

Article

Research on the Current Situation and Inheritance Issues of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera

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Received: 13 November 2025 / Accepted: 6 December 2025 / Published: 31 December 2025

Abstract: Yangxian Lantern Shadow Puppetry is a traditional Chinese opera performance art that integrates various forms such as opera music, painting, sculpture, and stage performance. Due to its unique geographical location and rich historical and cultural resources, combined with the local dialects and various opera singing styles and musical structures, the Yangxian Lantern Shadow Puppetry Opera has formed a unique style. From its early formation to its current endangerment, Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera has followed the rule that all things in nature cannot escape development. Therefore, for the endangerment of this local opera, inheritance, development, and protection are particularly important. This is not only the action and thinking that contemporary people need to take but also the responsibility and obligation that contemporary people cannot shirk. Therefore, this article summarizes the characteristics of the creation of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera in the new era by analyzing the newly composed play "Xiecun Bridge," providing a basis and direction for the subsequent development of Yangxian Shadow Opera music. At the same time, in response to policies and various factors, as well as our own reasons, we ultimately hope to provide our own suggestions for the protection, inheritance, and development of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, Shaanxi local opera music, and intangible cultural heritage through the study of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry.

Keywords: Lantern Shadow Opera; Shadow Puppetry; Yangxian; Inheritance

Hanzhong is located near the north-south boundary of China, known as the "birthplace of the Han family", "Tianhan", "hometown of the Han people", etc. It is bordered by the foothills of the Qinling Mountains to the north, the Sichuan region of Bashan to the south, Ankang City to the east, and Longnan, Gansu to the west. Due to the influence of subtropical monsoon climate, there are three terrain forms within the territory: plains, mountains, and hills. At the same time, due to its unique geographical location and other factors, it has been an important factor in connecting the economic, trade, political, cultural, and military transportation of the northern and southern regions of China since ancient times, which has also created the diversity and complexity of folk culture and art in Hanzhong.

Yangxian is located in the eastern part of Hanzhong, formerly known as "Yangzhou", with a long history and culture. It is also known as the fortress of the "Dangluo Ancient Road" and is one of the important passages that crossed the Qinling Mountains from north to south in ancient times. The Han River flows through the county from west to east. According to the "Annals of Yangxian County", as early as the new era, more than 7000 years ago, humans had been living here. During the reign of Emperor Wu of Western Jin, Yangzhou was established here and governed under its jurisdiction. During the Tang and Song dynasties, Yangzhou was a

mountainous and prosperous county known for its dry wine and abundant resources. In the third year of the Hongwu reign of the Ming Dynasty, it was renamed as "Yangxian" and has been in use ever since. According to the Qing edition of the "Yangxian Annals," a large number of literati and scholars have stayed here throughout history, and Cai Lun of the Eastern Han Dynasty was also buried here (Yangxian Local Chronicles Compilation Committee, 1898/2020).

There are various types of Chinese opera, each with its own unique singing style and charm. According to incomplete statistics, there are over 360 types of traditional Chinese operas in various parts of China. According to the "Integrated Collection of Chinese Opera Music - Shaanxi Volume", there are 21 widely spread opera genres scattered in various regions of Shaanxi Province. However, in the process of spreading many vocal opera genres, folk music, and folk tunes have also been added, and a new vocal system has been developed.

1. Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera

1.1 Formation of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera

In the Book of Han, it is recorded that Emperor Wu of Han, out of longing for his beloved concubine Lady Li, had his minister Li Shaoweng cut a cotton and silk image of Lady Li, painted it with colors, and installed wooden poles on his hands and feet. At night, a square curtain is hung, and candles are lit, respectfully inviting Emperor Wu to watch. Emperor Wu was delighted by the dragon's appearance and couldn't put it down (Ban, 1962). Therefore, it is considered to be the earliest record of shadow puppetry. The period when shadow puppetry was truly developed was during the prosperous Song Dynasty; During the Ming and Qing dynasties, it was developed to a new height (Wang, 2012).

The art of shadow puppetry originated in Shaanxi (Gu, 1983), and during the development of various dynasties, Shaanxi, as an indispensable region, had a wide range of influence and dissemination. As a necessary path for the two ancient "Land of Abundance" (recorded in the "Strategies of the Warring States: Qin Strategy": the "Land of Abundance" describes the "Guanzhong Plain"; Zhuge Liang's "Longzhong Dui" describes the land of Bashu as the "Land of Abundance"), Yangxian naturally absorbed many different cultural influences.

According to the "Integrated Collection of Chinese Opera Music - Shaanxi Volume - Yangxian Dengying Opera Volume", the development and dissemination of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry could not have been separated from the population migration in the 30th year of Kangxi's reign in the early Qing Dynasty; In terms of language characteristics, Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry is closer to the dialect of the Guanzhong region in Shaanxi Province, which is obviously related to the migration to this area in the early Qing Dynasty due to various factors such as war (Feng, 1989).

The late veteran performer of Dengying Opera shadow puppetry in Baishi Township, Yang County, He Junxian, once said in an interview that the Liu family was the first to sing shadow puppetry in Yang County because a theater troupe in the Guanzhong region lost a box in Baishi Township. This statement is recognized by local shadow puppetry artists. According to the historical facts stated by the late veteran artist Wang Weixin (1903-1986), the five generations of his family sang Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, and his great-grandfather Wang Wenju was the first to learn the art from an artist named "Lanpan". According to existing historical records, it is impossible to prove the specific formation time.

Therefore, Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry was introduced from the Guanzhong area of Shaanxi Province approximately 200 years ago during the Qianlong and Jiaqing periods of the Qing Dynasty.

During the reign of Emperor Jiaqing in the Qing Dynasty, Li Fanggui, who was then the teacher of Yangxian County, Shaanxi Province (the teacher was a professor of the county school, equivalent to today's teacher), brought the bowl and bowl style shadow puppetry drama from

the Guanzhong region of Shaanxi Province to Yangxian County. The artists who performed the Dengying Opera shadow puppetry at that time underwent processing and evolution, injecting local unique dialects, and injecting fresh blood into the Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry. To this day, plays such as "Nine Lotus Lantern" (Figure 1), "Flame Horse", and "Purple Cloud Palace" are still preserved.

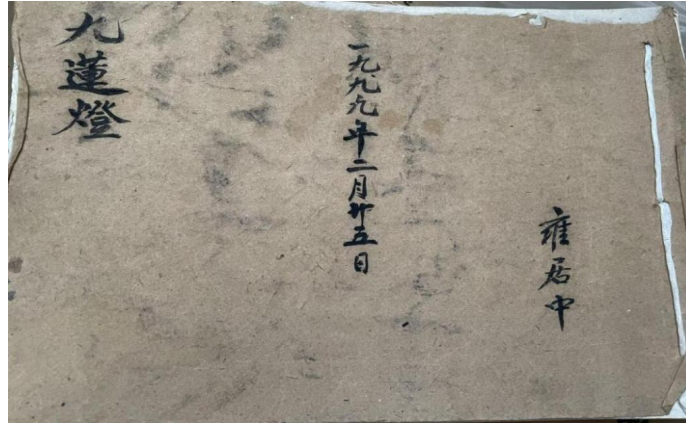


Figure 1. Manuscript of "Nine Lotus Lanterns" by Yong Juzhong

The musical form of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry has a certain blood relationship with Shaanxi Guanzhong Daoqing, Huxian Wanwan Opera, Qianxian Xianban Opera, and so on (Xianyang Folk Literature and Art Association, 2014). However, in the long-term learning and singing process of artists, due to its special geographical location, many opera singing styles and Hanzhong folk music were added to it. According to the characteristics of the local language and the evolution of accompanying instruments, the performance forms of shadow puppetry were gradually enriched and inherited, which led to different special changes in the shadow puppetry introduced to Yangxian, thus forming a unique Yangxian lantern shadow puppetry (Feng, 2009).

Dengying Opera is a unique vocal system in Yangxian shadow puppetry. The earliest use of kerosene lamps was mainly due to their light mapping characteristics at night, where projection images were projected onto specially made transparent screens for viewing. Locals commonly referred to them as "lamp shadows" or "lamp shadow chambers" (Qi, 1995). The flute is the main accompaniment instrument for Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, accompanied by ethnic instruments such as banhu, suona, erhu, and sanxian as auxiliary accompaniment instruments. Because its characters and scenery are all carved from animal skins, it is also known as "shadow puppetry". Its singing style is unique, with a gentle and smooth melody, pleasant and fresh (Jiang, 1992).

1.2 Current situation of contemporary Yangxian lantern shadow puppetry

The Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera has undergone more than 200 years of development, from the first generation of Baishi Liu shadow puppetry artists to the sixth generation of He Bao'an teacher today. Through the painstaking efforts of six generations, it has had a considerable influence in Yangxian today. There is a popular saying in the local area that goes, 'I would rather watch cowhide fight than listen to wooden skulls speak.' Due to the use of cowhide in lantern shadow puppetry, it is affectionately called cowhide. From the four major shadow puppetry troupes of Hua, Wang, He, and Wu at the beginning, to the 28 optimized shadow puppetry troupes during the late Qing Dynasty, it can be seen that the development scale of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera in the local area is enormous (Yangxian Cultural Center, 2010).

During an interview with Teacher He Bao'an, the inheritor of the contemporary intangible cultural heritage of Yangxian Dengying Opera Shadow Puppetry, he told us that "Yangxian Dengying Opera Shadow Puppetry had the most class leaders when I was a child, but as more

and more young people went out to work, none of us were willing to learn this craft. I am very happy that you can come and learn about our craft, and I hope more people can come and learn about it. We are very cooperative in inheriting the craft of our ancestors. From the words of Teacher He Bao'an, it can be seen that Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry has been highly recognized as a local opera art in Yangxian for a period of time.

He also mentioned to us that during his apprenticeship, Master Yong Zhongzhong required not only to be able to sing, but also to play the accompanying instruments. He also emphasized the importance of learning and practicing more. It was reported that the inheritance of the Yangxian Dengying Opera was similar to many traditional Chinese operas. Initially, it was passed down internally but not externally, and passed down to relatives but not to reason. However, with the passage of time, Yangxian Dengying Opera broke this tradition and widely recruited students. Although the teaching method was passed down orally and heart to heart as a relay baton, fortunately, the large number of students allowed Yangxian Dengying Opera to develop.

In the interview, it was also learned that Cai Shancun, an old artist from Du Village, Longting, Yangxian County, is one of the class leaders of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry. He not only plays the accompanying instruments of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, but also is one of the few artists in Yangxian who can use traditional techniques to carve the shadow figures of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry. His contribution to the inheritance cannot be ignored, but as he grows older, he is no longer able to carve shadow puppetry and has passed away in recent years. The carving technology of shadow figures in the Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry has become unparalleled.

Compared with before, the physical condition of Teacher He Bao'an, the inheritor of the intangible cultural heritage of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, has improved significantly in recent years due to a benign tumor resection surgery in the throat in 2013. However, when our researchers interviewed Teacher He in mid-March 2023, he was undergoing follow-up treatment at the hospital. Nevertheless, the Teacher insisted on taking us home to showcase the performers of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry and patiently explained to us for two hours during the interview. It can be seen that Teacher He has a passion for Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera.



Figure 2. Yang County Lantern Shadow Opera Shadow Puppetry Player

The persistence of Teacher He Bao'an in Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry is unmatched by most of us in modern times. As the saying goes, heroes share similar views not

only with Teacher He Bao'an himself, but also with his wife, who is a singer in contemporary Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry. His younger brother, He Baozhong, also serves as a "sitting groove" in Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, performing alongside Teacher He during the show. As the current leader of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera, Teacher He Bao'an not only selects popular pieces from traditional plays during each performance, but also creates new ones. More importantly, after the performance, he seeks more opinions from the audience, summarizes his experience, and formulates corresponding strategies for future performances.

The Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry is not only performed in various places in Yangxian and even in Shaanxi Province, but has also been invited to perform in Izumo City, Japan, and Turnmilligram City, Belgium in recent decades, and has been loved by local people. It can be seen that Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera, as a traditional Chinese opera music culture, is still widely loved and easily accepted (Yang, 2014).



Figure 3. Yangxian Lantern Shadow Puppetry Opera Invited for Exchange and Performance (Part)

Although there have been significant changes in the accompaniment instruments and band arrangement of contemporary Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, during the interview process, according to the introduction of He Bao'an, the inheritor of intangible cultural heritage of contemporary Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, and his wife, it was found that the addition of the double bass and electronic keyboard to the accompaniment greatly changed the insufficient accompaniment in the bass area of the play. However, the accompanying problem is that the popularity of the double bass is low, the number of people who can play it is relatively small, and it is impossible to complete the normal operation of the band. Although the electronic tone of the electronic keyboard can resonate with the main instrument, the flute, more electronic keyboards, as electronic instruments, have better sound effects than the flute as a national instrument, greatly masking the tone of the flute and completely failing to highlight its characteristics as the main instrument in the Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry.

The Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera can follow the laws of development of things and develop step by step until today, and its value cannot be ignored. Although there are also new plays created today, most of the performances are based on traditional plays. During the interview and research process, the author found that there are very few existing troupes in Yangxian County, except for the contemporary Yangxian Dengying Opera troupes led by Professor He Bao'an. This indicates that the current situation of Yangxian Dengying Opera is gradually facing difficulties.

2. Inheritance of the Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera

The development of things cannot be separated from certain laws, and the Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry has followed its unique development trajectory from its emergence to inheritance to modern times. In traditional concepts and societies, the Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera, as the main entertainment project in the local area, is developing in response to the needs of the people. In today's situation, as a traditional Chinese opera music, its

main social function has undergone tremendous changes, gradually transforming from a primary form of entertainment to a folk opera music and artistic performance form that allows people to understand regional characteristics, local cultural features, and cultural dissemination (Yang, 2006).

Despite these changes, with the joint efforts of six generations, Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera has undergone tremendous changes and innovations in keeping with the development of the current era and the pace of history. In the hands of Mr. He Bao'an, the inheritor of the intangible cultural heritage of contemporary Yangxian lantern shadow puppetry, a series of creations has also been carried out. The successive release of works such as "Xiecun Bridge" and "Farmhouse Courtyard - Huangjiu Workshop" marks another development of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry.

Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera, like most cultural and artistic forms, not only has its own unique inheritance rules and system, but more importantly, it adapts to the development of history and the changes of the times, has strong inclusiveness, and can absorb different cultural and artistic nutrients while also changing itself in the interests of the audience to optimize itself and better inherit and develop. As a local theatrical genre, Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry has also followed the laws of development and inheritance in the process of development and inheritance. Like many folk art forms, it also follows the inheritance laws passed down from generation to generation. According to incomplete statistics, Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry has been passed down for six generations from its formation to inheritance. The table shows some inheritance lineages:

Table 1 Inheritance Genealogy of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera (Part)

Generation	Number of Artists	Educational Background	Inheritance Method	Period of Practice	Residential Distribution
1st	Liu X	Unknown	Master-disciple	Unknown	Baishi, Yangxian
2nd	Yong Chaojie, etc. (4 people)	Unknown, Illiterate	Master-disciple	1862—1872	Shicao, Longting, Yangxian
3rd	Yong Kejing, etc. (10 people)	Illiterate	Family inheritance, Master-disciple	1881—1915	Shicao, Baishi, Guanxi, Yangxian
4th	He Junxian, etc. (14 people)	Private school education, Illiterate	Master-disciple	1917—1936	Baishi, Shicao, Longting, Guanxi, Anling, Huaishuguan, Changxi, Yangxian
5th	Hua Shengxin, etc. (10 people)	Primary school education, Semi-literate	Family inheritance, Master-disciple	1945—1964	Guanxi, Shicao, Huaishuguan, Longting, Yangxian
6th	He Bao'an, etc. (18 people)	Junior high school, Senior high school	Master-disciple, Family inheritance	1982—1989	Guanxi, Longting, Luogang, Huaishuguan, Shicao, Anling, Yangxian

From this table (Dong, 2003), it can be seen that, influenced by traditional Chinese culture, the two most common ways of inheritance are through mentorship and family inheritance. Due to cultural limitations and the lack of more advanced and systematic teaching methods, oral and heartfelt instruction is the main approach, supplemented by observation and correction by apprentice singers. Generation after generation, Yangxian Lantern Shadow Puppetry has been passed down to this day. Through the unremitting efforts of six generations of inheritors, there have been significant breakthroughs in recent years, both in terms of strong policy support and in teaching the inheritance of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera.

Inheritors are the main body of inheriting and carrying forward excellent traditional culture. In an interview with Teacher He Bao'an, the sixth generation inheritor of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera, Teacher He perfectly explained the responsibility and mission that inheritors should have. He said, "The inheritance of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera is not the work of one person, nor can it be achieved by one person casually. More importantly, everyone works together to inherit and carry forward the precious culture left by our ancestors."

The inheritance of culture is limited by the level of science and technology, and many valuable materials and performance images have not been well preserved. Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry is no exception. Although folk opera art and culture have been passed down for a long time and have a wide audience, due to conservative and outdated learning methods, and limited by the cultural level of the inheritors themselves, artists often express their own feelings and understanding during the singing and inheritance process, resulting in different people having different understandings. This is also a disadvantage of oral transmission.

The inheritors of Yangxian Dengyingqiang Shadow Play are mostly male, which is undoubtedly a special existence as a type of opera. More importantly, Yangxian Dengyingqiang Shadow Play is not as popular as Kunqu Opera, Beijing Opera, Huangmei Opera, Qin Opera and other large types of opera. It has a wide range of popularity and has a number of singers all over the country. The survey found that after the formation of Yangxian Dengyingqiang Shadow Play, although popular and popular, all the inheritors are undoubtedly native to Yangxian. This phenomenon is mainly due to the fact that Yangxian Dengyingqiang Shadow Play is the most popular form of shadow play. The main singing language is to use the local dialect of Yangxian County, which adds difficulty to the inheritance of Yangxian Dengying Shadow Play. In addition, according to the Chinese census data in 2020, the population of Yangxian County is 345000. This undoubtedly limits the number of people who can spread the Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera.

The implementation of the reform and opening-up policy has brought new opportunities for the development of the country, as well as promoted social progress and the improvement of people's living standards. However, it has also brought new challenges to the development of the Yangxian Dengying Opera. With the continuous promotion of the market economy, the sixth generation inheritor of Yangxian Dengying Opera, Mr. He Bao'an, contracted the Yangxian Dengying Opera Troupe as a personal celebrity and served as the "box owner". In 2012, he was invited to bring the Yang County Lantern Shadow Opera to Belgium for cultural exchange activities and performed over 4000 shows in various regions of Shaanxi Province. While inheriting the Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera, we also innovate and reform traditional plays to meet the needs of people in today's era. We dare to open up new ideas and create new plays such as "Xiecun Bridge" and "Farmhouse Courtyard - Huangjiu Workshop". In long-term performances and practical activities, Teacher He Bao'an has repeatedly demonstrated the unique artistic charm of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, while also expanding publicity and increasing the influence of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry.

The inheritance of the Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera cannot be separated from the unremitting efforts of generations of inheritors. It is precisely because of their inheritance spirit that Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera shines brightly in the long river of history. In the context of today's economic globalization, the path of inheriting traditional art and culture is gradually narrowing. However, it is precisely artists like Teacher He Bao'an who continue to persistently stand on the front line of inheritance. With the development of technology and the impact of the information age, the phenomenon of "discontinuity" has emerged in Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry. Therefore, how to inherit it has become the top priority for Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry today. If, in a few years, many cultural and living arts will be inherited like the current situation of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, how should we inherit excellent traditional culture? How to protect and develop these traditional cultures. This is a question we have carefully considered, and it is also the goal, mission, and responsibility that we must strive for.

3. Innovation of Contemporary Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera

In the early stage of reform and opening up, the economy of China's coastal areas developed rapidly, and under the influence of foreign culture, a wave of electronic music swept across the country. When the country opens up to people's pursuit of new things, traditional music is facing unprecedented challenges. But fortunately, as people pursue new things, it also brings opportunities for the development of production and lifestyle. Through various hardships, Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera has changed its traditional concept and established itself in modern society, drawing on the influence of foreign music culture to carry out radical reforms and innovations.

The Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry has undergone varying degrees of adjustments in the performers. To this end, in the performance of the newly composed song "Xiecun Bridge", one banhu was removed from the original two, and a combination of banhu and erhu was used as accompaniment. In the performance, most of the ensemble pieces are no longer used, but rather accompanied by exchanging instruments such as flute, banhu, erhu, etc. In previous experiments, Western instruments were added as accompaniment to compensate for the lack of bass in the performance of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry. However, in the performance of "Xiecun Bridge", Western instruments such as double bass and cello were gradually used as accompaniment instruments and skillfully applied.

In the creation of 'Xiecun Bridge', on the one hand, the original flavor is maintained, and on the other hand, in the process of composing the music, attempts are made to use the orchestration techniques of Western instruments, modify the score examples, and arrange harmonies for Western instruments such as double bass. During the performance, the intricate plot structure of traditional plays was simplified, and in 'Xie Cun Qiao', the story was elaborated through a single storyline, greatly omitting the arrangement and layout of scenes. For the first time, a multi performer dialogue was performed in the vocal style, which can make the vocal music more diverse and the structure of the music more varied, but more importantly, reflect the differences in the structure of the music.

In recent years, more performances and rehearsals of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry have been recorded, and the newly composed play "Xiecun Bridge" is no exception. Today, you can also see that the entire play "Xiecun Bridge" has been successfully recorded.



Figure 4. Still from the performance of "Xiecun Bridge" recorded by the Yangxian Cultural Center (partial)

Not only that, in traditional plays, Western instruments are also boldly used for accompaniment, simplifying some singing sections to achieve exquisite repertoire. Through research, during the performance, the opening gong and drum music will be improvised and increased on a fixed score according to different needs, and the time will be adjusted to expand or reduce the performance time. At the same time, during the performance, the performance stage of the Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera will be expanded to better showcase the charm of the Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera. And the traditional theater layout will be changed, expanding the original screen from a small size to better allow the audience to see the performance more intuitively. The number of performers will be increased, and the accompaniment of the band will be almost exclusively played by a dedicated person. Singers and actors who control the actors will gradually sing and perform independently. The main purpose is to optimize the performance of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, in order to achieve the development of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry.

4. Reflection and Prospect

The Yangxian Dengying Opera provides us with many thought-provoking and research-oriented questions in terms of its formation and inheritance methods. Through Yangxian Dengying Opera, we can see that although Yangxian is located south of the Qinling Mountains, it is deeply influenced by the Guanzhong region of Shaanxi, indicating the profound influence of regional culture on surrounding areas. As a different chamber of shadow puppetry, Yangxian Dengying Opera has undergone changes influenced by the local culture of Yangxian. It also reflects that factors such as transportation and geographical location can have a certain impact on the dissemination of things.

Although Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry belongs to folk opera music, it plays a crucial role in studying the differences in local culture and dialects, the historical context of the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage in Yangxian, and local opera in Yangxian. Nowadays, the current situation of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry has encountered a dilemma. Whether in terms of carving or performance, there has been a period of discontinuity, and even in a few years, the "living" art of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry will no longer exist. In order to continue the artistic value of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, both innovation and development are crucial. Therefore, it is urgent to protect the inheritance and development of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry.

Survival and development are issues that all folk arts need to consider. All folk arts will go through periods of formation, development, and glory. In the long history, how to better survive and develop is the period that artists are most concerned about. In recent years, more and more people have attached importance to Chinese opera music culture, folk art, and other unofficial organizations, such as individuals and groups. But with the support of better policies in China, they are all striving for a common goal.

Yangxian Shadow Play, like Qin Opera, Peking Opera, and other operas, depends on the existence of the Chinese nation. As a local theatrical genre, it has been more than 200 years since its formation. During this period, relying on various factors such as geography and history, it has continuously innovated and reformed, and finally preserved the brand new Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera to this day. It is not easy. Therefore, as the main content of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera today, how to survive, develop, and inherit it is still the most important aspect.

While China's economy and culture are rapidly developing, they are also showcasing the charm of traditional Chinese culture to the world. Music, as a major component of culture, coexisted with ritual in ancient times. But today, personalized trends are gradually occupying a dominant position in music culture. In terms of creation and other aspects, not only should there be values, but also, more importantly, people's spiritual and cultural needs should be met. As China began to learn from the development of the West, the Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera, as a form of traditional Chinese opera music, was also breaking traditional concepts and innovating. Based on this innovation, it is suggested that:

(1) On the premise of not losing traditional performance styles and accompanying instruments, Yangxian Dengying Opera can appropriately incorporate different ethnic and Western instruments for alternating performances. At the same time, in terms of creating lyrics and composition, it breaks away from traditional seven character phrases, cross-sentences, etc., and uses sentences of different lengths for description. Add appropriate accompaniment music to the vocal section to prevent it from becoming stiff and to enhance the singer's tone.

(2) In accordance with the protection measures of the world's intangible cultural heritage and the policies of China and relevant local departments, we will continue and develop the inheritance of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera, break the traditional teaching mode, and if necessary, record classic repertoire performances and videos of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera for future generations to learn and inherit (Song, 2013).

(3) Targeting the reserve force for the inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage, inheritors of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, relevant policies will be implemented to support the new generation to learn and inherit Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, a traditional Chinese opera music culture (Song, 2007).

(4) Under limited conditions and capabilities, expand the audience and scope of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, and if necessary, hire music and culture-related professional researchers and scholars to conduct detailed research on the music, culture, and other aspects of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry. The study of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry should retain written or recorded materials.

(5) In conjunction with the Yangxian Cultural Center and the Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Department, conduct a statistical survey on the inheritance qualifications of existing artists in Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, establish an official protection department for Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, provide living subsidies for development and inheritance, and encourage development and inheritance.

(6) Submit the application to qualified scholars who have the ability to conduct research on the existing historical plays, musical and cultural values of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry, in order to carry out rescue measures and protection efforts for the popularization of Yangxian Dengying Opera shadow puppetry.

(7) To rescue and protect the carving techniques of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera, it is necessary to hire carving professionals, enthusiasts, and other personnel to inherit the carving techniques of Yangxian Lantern Shadow Opera.

Through the support and protection of various policies, as well as innovation and inheritance, Yangxian Dengying Opera will see new vitality, and the value of Yangxian Dengying Opera will be further spread.

5. Conclusions

The research in this paper shows that Yangxian Dengying Opera, as a unique local opera that integrates traditional Chinese opera music, painting and sculpture, stage performance, and incorporates elements of the Yangxian dialect and multiple regional operas, has undergone about 200 years of development and six generations of inheritance. It once had a wide mass base and numerous troupes, but in contemporary times, it faces the dilemma of "generational" shortage of troupes, unparalleled carving skills of filmmakers, aging inheritors, and a shortage of young talents. At the same time, there are problems in the innovation of accompaniment instruments, such as the masking of the characteristics of the main playing instrument and the low popularity of new instruments. Due to dialect dependence and regional population size limitations, it is difficult to expand the audience for dissemination. However, practitioners represented by the sixth generation inheritor He Bao'an have explored a path for the development of drama genres through innovative practices such as creating new plays, such as "Xiecun Bridge" (simplifying the plot, innovating instrumentation, and incorporating Western instruments), optimizing performance forms, and engaging in regional exchange performances. The paper ultimately proposes that it is necessary to promote artistic innovation while adhering to traditional styles and core musical instruments. By breaking the traditional teaching mode, recording classic plays, providing policy support for young inheritors, establishing official protection departments, expanding audiences through academic research and publicity, and rescuing endangered skills, measures should be taken to protect and develop Yangxian Lantern Shadow Puppetry, thereby assisting in the revival and development of Shaanxi local opera music and Chinese intangible cultural heritage.

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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