



The Influence of Qin Guoming on the Development of Chinese Folk Songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region

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Abstract

Background and Aims: Guilin folk songs, an integral part of the cultural heritage of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, face challenges due to modernization and shifting societal values. Qin Guoming, a renowned folk musician, has played a pivotal role in preserving, transmitting, and innovating these folk songs. This study analyzes the influence of Qin Guoming on the development of Chinese folk songs in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Methodology: This research employs a qualitative approach, incorporating ethnographic fieldwork, in-depth interviews, and textual analysis. Data collection involves interviews with folk musicians, cultural policymakers, and music educators, as well as an analysis of archival materials, folk song recordings, and academic literature. The study categorizes themes related to folk song preservation, transmission, and modernization to comprehensively assess Qin Guoming's impact.

Results: Findings reveal that Qin Guoming's efforts have significantly contributed to the sustainability of Guilin folk songs through systematic documentation, education, and innovation. His mentorship programs have trained over 10,000 students, ensuring the continuation of traditional singing techniques. Additionally, his integration of modern instrumentation and media outreach has expanded the audience for folk music, making it accessible to younger generations. His collaborations with cultural institutions have further institutionalized folk song preservation.

Conclusion: Qin Guoming's work has transformed Guilin folk songs from fading traditions into vibrant cultural practices taught in schools, performed publicly, and preserved for future generations. His model shows that education, media outreach, and innovation can ensure the lasting vitality of traditional music.

Keywords: Guilin Folk Songs; Qin Guoming; Folk Music Preservation; Cultural Transmission; Music Education

Introduction

The preservation of traditional folk music is a pressing issue in contemporary China, where cultural heritage faces increasing threats from modernization and digital entertainment. This study





focuses on Guilin folk songs, emphasizing their significance as both artistic expressions and vital cultural assets. Chinese folk songs have long served as a cultural bridge between generations, preserving regional customs, historical narratives, and ethnic identities through oral traditions. Among the diverse folk song traditions across China, Guilin folk songs of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region are particularly renowned for their melodic expressiveness, poetic lyrics, and deep connection to local ethnic communities. These songs, traditionally sung by the Zhuang, Yao, and Han ethnic groups, encapsulate themes of love, labor, nature, and communal life, reflecting the daily experiences and values of the people in the region (Chen & Sensai, 2024; Li & Chaiyason, 2024; Zhang et al., 2022). For centuries, these folk songs have been passed down through oral transmission, maintaining their cultural essence and significance. However, in recent decades, rapid socio-economic transformations, urban migration, and the rise of modern musical influences have posed serious challenges to the continuity of traditional folk music. As younger generations gravitate toward contemporary music and digital entertainment, the practice of learning, performing, and transmitting folk songs has significantly declined (Chan, 2018; Knights, 2016; Xiaozhi, 2024). This shift threatens not only the survival of specific song traditions but also the broader cultural heritage associated with them.

Amidst these challenges, Qin Guoming, a celebrated figure in Chinese folk music, has emerged as a crucial force in the preservation, promotion, and evolution of Guilin folk songs. Revered as the "King of Mountain Songs," Qin Guoming has dedicated his life to ensuring the survival of traditional folk songs while also adapting them to modern cultural landscapes. His contributions extend across songwriting, performance, music education, and cultural advocacy (Jiabao, 2020; Yao et al., 2023). Through extensive fieldwork, Qin Guoming has documented and recorded endangered folk songs, preserving them for future generations. Additionally, he has modernized song structures and performance styles to make traditional folk songs more accessible to contemporary audiences while retaining their cultural authenticity. His role in music education has been particularly influential, as he has nurtured thousands of students, training them in the unique singing techniques of Guilin folk songs and fostering a new generation of folk music practitioners (Fan, 2024; Shun & Boonsrianun, 2023). Moreover, his advocacy for folk music in cultural policymaking and public engagement has helped secure institutional recognition and funding for the promotion of traditional music in Guangxi.

This research is guided by the key question: "How has Qin Guoming influenced the development of Chinese folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region?" The study will examine his role in folk song preservation, transmission, and innovation, offering insights into how individual agency contributes to the revitalization of traditional music in contemporary society (Dong & Chaiyason, 2024; Pang & Sensai, 2025). By investigating Qin Guoming's influence, the





research will also shed light on the intersection between folk traditions and modern cultural forces, illustrating the strategies and methods that have enabled Guilin folk songs to persist in changing times (Cui & Xie, 2024; Deng, 2020; Siringo-ringo et al., 2022). Additionally, this study will explore the broader implications of Qin Guoming's work, assessing how his model of folk music sustainability can serve as a reference for cultural preservation efforts in other regions facing similar challenges.

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to ethnomusicological studies and cultural heritage preservation. As globalization and digital media reshape the cultural landscape, many folk traditions risk being lost unless effective models of adaptation, education, and documentation are implemented. Qin Guoming's efforts exemplify a successful integration of tradition with contemporary practices, demonstrating how folk music can be both preserved and innovated (Amadi & Agena, 2015; Wu & Suanmonta, 2024). By analyzing his contributions, this research offers valuable insights for cultural policymakers, educators, musicians, and scholars, guiding them in their efforts to sustain folk music within evolving cultural environments. In an era of rapid cultural change, this study underscores the urgency of documenting and supporting effective models like Qin Guoming's to ensure that traditional folk music remains a vibrant part of China's cultural future.

Research Objectives

To analyze the influence of Qin Guoming on the development of Chinese folk songs in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Literature Review

The literature review explores three key areas relevant to the research: the cultural significance of Chinese folk songs, the endangerment and revival of folk music, and the role of individual musicians in folk music preservation and innovation. These perspectives provide the theoretical foundation for understanding how Qin Guoming has influenced the development of Guilin folk songs in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Additionally, this review critically examines the existing literature, identifying both consensus and gaps that this study seeks to address.

1. Chinese Folk Songs and Their Cultural Significance

Chinese folk music is a significant part of the nation's cultural identity, serving as a medium for storytelling, community bonding, and moral values transmission. The Zhuang, Yao, Han, and Miao ethnic groups have developed unique folk song traditions, with Guilin folk songs being a special example. These songs, often reflecting nature, labor hardships, and love and longing, are





essential in everyday life and cultural rituals. Folk songs serve as oral history, preserving collective memories and traditional wisdom in regions with limited written records. However, modernization, migration, and economic shifts pose challenges to the transmission of folk songs (Afridi et al., 2025; Akinyemi & Falola, 2021; Ho, 2018; Howard, 2016). While these studies emphasize the cultural value of folk songs, few provide localized analysis of specific traditions like those in Guilin. Qin Guoming, a respected folk singer and cultural advocate, has preserved traditional elements of Guilin folk songs while modernizing and promoting them to ensure their relevance in contemporary society. His approach aligns with cultural sustainability theories, emphasizing the need to balance preservation with adaptation to maintain cultural traditions in changing social contexts. Recent works (Cui & Xie, 2024; Yao et al., 2023) support this dynamic view, but there remains limited discussion on how individuals strategically integrate traditional and modern influences—a gap this study addresses.

2. The Endangerment and Revival of Folk Music

The decline of traditional folk music in China is attributed to factors such as urbanization, shifting social values, and economic changes. Younger generations moving from rural areas to urban centers have weakened traditional settings, and the dominance of Western and pop music genres in mainstream media has reduced exposure to traditional folk songs. As a result, many folk music traditions, including those of Guangxi and the Zhuang ethnic group, are classified as endangered cultural practices. Despite these challenges, efforts have been made to revive and promote folk music, including government-led initiatives, folk music festivals, educational programs, and digital archiving projects. However, true revival requires active participation from communities and artists, rather than relying solely on institutional measures (Grant, 2015; Knights, 2016; Kuang & He, 2022). This view is echoed in more recent research by Gong et al. (2024) and Wu & Suanmonta (2024), which stresses the limits of top-down approaches to revival. Qin Guoming's work serves as a case study of grassroots folk music revival, focusing on active engagement, performance, and education. His approach aligns with community-based cultural sustainability theories, which argue that the survival of folk music depends on its ability to remain meaningful and functional within the communities that created it. However, there is ongoing debate about whether modernization efforts risk diluting traditional forms (Siringo-ringo et al., 2022). This study builds on these discussions by evaluating how Qin balances authenticity with adaptation.





3. The Role of Individual Musicians in Folk Music Preservation

Individual musicians often play a crucial role in the preservation and evolution of traditional music, as seen in the case studies of Wang Luobin and He Luting. These artists not only document and perform traditional songs but also reinterpret and innovate within traditional frameworks, ensuring their music remains relevant to contemporary audiences. Qin Guoming, a key figure in Guilin folk music, has actively worked to revive forgotten songs, integrate modern elements into traditional compositions, and mentor future generations. His innovative approach combines traditional mountain songs with modern musical forms, demonstrating an understanding of folk music as a dynamic and evolving tradition. In addition to his creative influence, Guoming has advocated for folk music education, ensuring younger generations have access to traditional music instruction (Grant, 2016; Gong et al., 2024; Nikolsky et al., 2020; Wu & Chuangprakhon, 2024). Yet, while many studies highlight the creative capacity of individual musicians, few critically examine how such individuals engage with institutional frameworks or policy advocacy to effect cultural change. His work has had a lasting impact on the sustainability of Guilin folk songs, as he has trained thousands of students who continue to sing, compose, and promote the genre today. This study contributes to filling this gap by analyzing Qin Guoming's dual role as both cultural innovator and policy influencer.

Research Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework consists of four interrelated components that illustrate how Qin Guoming has contributed to the sustainability and development of Guilin folk songs in the modern era. These components are: (1) Documenting and Archiving, (2) Digital Platforms for Dissemination, (3) Intergenerational Learning, and (4) Fusion with Modern Elements. Together, they reflect the strategies through which individual agency can effectively preserve and innovate traditional music in response to contemporary cultural challenges (Gaunt et al., 2021; Grant, 2021).



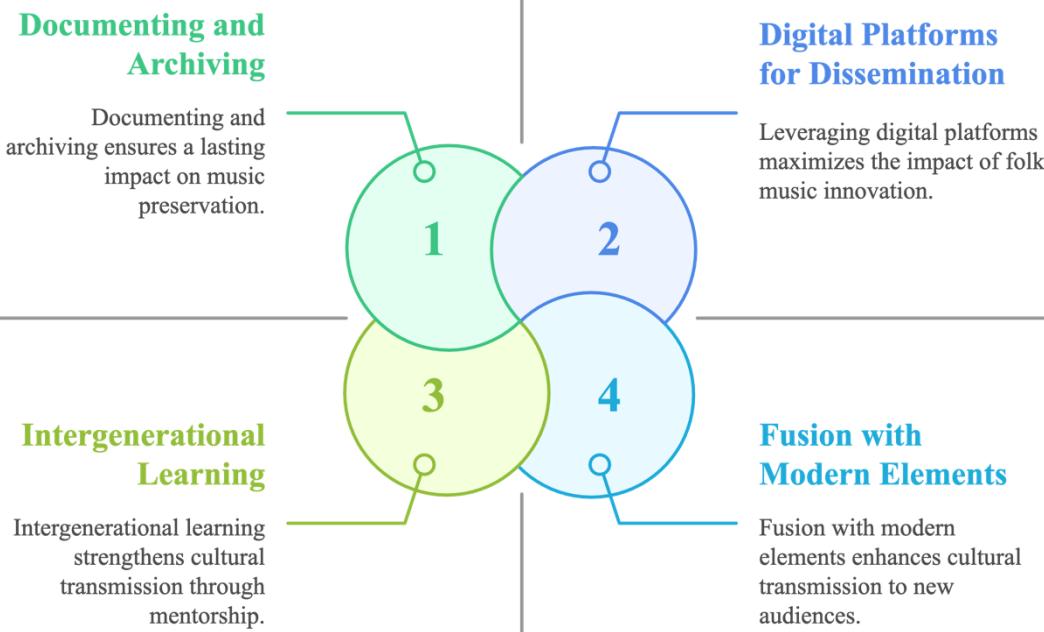


Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework

1. Documenting and Archiving: This component highlights the importance of systematic collection, transcription, and recording of traditional songs. Qin Guoming's extensive fieldwork, song anthologies, and preservation of oral traditions have ensured that endangered Guilin folk songs are safeguarded for academic study and public access. His collaboration with cultural institutions reinforces the long-term preservation of these cultural materials.

2. Digital Platforms for Dissemination: Qin Guoming has leveraged digital media, such as television, radio, and online platforms, to broaden the reach of traditional music. By doing so, he amplifies the visibility and accessibility of Guilin folk songs, particularly among younger and global audiences. This component underscores the role of digital tools in maximizing the impact of cultural transmission and innovation.

3. Intergenerational Learning: Through mentorship and education, Qin Guoming has trained thousands of students, passing on traditional singing techniques and cultural knowledge. This component emphasizes the value of direct teacher-student transmission and highlights how intergenerational engagement sustains folk music as a living tradition rather than a static relic.

4. Fusion with Modern Elements: To maintain the relevance of folk songs, Qin Guoming has innovatively blended traditional structures with contemporary instruments and themes. This approach respects cultural authenticity while introducing folk music to new audiences. His ability to modernize without eroding the traditional essence exemplifies adaptive cultural preservation.



Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, incorporating ethnographic fieldwork, interviews, and textual analysis to investigate (Liao & Chaiyason, 2024; Tracy, 2024) Qin Guoming's influence on the development of Chinese folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Given the intricate relationship between folk music traditions, cultural preservation, and artistic innovation, a qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of Qin Guoming's contributions. This method is particularly suitable for capturing the complex, lived experiences and cultural nuances embedded in oral traditions, which are not easily quantifiable but are critical to understanding the evolution of folk music. The methodology is divided into three main sections: Research Approach, Data Collection, and Data Analysis.

1. Research Approach

This study adopts an ethnographic research approach, commonly used in ethnomusicology and cultural studies, to capture folk music traditions in their authentic settings. Through interviews, field observations, and textual analysis, this research aims to document Qin Guoming's role in the preservation, transmission, and modernization of Guilin folk songs. The sample for this study includes 15 participants, purposefully selected based on their direct engagement with Guilin folk music. These include five of Qin Guoming's former students, five cultural policymakers or educators familiar with his work, and five experienced folk musicians influenced by his innovations. Table 1 summarizes the key research methods used in this study.

Table 1 Research Methods and Their Descriptions

Research Method	Description
Interviews	Collects firsthand narratives from individuals directly engaged with or influenced by Qin Guoming's work.
Analysis	Examines stylistic elements, thematic content, and innovations within his works.
Field observations	Provides direct insight into how Qin Guoming's influence manifests in live performances and educational settings.

These combined methodologies allow for a multi-dimensional understanding of how Qin Guoming has impacted the evolution of Guilin folk music while ensuring that data is derived from both historical documentation and contemporary practice.

2. Data Collection

This study incorporates both primary and secondary data sources to ensure a comprehensive understanding of Qin Guoming's influence. The data collection is structured to examine the





perspectives of practitioners, scholars, and cultural policymakers while also analyzing existing archival records and academic literature on folk music transmission and preservation. Participants were selected based on criteria such as length of involvement with Guilin folk music (minimum 10 years), direct professional or academic relationship with Qin Guoming or his work, and recognition within the folk music community. Table 2 outlines the data sources used in this research.

Table 2 Primary and Secondary Data Sources

Data Source Type	Specific Sources
Primary Sources	Interviews with folk musicians and Qin Guoming's disciples. Conversations with cultural policymakers and ethnomusicologists. Field observations at folk music performances and workshops in Guilin.
Secondary Sources	Academic literature on Chinese folk music traditions. The government reports on cultural preservation policies. Archived folk song collections, including transcriptions and audio recordings

By drawing from both firsthand experiences and historical documentation, this study ensures a holistic approach to assessing Qin Guoming's contributions to folk music preservation and innovation.

3. Data Analysis

The data analysis follows a thematic and comparative approach, allowing for the identification of key patterns and trends in Qin Guoming's impact on Guilin folk music. This research employs qualitative thematic analysis, where interview transcripts, performance recordings, and archival materials are systematically categorized. The coding process involved identifying recurring themes such as vocal techniques, pedagogical methods, and community outreach, followed by grouping these into broader analytical categories aligned with the research framework. Table 3 highlights the core data analysis methods used in this study.

Table 3 Data Analysis Methods and Their Application

Analysis Method	Application in the Study
Categorization	Groups interview findings into themes such as folk song preservation, cultural transmission, and musical innovation.
Comparative analysis	Identifies stylistic changes and thematic adaptations in Qin Guoming's folk song arrangements.





Analysis Method	Application in the Study
Contextual analysis	Examines how musicians and educators apply Qin Guoming's techniques in contemporary settings.
Interpretation	Evaluates how Qin Guoming's work aligns with broader trends in Chinese folk music history and policy.

The thematic coding and analysis were supported using qualitative data organization tools, ensuring consistency and traceability of interpretations. This research, through a structured qualitative analysis, provides a detailed and evidence-based assessment of Qin Guoming's role in shaping the future of Guilin folk music.

Results

This study reveals that Qin Guoming has had a profound influence on the development of Chinese folk songs in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, specifically within the context of Guilin's traditional music culture. His multifaceted contributions span the preservation of endangered musical forms, the transmission of vocal traditions through education, and the modernization of folk songs through stylistic innovation. The findings are organized into three core dimensions: preservation, education and transmission, and innovation and adaptation. Each is analyzed below concerning the central research question: "How has Qin Guoming influenced the development of Chinese folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region?"

1. Preservation of Traditional Guilin Folk Songs

The preservation of traditional Guilin folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has been a critical challenge due to social modernization, changing cultural values, and the decline of oral transmission. As one of the most influential figures in Guangxi's folk music scene, Qin Guoming played a pivotal role in ensuring the documentation and conservation of these folk songs. His extensive efforts include the collection, transcription, recording, and integration of folk songs into cultural and educational programs. Through a combination of personal dedication, academic contributions, and collaboration with cultural institutions, he has helped maintain the continuity of Guilin folk traditions.

1.1 Compilation and Documentation of Folk Songs

Qin Guoming recognized the urgency of preserving traditional folk songs, which were historically passed down orally. Many elderly folk singers had a vast repertoire of songs that had never been written down or formally recorded. To prevent their disappearance, Qin initiated large-scale folk song collection projects, traveling across different regions of Guangxi to document and archive them.



**Table 4** Qin Guoming's Contributions to Folk Song Compilation

Contribution	Details
Field Research and Collection	Visited rural villages, interviewing elderly folk singers to collect rare and endangered songs.
Transcription of Oral Traditions	Transcribed lyrics and melodies into written form to create a standardized collection of Guilin folk songs.
Creation of Song Anthologies	Compiled multiple folk song anthologies that documented traditional singing styles, lyrics, and melodies.
Audio and Video Recordings	Recorded folk performances in various dialects and singing styles to preserve authentic interpretations.

Through these efforts, Qin Guoming preserved hundreds of folk songs that might have otherwise been lost. His work provided a crucial foundation for scholars, musicians, and educators interested in Guilin folk music.

1.2 Contributions to Cultural Archives and Heritage Institutions

Beyond personal documentation, Qin Guoming collaborated with cultural institutions to ensure his collected materials were archived and publicly accessible. He worked closely with Guangxi's Department of Culture, the Guilin Cultural Bureau, and universities to integrate his research into national and provincial heritage databases.

Table 5 Qin Guoming's Impact on Cultural Archives

Institution	Type of Contribution
Guangxi Cultural Bureau	Submitted folk song collections for official cultural heritage registration.
National Intangible Cultural Heritage Center	Provided audio recordings for national cultural preservation projects.
Universities and Music Conservatories	Integrated folk songs into academic research and curriculum materials.
Local Folk Music Museums	Donated manuscripts, audio files, and historical records of Guilin folk music.

As a result, many of the folk songs documented by Qin are now part of China's intangible cultural heritage preservation efforts. These initiatives have ensured that future generations can access and study Guilin folk music through formal channels.

1.3 Interviews with Folk Song Practitioners and Cultural Experts





To understand the impact of Qin Guoming's preservation efforts, we interviewed folk singers, music educators, and cultural policymakers who have worked closely with him. The informants provided valuable insights into their role in preserving Guilin folk songs and their long-term influence.

Table 6 Key Informants' Insights on Qin Guoming's Contributions

Informant	Role	Key Insights
1 st informant	Folk Singer	Without Qin Guoming's efforts, many of the folk songs we sing today would have been lost. His transcriptions allowed us to teach these songs to younger generations.
2 nd informant	Ethnomusicologist	Qin's field recordings are among the most comprehensive collections of Guilin folk songs. His work has significantly contributed to the academic study of Guangxi's musical heritage.
3 rd informant	Cultural Policy Expert	Through his partnership with cultural institutions, Qin Guoming helped formalize the preservation of folk songs as an important cultural heritage project in Guangxi.

The informants unanimously agreed that Qin Guoming played a crucial role in ensuring the survival and accessibility of Guilin folk songs through systematic documentation and institutional collaboration.

1.4 Integration into Music Education and Public Awareness

One of Qin Guoming's most enduring contributions is the integration of folk songs into music education and public awareness programs. Recognizing that preservation is not merely about documentation but also sustained practice, he actively promoted the teaching of folk songs in schools, cultural workshops, and media programs.

Table 7 Implementation of Folk Songs in Education and Public Outreach

Program	Description	Impact
School Music Curriculum	Developed folk song syllabi for primary and secondary schools.	Exposing young students to Guilin folk traditions, fostering early appreciation.
University Courses	Collaborated with music departments to introduce Guilin folk songs in higher education.	Provided formal training for future musicians and musicologists.
Public Broadcasts	Promoted folk music through television, radio, and social media.	Expanded public awareness and appreciation for Guilin folk songs.





Program	Description	Impact
Folk Song Competitions	Organized singing contests to encourage community participation.	Inspired new generations to engage with and perform folk music.

Qin's educational and public engagement strategies ensured that folk music remained a living tradition rather than a relic of the past.

1.5 Challenges and Future Directions

While Qin Guoming's contributions have been instrumental in preserving Guilin folk songs, challenges remain. The impact of modernization, lack of institutional funding, and the dominance of popular music continue to threaten traditional folk song practices. However, his legacy provides a strong foundation for future folk song preservation efforts. Areas for continued work include:

1.5.1 **Digitization of Folk Song Archives:** Expanding online accessibility for global audiences.

1.5.2 **Enhanced Government Support:** Securing additional cultural funding for folk music education.

1.5.3 **Youth Engagement Initiatives:** Incorporating interactive and multimedia approaches to make folk music appealing to younger audiences.

2. Educational Impact and Cultural Transmission

Qin Guoming's contributions to the education and transmission of Guilin folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region have played a crucial role in preserving and revitalizing this musical tradition. His influence is most evident in the establishment of structured folk song workshops and academic programs, which provided a formal platform for learning and practicing traditional music. Recognizing the decline in folk music appreciation among younger generations, Qin initiated training workshops in cultural centers, where aspiring musicians were taught the fundamentals of folk singing, including vocal techniques, melodic structures, and the cultural significance of the songs. In collaboration with academic institutions, he helped integrate folk music into university curricula, allowing students to study the history and performance of Guilin folk songs in a structured environment. These initiatives ensured that folk songs were not only preserved but also adapted to modern educational settings, making them more accessible to younger generations.

Beyond formal education, Qin Guoming played a pivotal role in mentorship and training, personally guiding more than 10,000 students in mastering the vocal techniques unique to Guilin folk music. His teaching emphasized specialized breathing techniques, vocal resonance, and the smooth transition between true and falsetto voices, essential skills for performing the expressive





and dynamic melodies of mountain songs. Moreover, he encouraged his students to innovate while staying true to the essence of folk traditions. This approach fostered creativity, allowing many of his students to become influential folk musicians and educators themselves. By nurturing these future performers and scholars, Qin ensured that the knowledge and appreciation of folk songs continued to be passed down through generations, reinforcing their relevance in both traditional and contemporary musical landscapes.

In addition to direct teaching, Qin Guoming actively promoted the broader cultural transmission of folk music through public performances, festivals, and media documentation. He played a key role in integrating folk music into large-scale cultural events such as the Guilin Mountain Song Festival, providing a platform for emerging folk musicians and engaging the wider community in folk traditions. His recordings and documentaries captured the essence of Guilin folk songs, ensuring that they were preserved in archives and made available for public and academic use. Furthermore, his advocacy for folk music education led to increased government support, resulting in funding for research, scholarships for folk musicians, and policies that incorporated folk music into school curricula. Through his multifaceted approach to education and cultural transmission, Qin not only safeguarded Guilin folk songs but also reinvigorated their presence in both academic and cultural spheres, solidifying their role in Guangxi's rich musical heritage.

3. Innovation and Adaptation

Qin Guoming's innovation and adaptation of Guilin folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region played a crucial role in revitalizing the traditional music and making it relevant to contemporary audiences. One of his most significant contributions was the introduction of modern instrumentation while retaining the fundamental characteristics of folk music. Traditionally, Guilin folk songs were performed a cappella or accompanied by simple traditional instruments such as the erhu (two-stringed fiddle) or pipa (Chinese lute). However, Qin experimented with integrating modern musical elements, such as guitar, keyboard, and orchestral arrangements, to enhance the richness and appeal of folk songs. These adaptations made folk music more accessible to younger audiences while preserving its lyrical and melodic essence. His approach ensured that Guilin folk songs remained recognizable while simultaneously evolving in ways that resonated with contemporary musical tastes.

Beyond instrumentation, Qin Guoming also composed new songs inspired by traditional forms, expanding the folk song repertoire and demonstrating that folk music could remain a living, evolving art form. He drew upon existing folk melodies, rhythmic patterns, and storytelling traditions to create songs that carried the spirit of traditional folk music but addressed modern themes. These compositions included elements of social realism, reflecting the daily lives,





struggles, and aspirations of local communities in Guangxi. Through this innovative approach, he bridged the gap between past and present, ensuring that folk songs continued to serve as a relevant cultural expression. His new compositions were widely embraced by folk musicians and were incorporated into festivals, music education programs, and radio broadcasts, expanding their influence beyond local traditions.

In addition to composition and musical arrangement, Qin Guoming also pioneered new performance styles that adapted folk songs for different settings, including television performances, concert halls, and large-scale cultural festivals. Traditionally, folk songs were performed in small gatherings, mountain song competitions, or informal community settings. Qin, however, recognized the potential of modern media in amplifying the reach of Guilin folk songs. He collaborated with television stations, film producers, and national arts organizations to bring folk music into mainstream entertainment platforms. By doing so, he helped introduce Guilin folk songs to audiences across China and beyond, ensuring their survival in an era of rapid cultural change. His ability to balance tradition with innovation has left a lasting impact on the preservation and evolution of Guilin folk music, demonstrating that traditional music can adapt and thrive in modern society.

Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the significant influence of Qin Guoming on the development, preservation, and transmission of Guilin folk songs in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. His contributions align with theoretical perspectives in ethnomusicology, particularly cultural sustainability theories, which argue that folk traditions must be actively adapted to modern cultural contexts to remain relevant (Ho, 2018; Howard, 2016). The study reveals that while traditional folk songs have faced challenges due to socio-economic transformations, urban migration, and declining oral transmission (Chan, 2018; Knights, 2016), Qin Guoming's approach to documentation, education, and innovation has helped revitalize Guilin folk music, ensuring its continued relevance in contemporary society. This aligns with and further develops theories of adaptive heritage, illustrating how individual agency can mediate between preservation and reinvention in living traditions.

A major finding of this study is the extensive role of preservation and documentation in sustaining traditional folk songs. Qin Guoming's efforts to collect, transcribe, and record Guilin folk songs align with previous studies emphasizing the importance of archival documentation in cultural heritage preservation (Afridi et al., 2025; Amadi & Agena, 2015). His fieldwork and compilation of song anthologies reflect a proactive approach to safeguarding oral traditions, a strategy also employed in the preservation of other endangered folk traditions worldwide (Grant,





2015; Kuang & He, 2022). However, while documentation plays a crucial role in preventing the loss of folk traditions, previous research highlights that static preservation alone is insufficient for cultural sustainability (Gaunt et al., 2021). Qin Guoming's contribution extends beyond preservation to actively integrating folk songs into music education and public engagement, ensuring that these traditions are not just recorded but also practiced and transmitted to new generations. The study offers empirical support for dynamic preservation theory, which contends that traditional cultural forms must remain in use and evolve to retain meaning within communities.

The study further highlights Qin Guoming's impact on music education as a key driver of folk music transmission. His establishment of structured folk song workshops and integration of folk music into formal education align with cultural sustainability models that stress the role of active learning in heritage transmission (Ho, 2018; Wu & Suanmonta, 2024). The findings support the notion that individual musicians and educators play a crucial role in revitalizing folk music traditions, as evidenced by similar initiatives in the preservation of Salar vocal folk music and Naxi folk traditions in China (Dong & Chaiyason, 2024; Gong et al., 2024). Notably, the study finds that Qin's emphasis on mentorship and direct training, guiding over 10,000 students, has been particularly effective in sustaining traditional vocal techniques unique to Guilin folk songs. This hands-on approach reinforces earlier findings that emphasize the need for direct interaction and practice-based learning in folk music education (Shun & Boonsrianun, 2023; Li & Chaiyason, 2024). It further contributes to theories of intergenerational learning by demonstrating how mentorship networks can function as culturally embedded mechanisms of transmission.

The study also provides strong evidence for the role of musical innovation and adaptation in cultural sustainability. Qin Guoming's integration of modern instrumentation and contemporary themes into traditional folk music resonates with research suggesting that folk traditions must evolve to remain relevant in modern cultural landscapes (Howard, 2016; Siringo-Ringo et al., 2022). His use of guitar, keyboard, and orchestral arrangements to enhance the appeal of folk music parallels similar modernization efforts seen in the adaptation of Mongolian throat singing and Peking opera to contemporary music forms (Akinyemi & Falola, 2021; Pang & Sensai, 2025). However, while these adaptations have successfully broadened folk music's reach, some scholars caution that modernization may dilute traditional elements, leading to potential cultural homogenization (Cui & Xie, 2024). The study finds that Qin Guoming has carefully balanced preservation and innovation, ensuring that while folk songs evolve, their core melodic structures, lyrical themes, and cultural authenticity remain intact. This nuance adds to the discourse on cultural hybridity, demonstrating that fusion with modern elements can be harmonized with traditional values, rather than replacing them.





In examining the broader implications of Qin Guoming's contributions, the study aligns with existing research on individual agency in folk music preservation. Previous studies highlight the role of key figures, such as Wang Luobin and He Luting, in reviving and promoting Chinese folk music (Grant, 2016; Jiabao, 2020). Qin Guoming's impact is comparable, as he has not only documented folk songs but also actively shaped their contemporary reception and practice through media, public performances, and policy advocacy. His collaboration with cultural institutions and government agencies to secure institutional recognition and funding for folk music preservation aligns with research indicating that sustainable folk music transmission requires both grassroots efforts and institutional support (Howard, 2016; Wu & Chuangprakhon, 2024). The study further supports the view that community engagement and participation are essential in maintaining living folk traditions, as highlighted in ethnographic studies of folk music sustainability (Tracy, 2024; Nikolsky et al., 2020). This reinforces participatory cultural theory by illustrating how individuals like Qin act as cultural brokers, connecting local practices with institutional frameworks.

Despite these significant contributions, the study also identifies key challenges and areas for further development in the preservation and transmission of Guilin folk songs. The findings indicate that modernization, digital entertainment, and changing cultural preferences continue to pose threats to folk music traditions, echoing concerns raised in previous literature (Xiaozhi, 2024; Knights, 2016). The study suggests that enhanced digital archiving, expanded government support, and youth engagement initiatives are necessary to sustain folk music traditions in the long term. Recent studies highlight the potential of digital technology in folk music preservation, including online archives, virtual folk music classes, and social media engagement (Grant, 2021; Deng, 2020). This supports emerging digital ethnomusicology frameworks, but also calls for more context-sensitive applications that align with local needs and cultural values. Future research could explore how digital platforms can further amplify the transmission of Guilin folk songs, leveraging modern tools while maintaining their cultural essence.

In conclusion, this study provides compelling evidence of Qin Guoming's significant impact on the preservation, education, and innovation of Guilin folk songs. His work aligns with cultural sustainability theories, emphasizing the dynamic nature of folk traditions and the need for both preservation and adaptation in contemporary contexts (Gaunt et al., 2021; Afridi et al., 2025). By bridging traditional knowledge systems and contemporary technologies, Qin Guoming exemplifies a hybrid model of cultural transmission that expands the theoretical understanding of how folk music can survive and thrive in modern society. The study highlights the effectiveness of integrating folk music into formal education, public performances, and digital platforms, reinforcing the view that cultural transmission is most successful when it remains an active,





evolving practice. While challenges remain, Qin Guoming's approach serves as a model for future folk music preservation efforts, offering valuable insights for cultural policymakers, educators, and musicians in China and beyond. By ensuring that Guilin folk songs continue to thrive, his contributions exemplify the resilience and adaptability of traditional music in a rapidly changing world.

Suggestions

1. Suggestions for Applying the Research Findings

1.1 Educational institutions should incorporate Guilin folk songs into music curricula at different levels, emphasizing traditional singing techniques, cultural significance, and historical context to sustain interest among younger generations.

1.2 Utilizing digital platforms, such as online archives, virtual folk music workshops, and social media, can enhance the accessibility and visibility of Guilin folk songs, allowing for broader public participation and cultural appreciation.

2. Suggestions for Future Research

2.1 Future research could compare Qin Guoming's preservation strategies with those of other prominent folk musicians in China and globally to identify best practices in folk music sustainability.

2.2 Investigating the effectiveness of digital tools, such as virtual folk music education, streaming platforms, and interactive cultural heritage databases, can provide insights into new methods for preserving and transmitting traditional folk songs.

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