, the woman died because of unbearable humiliation, which showed the "relief" of "tragedy" and also gave people a "sublime sense" based on tragedy.

This work embodies the ancient Chinese tragic aesthetic concept of "beauty in sorrow" and "joy through sorrow".

3. Combination of Melody and Language

3.1. Combination of Melody Line and Language Tone

The melody line, also known as the pitch line, is a morphological mark in the horizontal connection of musical notes. It is a hidden line with various expressions. It drives

the development of the melody with its internal power generated by the careful arrangement of pitches and their mutual relationship. From the perspective of the form of the continuous progression of musical notes, the melody line can be divided into horizontal, ascending, descending, circling, wavy and other types.

Melody is a means of musicalizing lyrics. The beauty of melody depends on the poetic language of the lyrics. Only when the language is accurate and the melody is beautiful and smooth can the text and the sound be unified. Whether it is the original oral chanting, or the creation of tunes and scores based on lyrics, or the writing of lyrics according to scores and sounds, China's traditional folk singing art has left us with precious treasures in the process of thousands of years of development. In the melody composition factors such as rhythm, scale, mode, rhythm, form and melody development techniques and layout, it has formed unique national characteristics.

Singing language, also known as "singing poetry" or "sound poetry", is a kind of "poetry that can be sung with music" for singing. This term was put forward as early as in the Song Dynasty. Singing language is not equal to lyrics. Only when the composer creates music based on the lyrics can the lyrics be transformed into melodic language. Every vocal work is composed of melody and singing language. Only when the melody and singing language are well combined can the work be charming and fascinating, that is, the poetic beauty and the beauty of the song are unified in the work.

The first sentence of the work "Yellow River Grievance" is "Wind, don't shout", which is a "downhill" tone in recitation. The composer cleverly gives it a "descending" melody line.

The extremely consistent combination of such melody line and the intonation of language also makes it easier for the speaker to express emotions and for the listener to understand the meaning more directly.

3.2. Combination of Melody Rhythm and Language Rhythm

In vocal works, the melody rhythm and language rhythm are closely related. The rhythm of a song cannot exist independently without the rhythm of the lyrics. If the two are separated, it is difficult for people to understand the meaning of the lyrics; if the two are closely combined, the lyrics and the meaning of the song complement each other. When composing a song, the composer must first pay attention to the rhythm of the lyrics. The rhythm of recitation is more concentrated, more vivid, and more emotional than daily speech, and can often serve as the rhythm basis of vocal works. However, when creating a melody, it is even more important to find the most expressive rhythmic factors and create rhythms boldly. Because musical rhythm is more essential, more vivid, and more influential than language rhythm, a piece of music can never exist independently without rhythmic factors. The relationship between the rhythm of lyrics and the rhythm of melody is a changing and unified one. This is mainly reflected in the fact that the strong tones in the lyrics are generally placed in a strong or relatively strong position in the melody, while the weak tones are generally placed in a weak position except for special effects.

The interjection "a" is pronounced in a light tone and is placed in a weak position in this sentence, while the content word before "a" is in a strong position.

The continuity of some tones and rhythms in "Yellow River

Grievance" and the clear development of music with layers and logic all make this large-scale, emotionally profound art song composed of multiple sections present in a complete and unified manner. The rhythms are staggered in length and are tight or loose, with a large room for flexibility. Under different beat conditions, it can express a variety of complex emotions. The long-duration sound comes first, which can easily give the short-duration sound behind it a sonorous, powerful and neat feeling; the short-duration sound comes first, which can easily give the long-duration sound behind it a feeling of excitement, affirmation and breadth.

The melody rhythm and language rhythm of this song are extremely consistent, and the lyrics are read out along with the rhythm, just like reciting.

Such a rhythm arrangement can enable the singer to express his emotions better and make the content of the lyrics easier to express.

3.3. Analyze the Range, Rhythm, and Emotional Tone of Each Section of the Work

In the introduction, the violin first plays a tense and sad descending theme on the high G string. Then, the oboe repeats it lonely in another key against the background of the French horn.

Section A: The tail is expanded, with a slow tempo and a gradual progression as the main melody. The long breath sings out the voices of the oppressed and insulted. The tone is sad and lingering, and the emotion is deep and moving.

Section B: The rhythm is tightened, with five bars of the same rhythmic pattern, making the music more sad and angry. Then the tempo slows down, giving people a sense of pain, describing the tragic death of a beloved child, the grief and tears. The lowest note "2" appears in the whole piece.

Section C: The intensity is increased, tightly interweaving the strong wind, dark clouds, waves of the Yellow River and the painful mood, further deepening the emotion of grief and indignation, and the excited and undulating tones are accompanied by low-pitched tremolo (sometimes accompanied by three descending tones of female voice).

D: The rhythm of the second section is basically repeated, with a higher pitch and a faster speed, pushing the song to a climax. Its melody is slightly reciting, showing a determination to resist with death, expressing the theme of "paying my blood debt for me", and is the last cry of a tragic life. When the song is about to end, the highest note of the movement "2" appears.

The main key of the whole piece is bA. Before "Don't Weep", there are bA, bD, bC and other modulations, and then there are bE, G and other modulations, and finally end on the C chord, so as to fuse with the next movement "Defend the Yellow River" in C. The change of key is the most expressive range for the solo melody. In addition to the solo part, female accompaniment is added to make the grief more fully expressed. The harp part runs through the orchestra in this movement, playing the basic chords. Other parts make various changes on this basic chord. There are several different expressive functions in the orchestra, and the harmony makes the basic chords more complicated according to different functions. The harmony and counterpoint techniques are used in combination, and the rhythmic characteristics of each part are clear and can complement each other to form a whole.

4. Form Structure Analysis

4.1. Form Structure Analysis

The whole song of “Yellow River Grievance” has twists and turns, ups and downs, and progresses in an orderly manner. The continuity of some tones and rhythms, and the clear development of music with layers and logic, all make this large-scale, emotionally profound art song composed of multiple sections to be presented in a complete and unified manner.

“Yellow River Grievance” uses an angry and sad tone to lament the plight of a woman who has been oppressed and humiliated by the enemy. The whole song is a multi-part form consisting of 4 sections, and the structure of the form is as follows:

Introduction: 8

A: (a4+b4+c5+d3+e3)

This music segment is a five-sentence music segment, presented in the key of b A ~ f, with a free rhythm and a slightly slow speed, narrating a sad and sorrowful

This section is relatively gentle, with the notes mainly in “gradual progressio”. In addition to creating a “sad” atmosphere at the beginning, it also paves the way for Section B, making the emotion of Section B more exciting and abrupt.

Interlude: 2

B: (f4+g4+h4+interlude 2+j3+k3)

This passage is a five-sentence passage in the key of F minor. The dotted rhythm and the continuously descending melody line until the lowest note B flat all contribute to the profound expression of resentment, depression and tragic emotions.

Interlude: 3

C: (l2+m1.5+n2.5)

This passage is a three-sentence passage, with an upward shift in the pitch range, a return to the tonality (back to b A major), and a loud crescendo, it is an extremely passionate cry.

Interlude: 4

D: (o4+interlude 1+p2+q3+r2+s6)

This section is a multi-phrase section, with undulating melody lines, continuous dotted notes, dense rhythm, and the appearance of the highest point of the whole piece, b b 2 , which makes the music more exciting and urgent. This is a sad cry and an angry cry, a strong accusation against the brutal crimes of the invaders.

Afterplay: 4

The whole song is full of twists and turns, ups and downs, and progresses in an orderly manner. The continuity of some tones and rhythms, and the clear development of the music in layers and logic, all make this large-scale, emotionally profound art song composed of multiple sections to be presented in a complete and unified manner.

4.2. Analysis of the Subject Material of Each Paragraph

“The Yellow River Grievance” is a multi-part song with mixed beats and a total of four sections , which are continuous and integrated. The main motive of the music is steady, simple, repeated and deformed , with changes in tonality and rhythm , and repeated chanting , sometimes sobbing , sometimes shouting .

The tempo of the A section is slow, the rhythm is tight at the beginning and then loose, the melody is mainly progressive, and the note value is long. The descending melody line in A brings everyone into a sad atmosphere at the

beginning of the song. The repetition of the same notes in A and B adds a sense of dullness. The woman with dull eyes and no desire for life is just like in front of us, very real.

The rhythm of the B section is slightly tighter, with new material added. The first five bars are an extension of the motive of the C5 head. The dotted rhythm makes people feel suddenly tight, and the same tight rhythm in the first five bars makes this part more sad and tense. I can't help but sympathize with her experience and feel angry for her.

The rhythm of the C section is tight at the beginning and loose at the end, and the melody is mainly based on leaps. l and m have the same beginning, but develop their own endings. o echoes d in A.

The D section repeats the rhythmic pattern of the second section, with the pitch raised, pushing the whole piece to a climax. The q echoes the l in C, and the syncopated rhythmic pattern is newly added to the s and t. The compact syncopated rhythm emphasizes the tone.

4.3. Harmonic Language Analysis of Piano Accompaniment

Piano accompaniment, as an academic term, should be called piano art guidance, which means that the art of piano accompaniment should not be subordinate to solo singing or solo performance, but should be understood as a macro-grasp and overall drive of the essence of art at a higher level. As an important part of the overall music structure, piano accompaniment plays an irreplaceable role in music practice with its unique artistic form and means of expression. But in the final analysis, piano accompaniment still serves vocal singing. Its harmony, pattern, speed, emotion, etc. should all echo the singer's emotions, so that it can play a “guiding” role .

The introduction is mostly broken chords, like a rushing river, bringing people to the bank of the Yellow River at the beginning. The mood of the whole work comes out before the singer opens his mouth.

The accompaniment of paragraph A is the same tone chord, which changes every measure, sonorous and powerful, and a little heavy. The repetition of the same tone feels a bit dull, but it also foreshadows the subsequent explosion.

The accompaniment of paragraph B becomes a dotted melody, which is very tense and enhances the tension of this part.

The accompaniment of the C section is tremolo in the left hand, and the right hand is still a dotted melody with increased intensity.

The first half of the accompaniment of the D section is composed of chords with the same note, followed by a dotted melody, which fully expresses the sadness and indignation, bringing the whole piece to a climax .

5. Singing Processing

The emotional development of this female solo song is from suppressing extreme grief to exploding with unbearable resentment from the depths of one's heart . The key to the layout of the whole song is to retain the “stamina”, to “hold back” where it should be held back, and to “release” where it should be released.

The first few sentences require strong breath control and the concept of “holding back”. Singing very softly creates a depressing “sad” atmosphere and conveys the protagonist's deep inner pain of “wanting to cry but having no tears”. It is a good start and grabs the audience's heart from the very

beginning. The first three sentences are difficult to sing because the melody at the beginning is in the middle range of the soprano voice . It needs to be sung softly and with a long breath . If the basic skills are not solid , the voice will be weak, shaky and tight , which will destroy the mood . The first three sentences “Wind , don't shout ; Cloud , don't dodge ; Yellow River , don't sob” need to be sung in one breath , which increases the difficulty. The expression of the depressing atmosphere will also create an aesthetic effect of “making a good start” , as if the singer is speaking softly and the audience will listen quietly. It is just like the scene described in Chinese classical literature: "The whole audience is silent as if no one is there. The righteous are inspired and the sad are heartbroken." Before singing this piece , singers can imagine themselves as the miserable woman, and feel, comprehend, and experience it in the first person . That feeling is like the mood of the people of the whole country, especially the people of Sichuan, after the May 12 Incident. The extreme grief cannot be smoothed out or reduced by speaking. It has penetrated into the bones and flesh, and I don't know how to alleviate it. People have become a little dull, as if they have lost their souls . The person in the song is standing on the bank of the Yellow River in tattered clothes, disheveled hair, and in a trance. As the prelude introduces the sad and desolate introduction , her lips seem to move but not move , and she sings a coherent and weak voice with an expressionless face : “Wind, don't shout, cloud, don't dodge ! “ It sounds like a prayer to the sky , or like talking to herself, like the stagnation after a strong stimulation , the “calmness”of wanting to cry but not being able to , and the image of a “living dead”. When singing , the triple beat is almost inaudible , with a basic sense of one beat per measure . The slow articulation and soft pronunciation , with trembling breath and weak voice, highlighting the characteristics of “distant”, “weak”, “straight”and “continuous” , express the abnormal calmness of the protagonist who is heartbroken . The key word “yan” in the next sentence should change the previous articulation , from “wu” directly down to the medial vowel “ i ”of “yan” , and extend it , while adding a little strength and singing “yan” straightly with an angular angle , as if the expression suddenly wakes up and returns to the ruthless reality. The key word “ku” in the next sentence should be pronounced with a tight articulation and slow release , with the unique vibrato and color of the crying voice , and with a strong force.

Section B mainly expresses the woman's grief and hatred. At this time, she is a bit like “Xianglin Sao” in Lu Xun's works, as if she is the most unlucky person in the world, and misfortune befalls her again and again. In order to highlight the word “difficult” , the technique of extending the initial “ n ” should be used when singing ; “heartless” should be pronounced word by word , and burst out with gnashing teeth , as if wanting to eat the enemy's flesh and drink the enemy's blood. “Liver” should be stopped and then “frozen” with a breath , and then “baby” should be sung with a slower, smaller and more trembling sound, like weeping, and a breath that seems to be neither broken nor interrupted. “Casual” should be pronounced slowly with a tight bite , extending the vowel “ c ” , and trembling the final “ an ” with more breath and less sound . The key word “enemy” in the next sentence should be “shouted” with force and hatred. The word “steal” should be shouted out with a weak , slightly increasing and ambiguous voice after the crazy hatred , expressing the determination to fight to the death without shame .

The music of section C suddenly turns into a violent storm , and the pace is slightly faster . The water of the Yellow River is no longer as calm as before. Even the Yellow River is angry and starts to roar, as if it wants to swallow all the ugliness and evil. The "water of the Yellow River" turns to gradually slow and gradually strong, and the last word "swallow" is extended with the initial “ i ”. The next sentence should emphasize the three-beat feeling , and the word “clear” is cried out slowly and suddenly. "Husband ... reunited again" should be sung with a weak and straight voice , and the initial “ z” and the extended complex vowel “ ai “ should be trembling and sounded in a discontinuous and continuous manner. The last sentence is the protagonist's cry to the sky.

Section D is the climax of the whole song . The heroine calls on her relatives with passionate emotions to avenge her . Her tears and blood merge into the raging waves of the Yellow River. When singing “this pen”, the triplet pronunciation should be in a high position to pave the way for the highest note below. "Blood debt" is the total outburst of emotion . The word "debt" reaches the highest note of the whole song, the second group of small notes “ 2 ” . It should be sung clearly and powerfully , with breath and voice connected from top to bottom , and the resonance of the head cavity should reach full vibration. The last word “return” should be sung with medium-strong force first , then gradually increase and extend to the strongest point before ending hard.

The emotions of the whole piece are advanced layer by layer , and the musical development is distinct . When singing, attention should be paid to the delicate handling of voice and emotions . Whether it is sadness, resentment, grief, or anger , the volume and timbre should be used reasonably. In addition , the interlude of the song is an important part of expressing the thoughts and feelings of the work . It should be carefully tasted so that it can be integrated with the passionate singing .

Although this vocal work has been sung by many people , to truly understand this work and sing it well , one needs to carefully analyze it , get into the mood , go deep into it , and expand outward . One cannot judge the song by itself. One must grasp the vocal work as a whole , starting from the background of the times, lyrics, form structure, style characteristics, and content requirements , and accurately grasp the content and connotation of the vocal work .

6. Conclusion

Through the analysis of this work, we have a deeper understanding of the vivid embodiment of China's profound culture in musical works. China's 5,000-year cultural history is like a giant dragon, subtly influencing the various treasures left to us by our predecessors. In terms of vocal works, there is the joy at first and then the sadness in “Yellow Water Ballad”, the grandeur of “Defending the Yellow River”, and the pain of “Yellow River Lament”. In “Yellow River Grievance”, with its varied rhythms, crying melody, and multi-part musical structure, it is as if you are in it, as if you have become the middle-aged woman who lost her son and suffered humiliation, deeply trapped in it, unable to extricate yourself for a long time. Only by understanding its background can we more deeply understand how sad and desolate it is. The tragic aesthetic concept of ancient China is deeply rooted in the work "Yellow River Lament". It is beautifully sad, thoroughly sad, solemnly sad, and irresistibly sad.

This paper analyzes the song “Yellow River Grievance” in four aspects: the background of creation, the form structure,

the combination of melody and language, and the singing process, and draws the following conclusions:

1) The story in “Yellow River Grievance” is about a Chinese woman who lost her son and suffered humiliation, had no desire to live, and died with regrets;

2) “Yellow River Grievance” is a multi-part musical form consisting of four sections;

3) Although the emotional tones of the four sections of “Yellow River Grievance” are different, they all revolve around the word “sorrow”.

This article summarizes the era characteristics, creative characteristics and singing style characteristics of this song, and comprehensively grasps its artistic style; deeply understands the connotation of the lyrics, accurately grasps the inner emotions of the song, and strives to better shape the musical image; hopes to provide a theoretical basis for singing songs with the same theme and the same artistic style in the future.

Since the information I collected is limited, there are some imperfections and I apologize for that.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Lecturer Han Jinning, who not only provided me with great help in this thesis, but also the form analysis in the thesis mostly came from her previous personal teaching. I would like to thank my professional teacher, Associate Professor Wang Yanping, for many of the singing techniques in the thesis were learned from his tireless explanations over the past four years.

I would like to thank Professor Liu Hongyu for his repeated corrections and revisions on the format and structure of my paper.

Thank you again to all the teachers. I am not your best student, but you will always be my most respected teachers!

References

- [1] Guang Weiran , Xian Xinghai . Yellow River Cantata [M]. Beijing : People's Music Publishing House , 1978, 152-160.
- [2] Fang Zhinuo . Song Analysis and Writing [M]. Chongqing : Southwest Normal University Press , 2007, 26-29.
- [3] Yang Ligang. Phonetics[M]. Beijing: China Radio and Television Publishing House, 1999, 192-193.
- [4] Wu Junda. On the relationship between melody rhythm and language rhythm[J]. Journal of Nanjing University of the Arts. 1979, (2): 12-15.
- [5] Gu Xiaohui . The role of piano accompaniment in vocal singing and the quality of the accompanist [J]. Journal of Lishui University, 2007, (3): 2-3.
- [6] Xu Ximao. Song Analysis and Writing[M]. Jiangxi: Jiangxi University Press, 2006, 12-14.
- [7] Chen Guoquan. Song Writing Tutorial[M]. Beijing: People's Music Publishing House, 1999, 65-66.
- [8] Li Ling. Talking about the Art of Singing[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, 1980, 188-189.
- [9] Zou Changhai. Psychology of Vocal Art [M] . Beijing: People's Music Publishing House, 2000, 23-31.
- [10] Shen Xiang. Shen Xiang's Vocal Music Teaching Art [M] . Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing House, 1998, 56-70.
- [11] Zhao Meibo. The Art of Singing [M] . Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing House, 2001, 101-105.
- [12] Lu Guishan. Contemporary Chinese Literary and Artistic Trends[M]. Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2002, 163-165.
- [13] Yang Ligang. Vocal Music Teaching Methods[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing House, 1997, 25-28.
- [14] Shi Weizheng. Fundamentals of Vocal Music[M]. Beijing: People's Music Publishing House, 2002, 183-188.
- [15] Zhou Hengfang . On the style and artistic characteristics of Chinese singing [J]. Journal of Hainan University (Social Science Edition), 1998, (3): 48-53.
- [16] Li Xiuqin. My opinion on the singing of the song "Yellow River Lament" [J]. Journal of Huanggang Normal University, 2006, (5): 1-4.
- [17] [17] Sataloff RT. Care of the Professional Voice . Ann Arbor: MENC Conference,1984,1-4.