

Trends in the Communication of Chinese and Japanese Pop Music

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Abstract: With the growth of demand for cultural exchange between China and Japan since the normalization of diplomatic relations, two-way interactive communication in the field of Chinese and Japanese popular music has passed nearly fifty years. As the background of the times has changed, the focus of the two-way dissemination trend has also changed. In general, it seems that Japanese pop music has had a greater impact on China than Chinese musical elements have contributed to Japan, due to the different backgrounds and cultural policies of the two countries' music industries. To promote China's pop music outward, we should learn from the advanced experience of Japanese pop music dissemination, improve the domestic pop music development environment, broaden the music promotion and dissemination channels, and realize mature two-way dissemination.

Keywords: Pop Music; Cultural Industry; International Exchange.

1. Introduction

It was not until the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan in the 1970s that cultural exchanges resumed, and the musical arts developed by the two countries in their own ways could begin to spread and learn from each other again. Under the impetus of reform and opening up, Japanese modern music, which was profoundly influenced by Western pop music, began to be introduced to China and was sought after and welcomed by the Chinese people.

Today, the exchange of Chinese and Japanese pop music has been going on for more than 40 years. Guo Qingguang systematically elaborates the influencing factors of two-way cultural communication, they include the political field represented by international relations, the economic field represented by international trade, and the cultural communication field represented by cultural products. [1]

From the perspective of time, the factors influencing the two-way communication between China and Japan have changed with the changes of history, culture and social background, and the study of this factor is conducive to the establishment of a good mechanism for the dissemination of pop music in China; from the perspective of both sides of the communication, the focus of China and Japan in the two-way communication process also shows a skewed situation, and the study of the formation of such an unbalanced pattern is conducive to China's overall The study of this imbalance will help China to reflect on the real reasons for its weak cultural influence.

Japanese pop music is referred to as J-POP, a name coined by the radio station J-WAVE in 1988 and used to stand for "new music," and has since come to be widely known in Japan as modern music with Western influences, including pop, R&B, rock, dance, hip-hop, and soul. Zhang Yi also clearly defines J-POP as a genre of music based on Western rock and introduced to Japan to complete its localization, and forms a modern and traditional opposition to Japanese performance music. [2]

2. 1980s: The Early Stage of the Spread of Chinese and Japanese Pop Music

2.1. The Budding Stage of Japanese Pop Music

Japanese pop music originated in the Showa period, initially as a rock boom in the 1950s. The movement reached its peak in 1959, when some of its tracks were performed by Japanese rock bands in movies. Some of the performers began to fuse traditional Japanese music with rock music, such as the late Japanese musician Ku Sakamoto who achieved great success in 1961 with his song "Walk with your head held high" as a representative of budding Japanese pop music, the first Japanese song to reach number one on the charts in both the United States and Japan, and to achieve a "golden record" with sales of one million copies. "It was the first Japanese song to reach No. 1 on the charts in both the United States and Japan, and it sold one million copies and was selected by the BBC as one of the "Top 20 Songs that Changed the World in the 20th Century". The initial development and success of Japanese pop music deepened Japanese people's understanding of Western pop culture and increased their sense of cultural identity to a great extent.

2.2. The Beginning of the Spread of Popular Music in China and Japan

The visit of then Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka to China in 1972 marked the beginning of the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan. With the increasingly close exchanges between China and Japan, the two countries formed a new mindset of diplomacy under the new era and reached a common view on the historical legacy issues and political positions under the Cold War. Political mutual trust extended from the two governments to the people, and in the early 1980s, China gradually became one of the most emotionally acceptable countries to the Japanese people.

Taking the influence of post-war Japanese political trends on the relationship between China and Japan as the main theme, Liu Jianguo systematically explains the impact of the relationship between the two countries influenced by

political trends on cultural exchange and music dissemination.[3] In 1980, before the opening up of China, Japanese musician Masashi Sada held a solo concert at the Beijing Exhibition Hall, the first Japanese artist to perform in China, and although most of his music was written in Japanese, it also received a great response from the Chinese public. In 1980, Masashi Sada sang the theme song of the documentary "The Yangtze River", which was produced in cooperation with CCTV, and became well known again. As the originator of the spread of pop music between China and Japan, Masashi Sada played an extremely important role in pioneering the official cultural exchange between the two countries.

In the early 1980s, the opportunity of reestablishing diplomatic relations between the two countries and the unprecedented degree of political mutual trust laid a solid foundation for the spread of culture, and the political guarantee became the greatest impetus. The main form of dissemination was the singing of original Japanese songs.

With the unprecedented good relations between China and Japan, the economic exchanges between the two countries are also in full swing. The Japanese government, enterprises and private institutions came to China to sign trade agreements, which quickly created a full range of economic exchanges in a short period of time, and the influx of high-tech household appliances into Chinese homes quickly improved the quality of life and greatly satisfied spiritual needs. The convenience of economic trade brought to the people was more practical than political dialogue in promoting a sense of technological and cultural identity between the two countries.

2.3. The Development of Popular Music Diffusion in China and Japan

In the mid to late 1980s, due to the great convenience that economic trade brought to the lives of ordinary people in mainland China, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, the Chinese people began to take a great interest in Japanese technology and culture, and to learn more and more from Japanese music. In mainland China, Japan Pacific Video Company planned and recorded a cover album of "Japanese Songs" for the famous vocalist Li Gu Yi, which contained many tracks such as "Age of Youth" from the song "Age of Youth" by Koichi Morita and "Winter Color" from the song "Winter No Color" by Momoe Yamaguchi after translating and filling in the lyrics, which received a great response in China, and thus the musical talent of Momoe Yamaguchi also entered the career of the people in mainland China.

In Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, there is a richer and more active cover of Japanese pop music. The most mature one is Teresa Teng, the queen of the generation who went to Japan from the 1970s, who covered a lot of her own Japanese works with Chinese lyrics, and released eight cover albums in her musical career called the "Island Love Songs" series. The release of Teresa Teng's bilingual singles reached its peak in the mid to late 1980s, with the Chinese tracks "Repayment", "Lover" and "I Only Care About You" covering "Tsunami", "Lover" and "Body on the Flow of Time", which were released from 1984 to 1986 and had won three consecutive Japanese Cable TV Awards, respectively. To this day, the three tracks are household names and are widely circulated. The late Hong Kong singer Anita Mui, another representative singer of Japanese pop music who wrote lyrics and covered songs, was at the time of her debut in the 1980s and chose to

cover the classics of Japanese pop singers in the 1970s and 1980s when her own style was not fully defined, including covers of "Manjushawa" by Momoi Yamaguchi, "Song of the Sunset" by Makihiko Kondo, "Undecorated Tears" by Maria Takeuchi and "No One Wants to Love Me" by Akane Nakamori, "May We Die Drunk Together Tonight" by Kiu Sakamoto and many other tracks, which not only received unanimous approval from the music industry in Hong Kong and Taiwan, but also laid the foundation for shaping his own creative style.

The further development of international relations between China and Japan in the mid and late eighties led to an unprecedented boom in foreign trade between the two countries, and thus economic development replaced political promotion as the first major force in accelerating the spread of culture. The increasing demand for Japanese culture among the people of mainland China, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, coupled with the rapid development and promotion of Japanese pop music, the scale and form of the spread of Chinese and Japanese pop music became increasingly sophisticated. In addition to the two singers mentioned above, famous Chinese singers such as Liu Wenzheng and Alan Tam had the experience of borrowing a lot of Japanese music elements in their music creation at this time, and translated lyrics and original lyrics gradually became the main form of cover songs. Compared with mainland China, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan are more mature and active in borrowing Japanese pop music, and the extent of their own pop music development is also more obvious.

3. The 1990s: The spread of Chinese and Japanese Pop Music Matured

3.1. Music Communicator Influence Enhancement

Influenced by Teresa Teng, Anita Mui and other singers covering Japanese classics, many Hong Kong and Taiwan singers have joined the ranks of lyricists and cover singers, including many famous superstars across Asia: Jacky Cheung's "Love You More Every Day" and "Give Me My Darling" are lyric covers of Japanese national singer Yoshitomo Kuwata's "True Summer's Fruit" and "Itooshi no Eri"; Andy Lau's "Laughing and Crying" and "One Wooden Bridge" are lyric covers of The band Chuck and the Birds' famous song "Final Chapter ~ Theme of Reminiscence" and singer Takako Okamura's "Hagure Sona Angel"; Alan Tam's famous song "Heart and Blood" was also covered by the band DEEN's hit song "Wings Widespread". This brought the spread of Chinese and Japanese pop music to a higher level platform, and the Japanese tunes with lyrics and covers entered every household and became well known. Today, the classics are still loved by the public, but the process of creating the lyrics and covers from the original Japanese songs is not well known.

3.2. Prosperity in Inspirational Songs

In the 1990s, Japan experienced an unprecedented bubble economy, and the economic depression largely defeated the mental state of the entire Japanese population, leading to an unprecedented increase in depression and suicide rates; the Great Hanshin Earthquake in 1995 and the Tokyo subway sarin gas incident were natural and man-made disasters that made the public even more worried. The once-depressed

national spirit was in desperate need of energetic music, and the creation of inspirational songs became the mainstream of society since the early 1990s.

With a strong pop and rock flavor, light and strong rhythm, and energetic and powerful lyrics, inspirational songs were loved by men, women, and children alike. Japanese pop music was at its peak: many inspirational pop-rock bands emerged, and national bands such as B'z, ZARD, DREAMS COME TRUE, and others made great achievements during this period; the recording industry was booming and the competition in the music industry was at a feverish stage. The record industry was booming like never before, and the competition in the music industry was at a feverish stage, promoting their music works through television and other entertainment media, while gaining a strong response from the public, resulting in the number of million singles released by Japanese artists in the late 1990s (1995-1999) reaching a record of 95. From the perspective of the cultural impact of music on society, Abe. K. illustrates how melodies, lyrics, and cultural symbols in music played an inspiring role in Japanese society in the 1990s under the trauma of the collapse of the bubble economy and the Hanshin Earthquake. [4] The prosperity of Japan's own inspirational music has also prompted Chinese singers to cover the song with lyrics. The famous inspirational song "Red Sun" is a cover of the song "Sorega Big" released in 1993, and "Decision with Tears" is a cover of the famous song "TOMORROW" by Mayu Okamoto in 1995. The covers of inspirational songs have also brought great energy to Chinese listeners, and almost every one of them has become a classic in the history of Chinese pop music.

3.3. Drama and Anime as New Vehicles

With the further development of international relations between China and Japan, the field of exchange has been broadened since the mid-1980s to include cultural aspects in addition to politics and economics. Japanese dramas with a wide range of novel themes were gradually introduced to China and dubbed in Chinese by professional dubbers, such as the well-known "Blood Doubt", "The Dancer of Izu" and "Tokyo Love Story", which are typical representatives of Japanese dramas introduced to China, and the plots and characters in which are rich in Japanese culture have profoundly influenced the Chinese people. The unique Japanese anime works also developed rapidly at this time and were officially introduced to China for dubbing and distribution in Chinese. The classic anime works that were active in Japan in the 1990s, such as "Saint Seiya", "Dunking Master" and "Dragon Ball", were also widely loved by Chinese audiences in the same period. From the perspective of cultural transmission, Chao Chunlian systematically explains the process of spreading Japanese music to China through television dramas and anime, highlighting the role embodied by cultural media in the process of spreading music. [5]

As the above Japanese dramas and anime came into China, their theme songs and end credits songs also gradually became familiar to people. In the case of Chinese dubbing of Japanese dramas, the songs are not usually dubbed in Chinese, thus causing most listeners to not understand the general meaning of the lyrics. Even so, the theme song is still sung as the face of the drama, as it is repeated over and over again and as the audience enjoys the plot. The theme song of "Tokyo Love Story", sung by Kazumasa Oda, became an unforgettable classic for fans of Japanese dramas and started

the TIE-UP era. The theme song of the classic anime Doraemon has not only been covered by Chinese singer Kelly Chen and music group Soda Green, but has also become a familiar childhood song for most Chinese people. With Japanese dramas and anime as carriers, Japanese pop music spread to the majority of young people in the 1990s, truly pushing the reach and cultural identity of music to its peak.

Lopes, P. D. systematically analyzes the innovation process and development concept of the music industry in the second half of the last century from the perspective of the world's popular music industry, and the impact of this innovation in the field of cultural industry has also spread to Japan. [6] In the 1990s, the spread of Japanese and Chinese pop music continued the traditional lyric-covering format of the 1980s, and the influence of the distributors grew; the style of the content was positive and sunny, catering to the flourishing Chinese society; the spread of Japanese dramas and anime opened up new channels for the spread of pop music, and became the most important part of cultural exchange. The scope and depth of Japanese pop music in China has reached an all-time high.

4. New Century: Bi-directionalization of Chinese and Japanese Pop Music Communication

4.1. Decentralization of the Dissemination of Japanese Pop Music in China

With the growing maturity of Sino-Japanese cultural exchanges and the development of China's own pop music culture, the phenomenon of lyric covers of Japanese songs in the 1980s and 1990s gradually decreased, and the overall repertoire showed a decreasing trend. In addition, the trend of decentralization in the process of lyric covers has changed from the previous way of covering a large number of Japanese songs by the same singer to the form of a small number of Chinese singers who, on the basis of their own creative style, selected one or two songs that fit their style and covered them with lyric covers. Based on the history of the development of Japanese music, Kyohei Miyairi lists representative Japanese pop musicians and systematically explains the culturally significant parts of their works, and analyzes the mechanism by which Japanese music has been disseminated internationally through the medium of cultural products.[7] The song "Illusion into the wind" written by the famous Japanese musician Jean Hisaishi; Liu Ruying's "Love you very much" and "Later" are covers of the famous "Long time" and "Future he" respectively; the famous group F4's "Meteor shower" covers of Japanese singer Ken Hirai's hit "Gaining through losing" and other examples all reflect the right combination of personal style and cover content. The combination of personal style and cover content. The decentralization of lyricist covers reflects the breadth and relevance of the spread of Japanese pop music in China, and marks the growing maturity of Chinese pop music.

4.2. Bi-directionalization of the Spread of Pop Music in China and Japan

As the cultural exchange between the two countries deepened, Japan began to absorb Chinese musical elements while spreading its own pop music to China. In the new century, Japanese pop music crossed over from the era of pop rock to the era of innovative styles, so the expression of pop

music at this time was colorful, and the creative styles of different artists were very different. In the 1980s, Nakamori Akane, an idol superstar, released a nostalgic song in the new century called "Yoyo" using the guzheng, and the intro of "Two People Jing "Tenka Dengeki Killing" Yori" using the erhu as an accompaniment; the song "Kazaguruma" by Chinese-American singer Ichiai Myrtle is composed in the traditional Chinese five-tone style and uses the sheng and flute as the background music. In the field of pure music, the master musician Sojiro performed his masterpiece "Hometown No Original Landscape" in the traditional pentatonic style. In these works, elements of traditional Chinese music are used to enhance creativity and aesthetic resonance in the choice of accompaniment and composition.

In addition to the traditional Chinese musical elements that have been used in Japanese pop music, the biggest hits in Chinese pop music in recent years have also been covered by original Japanese singers. Chinese male singer Guangliang's masterpiece "Fairy Tale" and Eason Chan's masterpiece "Ten Years" have also been covered by Japanese artist Nakataka. In addition to the above-mentioned songs, Chinese pop music classics have also been covered by Japanese original artists in recent years, but most of these artists are unknown and most of them have uploaded and shared their works on the Internet, and few of them have been released as a separate record, so most of them are not well known to the Japanese public.

5. Conclusion

Looking at the process of the spread of pop music between China and Japan over the past 30 years, Japanese pop music is mostly spread in the form of original songs, covered by Chinese pop music pioneers or directly introduced into the Japanese version for broadcast in the media, and is sought after by the Chinese public; while Chinese music is mostly in the form of accompanying instruments and scores for Japanese artists to draw on in their own creative process, and in pop music Chinese music, however, is mostly composed by Japanese artists in the form of backing instruments and scores, and only a few of them are covered by Japanese singers, and the sales records and domestic popularity are relatively dismal. Thus, Chinese pop music has been developed to a certain extent by the content disseminated from the Japanese side; Japanese pop music is less influenced by Chinese musical elements and is less popular. There is a serious imbalance in the two-way dissemination of Chinese and Japanese pop music, and how to gradually improve the skewed state of it has become an important key to promote Chinese music out of China.

According to the changes in the factors influencing the spread of Japanese pop music to China over the past thirty years, Japanese pop music has its own main driving force in each stage of its spread: political diplomacy in the early 1980s, economic promotion in the middle and late 1990s, cultural dissemination in the 1990s, and object demand in the 2000s have all become the main driving force for the cultural spread

of the era. The smooth and rapid spread of Japanese pop music to China and the penetration of its culture into the public is apparently due to the strong impetus of the above-mentioned major factors, but the root of the problem lies in the great difference in the degree of economic and social development between China and Japan, which makes Japan an "information-rich country" and China a relatively "information-poor country". "On the other hand, Japan, with its strong economic and technological power, controls the production and dissemination of such information, resulting in an unequal structure of one-way flow of information, thus enabling the influx of Japanese music culture into China since the 1980s. The gap between economic level and social development became the fundamental reason why Chinese popular music could not spread smoothly to Japan, and thus could not form the main impetus for political, economic, and cultural dissemination.

The imbalance of the two-way dissemination trend of Chinese and Japanese pop music lies in the different levels of economic and social development of the two countries in the same era, followed by the difference in the main driving force of promoting cultural dissemination, and the difference in the music creation environment of the two countries, thus causing the unevenness of their own cultural development and finally forming a skewed two-way dissemination pattern. In order to promote Chinese pop music out of China and to face Japan and other countries, we should grasp all the opportunities of cultural dissemination based on the development of our own economic strength, learn from the advanced experience of Japanese pop music industry development, and improve our own music creation environment, so as to enhance the two-way nature and vitality of pop music dissemination between the two countries and to fill in the important key part of cultural dissemination.

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