

The analysis and comparison of Vienna classical school of harmony and popular music harmony

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ABSTRACT. *Harmony is an important part of music works and one of the basic elements of music. It can echo the melody of music, enhance the expressive force of music and promote the development of music works. Different times lead to different styles and forms of harmony. In the development and evolution of history, harmony has experienced different styles, and the formation of new harmony style means the decline of old harmony style. It can deepen the understanding of music works in different periods and provide reference value for its innovation and application at present by analyzing the characteristics of harmonies in different periods and comparing them. This paper makes a comparison and analysis of the Vienna classical school harmony and the popular music harmony in order to provide guidance for the application of harmony in practice.*

KEYWORDS: *Vienna classical school of harmony; The popular music harmony; Analysis and comparison*

1. Introduction

At present, most music colleges and universities mainly focus on traditional harmony when teaching harmony, and do not include popular music harmony into their teaching scope[1]. However, the popular music is a type of music that the current public tends to. Traditional music harmony could not adapt to the reality of popular music and could not be well integrated, which weakened the expressive force of music[2]. Popular music is easy to understand and catchy, focusing on the relationship between music and people. Audiences do not need too much professional knowledge to feel popular music. The popular music and the Viennese classical music are different but closely related[3]. Only by deepening the analysis and comparison of the Viennese classical music and the popular music harmony, and making clear the internal relations and differences between them, can we better apply them to the practice of music and promote the development of music[4].

2. The main features of the Vienna classical school of harmony

2.1 Overview of classical harmony

From the perspective of the development history of music, classical harmony refers to the harmony in the classical period of Vienna. Classical harmony and modern pop harmony are a pair of opposite concept[5]. In the classical period of Vienna, as there was no digital bass, the main tone music occupied the dominant position, and the harmonic function was mainly inclined to tuning[6]. At the same time, this period was also a prosperous period for the development of various independent Musical Instruments. All these changes of The Times provided the basic conditions for the development of harmony[7].

2.2 Basic features of the Vienna classical school of harmony

The harmonic system of Vienna classical music school mainly includes natural tone system and variable tone system, in which the major triad and the minor triad belong to the natural tone system. And the variable tone system includes tonicized chromatism 离调式伴音, debugging alternating variable tone 调式交替性变音 and altered chord harmony 变和弦和声. The natural sound system and the variable tone system complement each other. The natural sound system is the foundation and the variable tone system is the expansion.

Firstly, the harmonic of the Vienna classical school is a diatonic tonality whose tonality structure is based on the function of the sound level. In tonal harmony, each tone level has its own characteristic function. They move around the main chord according to their own different functions. Based on every step in the tonic is dominant, the main function and significance of harmony lies in tonality. Different from the chromatic harmony in the romantic period, the development of the Vienna classical music school is based on the principle of function. The functional logic of harmony movement is also a cycle to promote the stability from instable to stable.

Secondly, the minor triad is widely used in the work and shows its independence. As a substitute of the major triad, the minor triad appears in the work, which contains disharmonious factors. It is these disharmonious factors that enrich the harmonic language and materials, add more colors to the harmony and promote the development of music.

Thirdly, seventh chords at all levels and dominant ninth chords appear and are widely used. The more traditional harmony style became more conservative and rigorous. The appearance and use of these chords added new colors to the harmony, making the music more dynamic and active.

Fourthly, chromatic tone was widely used in the harmonic of the Vienna classical school. During this period, it can be divided into different pitch changing systems according to the nature and function of pitch changing, including diatonic tone changing, Alternating tone and intensive tone. The off-tone harmonies are

generally temporary, highly tendentious. Such as secondary dominant, superdominant sixth chord and deputy subordinate chord. This means the richness of chord structure. Harmonic color contrast is more intense, harmonic function gets outspread.

Fifthly, Tonal thinking is monotonous. The modulation method basically includes parallel size and near relation modulation. Tone modulation is not only a small range, but also often appear common tone which makes the original and new harmonies have basically achieved unity.

3. Popular music harmonic basic features

3.1 Overview of popular music

Popular music is hot and fashionable music. This type of music is an inevitable trend of the development of music. It is not only a style, form and genre of music, but also a cultural and social phenomenon. Popular music is different from classical music in that it covers a wide range of areas. Besides, audiences of this kind of music do not need to have profound theoretical knowledge of music and cultural literacy of music. It is easy to understand and more popular.

3.2 The main features of popular music harmonies

Although popular music harmony has the functional characteristics of traditional harmony, it is different from it. It pays more attention to the color of single chord, and enhances the strong contrast effect of music through the sharp contrast between different colors of chord. The popular music harmony not only highlights the harmony color, but also weakens its functional characteristics. Here are the characteristics of the common chords.

The first is the functional characteristics of common chords. A major triad is a consonant chord that is bright, open, and sunny; a minor triad is a consonant chord that is soft, dark, and melancholy. Diminished triad is a kind of instable dissonant chord which expresses sharp, tension and conflict. Similarly, the augmented triad is also a dissonant chord, often with a dreamy and mysterious color. Major seventh chord and minor seventh chord are similar in color to the major triads, which are bright, solemn and broad. The minor seventh 小小七和弦 is a dissonant chord, although it has a soft color. The diminished seventh chord 減減七和弦 is a discordant chord with tension that manifests itself in vicissitudes and dreariness. Then there are added notes 加音 and substitution chords 替代和弦. Added notes are a way to plump up the chord structure, which can enhance color contrast and the auditory effect. Besides, there is also the substitution chord technique in the popular music harmony. The more common ones include the substitution of natural seventh chord for natural triad, the substitution of changing chord and the substitution of tritone. The substitution chord technique is to enhance the color and make the harmony more modern. At last, there are Sus (Sus representative suspension) and

superimposed chords. Sus includes sus2 and sus4. Sus4 enhance the modern feel of music, which is a decorative chord that plays a foreshadowing role. In addition, the popular music also often uses superimposed chords 叠置和弦 or superimposed chords 高叠和弦.

3.3 The analysis and comparison of Vienna classical school of harmony and popular music harmony

3.3.1 Analysis and comparison of cadence

Cadence is mainly perfect cadence and imperfect cadence. According to different harmonies, it can be divided into authentic cadence, plagal cadence and deceptive cadence. Firstly, authentic cadence is a common cadence used both in Viennese classical and popular music harmonies. But the difference between these two is that the Viennese classical harmony adds a chord K46 before the authentic cadence. The typical representative of the cadence of the classical music school is the K46 chords, which is characterized by gentle and progressive. Generally speaking, the cadence is at the position of downbeat, and at the same time, it is generally subordinate chords before it, so as to balance all parts. The popular music generally does not use the ending of the K46 but the authentic cadence, and also uses a variety of forms at the end of the main chord. Secondly, the plagal cadence, which is weaker in effect than the authentic cadence. Its characteristic is to highlight the support of subordinate chords to dominant chords. This mode of cadence does not exist independently, but appears after the ending of the authentic cadence which is also called “plagal supplementary cadence” 变格补充终止. It was widely used in the classical music school of Vienna and the popular music, but its scope of use was narrow compared with the authentic cadence. Thirdly, the authentic cadence and plagal cadence can be divided into perfect cadence 完满终止式 and imperfect cadence 不完满终止 according to the degree of completeness of cadence. When the ending principal chord is in the root of chord and the strong beat position, it is considered as a perfect cadence; otherwise, if the ending principal chord is in the weak beat position, it is considered as an imperfect cadence. In the Vienna period, in order to enhance the sense of cadence, the imperfect cadence is generally placed before the perfect cadence. In popular music is more commonly used imperfect cadence to give audience an intriguing feeling.

3.3.2 Analysis and comparison of minor triads

In the Vienna classical music school, SII and TSVI chords are commonly used, while DTIII and DVII chords are rarely used, but they are widely used in the popular music. Based on this, this paragraph focuses on the analysis and comparison of the use of DTIII chord and DVII chord. First of all, DTIII chords were rarely used in the classical period of Vienna due to their unclear functions. However, in order to enhance the contrast, modern pop music tends to dilute the functionality of harmony, so it is often applied to DTIII chords to enhance the sense of change from instability to stability. The Viennese classical school, on the other hand, pays much attention to the functionality of harmony and the rigorous

specification of music as a whole, thus making less use of DTIII chords. Secondly, DVII chord is a type of diminished chord. In the Vienna classical music school, only DVII6 chord is generally used in the diminished triad. The use of diminished chords is limited, and the use of DVII chords is less common. However, in popular music, in order to enrich the color effect of harmony and enhance the sound effect, DVII chord will be more widely used, which can make the instability of music stronger and improve the impact of auditory effect.

3.3.3 Analysis and comparison of transitions

Transition is a common harmonic technique in the classical music school of Vienna and the modern pop music. Transition can make the melody of music temporarily have the characteristics and feelings of other diatonic. Transitional chords are often just to set off an atmosphere of music works. As for 重下属和弦, in the harmonic of the Vienna school of classical music, it is composed of the 附属下和弦, which enhances the transitional effect of the secondary dominant to the temporary main chord. This transition can also bring non-original chord overtones, thus enhancing the music color change. In the popular music harmony, the 重下属和弦 are called the lower seventh chord 降七级和弦. Among them, the application of the lower seventh major chord can obviously enhance the tension effect of harmony, while in classical music, the seventh down is a major triad, which is far less intense than the seventh chord in popular music.

4. Conclusion

In short, music of different styles in different periods is quite different, which is largely related to the harmony difference of music. At the same time, different styles of music harmonies in different periods are related to each other, so it is necessary to analyze and compare their relations and differences. The comparison and analysis between the classical music school of Vienna and the popular music harmony can help clarify the changes of harmony in different periods and promote the innovation of music harmony in techniques. The combination of harmony in two periods can promote the further development of music when applied to music practice.

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