



## An investigation of developing and Inheritance of Qin'an Xiaoqu in Gansu Province China

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### Abstract

This study use the qualitative research approach to collect a vast quantity of data via field inquiry and to classify and statistically analyze the data acquired. The objectives were to 1) examine the contemporary state of Qin'an Xiaoqu singing. 2) Analyze the inheritance of Qin'an Xiaoqu's singing. The study's findings are as follows: 1) The current status of Qin'an Xiaoqu. With the utmost attention of the Qin'an County People's Government. Since the 1980s, Qin'an Xiaoqu has gradually expanded to the important stages of counties, cities, provinces, and the nation. Based on the accomplishments listed above, Qin'an Xiaoqu's development is relatively positive. According to the artist interviews, the majority are affected by others around them. 2) Qin'an Xiaoqu's inheritance status extends to various middle schools and elementary schools in Qin'an. Most students can sing adequately. Currently, the Qin'an County Government and the Qin'an County Cultural Center are hosting the "Intangible Cultural Heritage" event with the intention of fostering a strong environment in which the entire community can participate, pay attention to, and preserve and pass on excellent traditional culture.

**Keywords:** Qin'an Xiaoqu, Present situation, Inheritance and protection, China.

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## 1. Introduction

Gansu, referred to as "Gan" or "long", the People's Republic of China provincial administrative region, the capital city of Lanzhou. It is located in northwest China, with Shaanxi in the east, Xinjiang in the west, Sichuan and Qinghai in the south, Ningxia and Inner Mongolia in the north, and Mongolia in the northwest (Geography and geomorphology of Gansu Province China, 2019).

The formation and popularity of Qin'an Xiaoqu are mainly in the southeast of Gansu Province, Tianshui City, Qin'an County. (Xiaoqu is the unique folk music of Qin'an County, It belongs to Quyi, an ancient rap music.) It expresses the thoughts and feelings of the

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working people with popular tunes and words. Usually, the Qin'an Xiaoqu is accompanied by one person with Sanxian and sung by one person. and the person who sings at the same time hits the rhythm with the percussion instrument "slam". "Slam" is a kind of percussion instrument like touching a bell (Kinneer, 2009; Nichols, 2012; Shang, 2020). Both the player and the singer sit and sing without any action performance. On the festive days of Chinese New Year and festivals, people who like to sing Qin'an Xiaoqu will gather in the streets, alleys, courtyards and other public places. On weekdays, they will gather to sing and play in the fields where they work, the yards at home or the kang head, and they are very happy. Many people who like Xiaoqu make Xiaoqu quickly become popular in life. When a family has a happy event, the people who sing Xiaoqu will come to the house to entertain and support the scene. In many places in Qin'an County (Huiqing, 2005; Liu et al., 2022).

From the formation of Qin'an Xiaoqu to the whole development process, following its historical origin and flow, the relative integrity of its Qupai, the richness of its content and the tacitness and delicacy of its tone, it does not seem to be created by a single person. It is probably a kind of Quyi rap music that has already formed in other places, Due to some reason, it was introduced into Qin'an and gradually combined with the local folk music (Ding, 2018; Bader et al., 2021; Chan, 2022; Gong, 2022). At the same time, under the influence of the local dialect character tone, it gradually formed a new type of music with local characteristics. Its performance form, singing style, It's performance form, singing style, the form of Qupai linkage, the structure of music singing and the format of lyrics have some artistic characteristics of Qupai art form in rap art: there is no specific pattern of Qupai connection and composition in the repertoire. But relatively free, in addition to the single Qupai, usually is any one of many Qupai or any one of the first and last two parts, cut for the beginning and end of a piece of music composition, such as Qin'an Xiaoqu artists often said that the double month tone, double back palace, Singing lyrics is a literary script written according to the musical style of specific Qupai, and it is a singing form of writing lyrics according to the cavity. Except for a few of five words, six words or seven words, the majority of Qupai singing words are uneven, commonly known as "long and short" miscellaneous style, the number of sentences in each Qupai form a certain format, The performance is simple and casual. It is said that this style of folk art in Northwest China was formed in the middle of Ming Dynasty and has a history of more than 500 years (China Intangible Cultural Heritage Website China Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Museum, 2020)

The traditional repertoire of Qin'an Xiaoqu is accumulated in different historical periods. In the 1960s and 1970s, Qin'an Xiaoqu was put into the "cold palace" and its development stagnated. Since the 1980s, the number of old artists and lovers of Qin'an Xiaoqu has been decreasing day by day. This valuable folk art form in Northwest China is facing a crisis of survival and may die out at any time, It is in urgent need of rescue and protection. As a young generation, we should try to think of ways, put forward some feasible ways to

improve the Xiaoqu, and strive to promote the development of Xiaoqu, and carry forward to let more people know Qin'an Xiaoqu, like Qin'an Xiaoqu.

Based on the above background, this paper will focus on the investigation of Qin'an Xiaoqu singing, Qin'an Xiaoqu contemporary status and Qin'an Xiaoqu inheritance and protection. Further study Qin'an Xiaoqu and explore its cultural value, find out the problems in its development, and put forward reasonable guidance, so that Qin'an Xiaoqu can be better inherited and protected in the future, and create more distinctive music.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Research site

Gansu is located in the northwest region of China, at the upper reaches of the Yellow River, and its geographical coordinates are between 32°11 and 42°57 north latitude and 92°13 and 108°46 east longitude. It is bounded by Shaanxi in the east, Xinjiang and Qinghai in the west, Sichuan in the south, and Inner Mongolia and Ningxia in the north, bordering Mongolia.

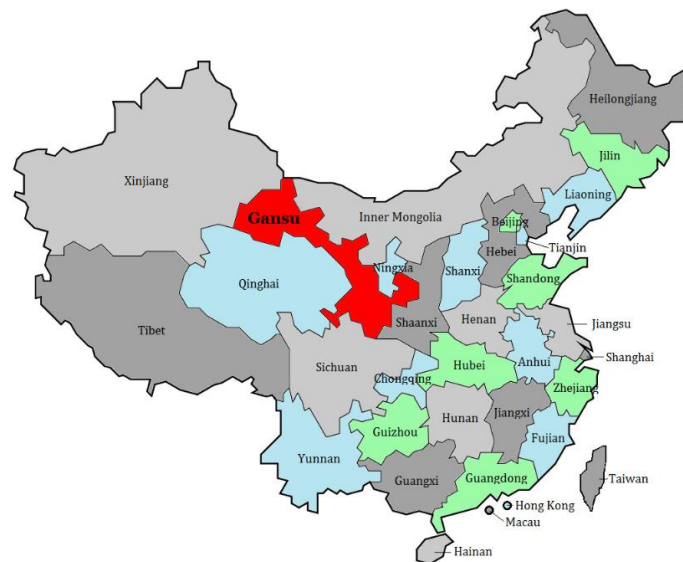


Figure 1. Map of Gansu Province

Source: <https://chinafolio.com/provinces/gansu-province>

### 2.2 Key informants

Inheritance people. The four inheritors selected for the research are mainly the inheritors of intangible culture in Gansu Province. They've been learning ditties from Xiaoqu players and singers for at least 30 years, They have rich experience in singing and playing, in Qin 'an Xiaoqu vocal singing, playing and the inheritance has great

contribution, they will be a lot of it, mainly by oral tradition, most of these people have no culture, many don't understand the theoretical knowledge can't accurately record PuLi, This is an important reason why Qin'an Xiaoqu can't develop quickly. Now it is urgent for people who understand music and have higher academic attainments to join the Xiaoqu team, and provide a lot of data and information for the development of Xiaoqu in the future.

Table 1. Gender and age of the inheritor

Gender of the inheritor		Age of inheritor			
		20 - 40	40 - 55	55 - 70	70 above
gender	ratio	Number of people			
man	100%	0	0	2	2
woman	0%	0	0	0	0

### 2.3 Literature analysis

Using the method of literature analysis, this paper reviews the relevant literature of Qin 'an Xiaoqu culture, such as ancient books, local Chronicles, audio, essays and works. This paper discusses the vocal singing of Qin 'an Xiaoqu, investigates the current situation of Qin 'an Xiaoqu, and puts forward some suggestions for its better inheritance and protection.

### 2.4 Data Collection

Prepared two forms for my fieldwork. One is a record of interviews and the other is a record of observations. In both forms, designed various questions, including the respondent's age, gender, singing. The form of Qin'an Xiaoqu performance, the language of singing, the occasion of singing, whether it is inherited or not, etc. Through interviews and observations, the historical and cultural heritage, rhythm, mode, interval and melody of Qin'an Xiaoqu are counted, so as to provide real data for the later research of this paper.

## 3. Result

### 3.1 The development of Qin'an Xiaoqu

With the great attention of the People's Government of Qin'an County, the historical and cultural heritage of "Qin'an Xiaoqu" was able to make a public appearance on the stage, and the performers of Xiaoqu were also respected. From the 1980s to the present, Qin'an Xiaoqu has slowly moved to the major stages of counties, cities, provinces and the country. From the above achievements of Qin'an Xiaoqu, the development of Qin'an Xiaoqu is relatively good. In just a few decades, from a small county town that nobody knows, it has

slowly moved to the international stage. The artists' innovation has been recognized again and again, and they are also encouraged. They have more power to develop Qin'an Xiaoqu. At the same time, it has won more understanding and love from people all over the country (Jing, 2009). The performers of Qin'an Xiaoqu according to the interview with artists, most of them are influenced by people around them. They are oral singers from generation to generation and use their leisure time to sing Qin'an Xiaoqu. Most of the artists have low cultural level, but they all love Qin'an Xiaoqu very much, and have made great contributions to the development of Qin'an Xiaoqu singing. The researchers mainly selected four inheritors of Qin'an Xiaoqu to conduct interviews. From their interviews, they learned that Qin'an Xiaoqu is facing great difficulties in its development. These people are old, and no young people can continue to sing. There is a serious fault. They said that there are many people who learn but few can adhere to it. Most of them only learn to sing when they have time to enrich their lives as entertainment, there is no systematic learning time and no cost subsidy, which is also the reason why no one is willing to stick to it all the time. Many learners are retirees and enthusiasts, ranging in age from a few years to 80 years old. These inheritors try their best to let their children learn. They don't want to see the decline of Qin'an Xiaoqu, so they are very willing to teach it as long as someone learns it (Huiqing, 2005).

### *3.1.1 Qin 'an Xiaoqu into the campus*

Qin'an Xiaoqu is now piloted in some middle schools and primary schools in Qin'an. According to the author's field survey, the time of entering the campus is earlier in the city than in the countryside, but their progress is basically the same. Most students can basically sing one or two Xiaoqu. In addition to singing in the community, most of the knowledge related to Qin'an Xiaoqu is mainly story content. From the attitude of the students in the club towards Qin'an Xiaoqu, whether they liked Qin'an Xiaoqu before they entered the club or gradually liked it through the club, but after such a period of learning, many of them really deepened their feelings for Qin'an Xiaoqu. Many students in the school club are willing to be the disseminators of Qin'an Xiaoqu art and will continue to learn Qin'an Xiaoqu after graduation. Therefore, the association still has a good effect in the art communication of Qin'an Xiaoqu. Again, from the survey of students outside the association, although the environment around them is changing, they still know the most about the land where Qin'an Xiaoqu was produced. In short, the development of Qin'an Xiaoqu must rely on school education to inherit (Lianyue, 2018).

### *3.1.2 Qin'an Xiaoqu Enters the Community*

In order to enrich the cultural life of the community, improve the community residents' understanding of the excellent intangible cultural heritage, and enable the intangible cultural heritage to take root in the community, the Qin'an County Cultural Center often

organizes personnel to carry out the activity of "intangible cultural heritage into the community, culture will always be inherited", invites the senior researcher of the county, Mr. Cai Aiqin, to give lectures, lead the performance team to sing songs, promote Qin'an songs, and let more community members know about Qin'an songs, I like our local traditional culture (Ting, 2019).

### *3.1.3 Qin'an Xiaoqu Enters the Military Camp*

Now, the Qin'an County Government and the Qin'an County Cultural Center have held the "Intangible Cultural Heritage" Qin'an Xiaoqu Campaign in the Military Camp for many times, aiming to create a strong atmosphere for the whole society to participate in, pay attention to and protect and inherit excellent traditional culture.

### *3.1.4 Qin'an Xiaoqu enters the nursing home*

The Double Ninth Festival is a traditional festival to respect and love the elderly. With the strong support of the Qin'an County Government, the team of the county cultural center's intangible cultural heritage "Qin'an Xiaoqu" will hold activities, mainly to bring joy to the elderly, so that they can have a sense of security and happiness in their old age. Considering the elderly's love of traditional culture and their understanding of Chinese folk art, they specially arranged performances to enter the nursing home.

## *3.2 The protection and inheritance strategies and measures of Qin'an Xiaoqu*

### *3.2.1 Filing*

The preservation of intangible cultural heritage archives plays an important role in the inheritance and innovation of intangible cultural heritage. We must cultivate professional intangible cultural heritage archives talents, strengthen the construction of intangible cultural heritage archives, unify the filing standards, formulate collaborative policies, and strengthen the general investigation and assessment of intangible cultural heritage archives from the basic information of the project, relevant customs information, artistic characteristics information, accompanied musical instrument production information, representative works information, etc.

### *3.2.2 Preservation*

Although Qin'an is rich in intangible cultural heritage, the protection of intangible cultural heritage archives has not received enough attention, especially the cultural authorities above the county level responsible for the protection and preservation of intangible cultural heritage of Qin'an Xiaoqu. Due to the imperfect protection mechanism of intangible cultural heritage archives, loopholes in the details of intangible cultural heritage archives protection, lack of technical support for long-term preservation and

dissemination, and other reasons, some precious original intangible cultural heritage archives have been damaged, lost or even disappeared, and the preserved intangible cultural heritage archives have been kept for a long time, hidden but not used, without giving play to their cultural heritage value.

### *3.2.3 Inheritance*

Inheritance mainly refers to school education inheritance, family education inheritance and social education inheritance. School education inheritance is the main guarantee for the future development of Xiaoqu. Schools should use publicity windows, campus websites, campus radio, school newspapers and other publicity media to publicize intangible cultural heritage, so that all teachers and students fully understand the importance and necessity of intangible cultural heritage inheritance, and help students deeply understand the rich connotation of "intangible cultural heritage", Establish correct values, culture and art. Of course, the inheritance of Qin'an Xiaoqu requires not only the guidance of relevant departments, but also the support of policies and school education, as well as the role of family education. Parents should not only let their children receive the influence of traditional culture, but also lead them to touch Qin'an Xiaoqu and feel the traditional culture, so that the fresh cultural heritage can take root in their hearts. The children will go to the society in the future and have the responsibility and obligation to do a good job in social education inheritance. Give full play to the strength of the folk masses to better protect and enhance the vitality of Qin'an Xiaoqu.

### *3.2.4 Communication*

By means of festival activities, performances, observation, training, professional seminars and other forms, through mass media and Internet publicity, we can deepen the public's understanding of the heritage and promote social sharing. Encourage the editing of children's books with intangible cultural heritage, popularize the optional textbooks for nine-year compulsory education, broaden students' cultural vision, and understand and promote the traditional and excellent folk music culture from democratic, harmonious and loose music classes (Yiru, 2019).

### *3.2.5 Protection*

The root of protecting Qin'an Xiaoqu lies in the inheritors of Qin'an Xiaoqu, especially the protection of folk music, which needs to rely on the professional skills of the inheritors to further promote cultural heritage. By actively building the team of inheritors, we can gradually realize the transformation of specialization and vitality. First of all, we need to mention With financial support, inheritors, as the core carrier of intangible cultural heritage music culture inheritance, are required to have a certain economic foundation to promote intangible cultural heritage music culture in order to protect the overall picture of intangible cultural heritage music culture. Therefore, we need to give strong support to

the inheritors in terms of their living security, provide them with social security, living subsidies, etc., and ensure their basic material needs, so that the inheritors can focus more on the protection of Qin'an Xiaoqu and achieve the inheritance of Qin'an Xiaoqu. In addition, the inheritors who selflessly share the performance skills of family music with the public need to be given economic subsidies to show their social value and promote the development of folk music culture.

## 4. Discussion

The development of Qin'an Xiaoqu is obvious, but there are also many problems in the development. According to the author's field investigation and data analysis, folk artists, inheritors, students and other groups, although they have confidence in the inheritance of Qin'an Xiaoqu, the current situation is also very worrying. According to the actual situation, the author puts forward the following suggestions:

### *4.1 Add funds and responsibility mechanism for turning to protection*

The protection of Qin'an Xiaoqu requires long-term operation, which requires a lot of energy, physical strength and financial resources. The government departments should add special protection funds, formulate reasonable use plans for the special funds, ensure that relevant inheritors and folk artists of Qin'an Xiaoqu receive economic subsidies, provide necessary equipment and facilities, and let them pass on Qin'an Xiaoqu without worry.

The government should clarify its own responsibility and mission, consciously and actively shoulder the responsibility of protecting Qin'an Xiaoqu, and strengthen its own awareness of the protection of Xiaoqu. Establish a responsibility mechanism, use the responsibility mechanism to restrain relevant departments, attach importance to the protection of intangible cultural heritage Qin'an Xiaoqu, The department with inadequate protection shall be dealt with in accordance with the law, investigated for its responsibility, punished the responsible person by means of administrative punishment, and required the relevant department to rectify.

### *4.2 Qin'an Xiaoqu should be organically integrated with the times*

If Qin'an Xiaoqu wants to be liked by more people, it must keep up with the development of the times. From the lyrics and the creation of Xiaoqu, it must integrate with the times. It cannot discard the tradition while innovating. We should increase more channels of communication, actively embrace new technologies and radiate new vitality. We can see that with the organic combination of new technology and intangible cultural heritage, the spread of intangible cultural heritage has completely broken through the geographical restrictions. With the help of new opening methods such as Internet live broadcast and VR,



intangible cultural heritage IP has become fashionable among young people. More musical and cultural elements of Qin'an Xiaoqu will be injected into the plot and clothing, so that more young people will have an interest in Qin'an Xiaoqu, which will be inherited imperceptibly in the digital era.

#### *4.3 Strengthen the education of traditional music culture in colleges and universities*

The development of Qin'an Xiaoqu must strengthen the traditional music education in colleges and universities. "The mode of school education determines the mode of social and cultural development to a large extent." "With the joint efforts of Chinese musicologists, Chinese traditional music has gradually formed a discipline system of initial scale, and an unprecedented prosperity has emerged in the theoretical circle." However, in today's market economy, this "prosperity" is limited to the academic community, while local traditional music is gradually blurred from everyone's view. The author believes that we should first pay attention to the training of teachers of traditional music. Secondly, music textbooks should increase the compilation of traditional music knowledge and production background, so that students can have a deep understanding of traditional music. Finally, we should use modern educational technology to make the transmission of traditional music in the classroom a new level. Teachers should find more relevant materials to let students listen to and understand more. If conditions permit, they can also invite inheritors and some folk artists into the classroom to let students get close contact with and experience traditional music (Zhongqiu, 2019)

#### **Acknowledgements**

This research project was financially supported by Mahasarakham University.

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