

# Dissemination and Inheritance of Anhui Fengyang Flower Drum Art from the Perspective of Intangible Cultural Heritage

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**Abstract:** Fengyang flower drum is a characteristic traditional folk custom in Anhui. Anhui is located between the Jianghuai watershed. Under the long-term influence of Jianghuai culture, it has bred a series of distinctive folk culture. Fengyang county also has the reputation of "hometown of Chinese folk culture and art" because of Fengyang flower drum. Fengyang flower drum was selected into the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list of the State Council in 2006. With the development of the times and the improvement of living conditions, Fengyang flower drum no longer appears in the form of begging, but more as a performing art, which makes the social status of Fengyang flower drum decline sharply. Less and less people pay attention to this art form, and its protection and inheritance also have problems. The younger generation lacks the knowledge of Fengyang flower drum and is unwilling to understand and learn. The future of Fengyang flower drum is in jeopardy. This paper analyzes the origin, cultural connotation and era significance of Fengyang flower drum, analyzes its current communication and inheritance dilemma, and explores the solutions suitable for the current development.

**Keywords:** Fengyang Flower Drum, Dissemination, Inheritance, Intangible Cultural Heritage

## 1. Introduction

The so-called intangible cultural heritage refers to various forms of traditional cultural expressions handed down by all ethnic groups from generation to generation, with their related objects and places. Intangible cultural heritage is an excellent folk traditional culture in China. It symbolizes the national spirit and culture and is an important resource for building China's cultural soft power. In recent years, with the acceleration of urbanization and the change of people's living habits, the living environment of intangible cultural heritage has changed greatly, which makes its inheritance and development face new challenges [1]. The protection of intangible cultural heritage in the new era is not only to keep it from disappearing in the long river of history, but also to spread and inherit. In particular, some distinctive art forms should give full play to their artistic value in protection.

Fengyang flower drum, also known as "flower drum", is a distinctive art form in Fengyang area, Anhui Province. It is mainly distributed in villages and towns such as lighting lamps and Xiaoxihe in Fengyang County. Fengyang flower drum originated in linhuai County of Fengyang Prefecture in the Ming Dynasty. It is a kind of folk performing art of Han nationality that integrates quyi and song and dance. Its quyi form is mainly manifested in rap. The performers perform song and dance while beating their small drums and gongs [2]. Fengyang flower drum was originally a means of begging, which spread all over the north and south of the river in the process of begging. Fengyang flower drum symbolizes the excellent spirit of Chinese tradition and reposes the life hope of the poor people. The inclusion of Fengyang flower drum in the protection list of China's intangible cultural heritage is of great cultural significance to the local people and even the people of the whole country. From the perspective of intangible cultural heritage, this paper analyzes the dissemination and inheritance of Anhui Fengyang Flower Drum Art, in order to provide a better way for the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

## 2. Literature Review

Throughout the literature of Chinese and Western scholars, there are many studies on the theme of intangible cultural heritage inheritance. Most of the relevant research in China focuses on how to inherit, protect and innovate. Research usually emphasizes the combing of cases and theories, ignoring the elaboration of the practical significance of intangible cultural heritage in today's society and the common exploration of general problems. On the other hand, there are rich theoretical achievements in the Historical Tracing of intangible cultural heritage in domestic relevant research. Under the multi angle, deep-seated and all-round research, considerable achievements have been made in the analysis of the historical source and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage. Taking the literature in CNKI as an example, there are 18710 studies with the keywords of "intangible cultural heritage" and "inheritance", while there are only 1300 with the keywords of "intangible cultural heritage" and "communication". Although such search terms are somewhat rough, it can be clearly seen that there are still limitations in domestic research on the dissemination and practical significance of intangible cultural heritage. Taking the dissemination and inheritance of Fengyang Flower Drum Art as the starting point, this paper makes a corresponding exploration on this unique form of folk music and dance.

Feng Yu's works on the evolution of Anhui Huayang's drum culture were mainly published in the academic journal of Fengyang University in 1980. For example, Feng Yu's works on the evolution of Anhui Huayang's drum culture were also divided into three categories. Feng Yu's works on the history of Fengyang's drum culture were mainly published in the Journal of Fengyang University, It provides a very valuable reference for future generations. In addition, Zhou Yude's article "the story of Fengyang flower drum" in 1980 lists the different development processes of Fengyang flower drum in various historical periods in chronological order, which is of great significance for textual research and inference of the origin of Fengyang flower drum. The second category focuses on the category of Fengyang flower drum dance. For example, in Zhou Zonghan's article "appreciating new flowers - praising flower drum lantern song and dance drama" in 1979, it analyzes the flower drum dance movement and music cooperation, and puts forward some suggestions on the innovation of art education. This has high academic value for the study of the times of Fengyang flower drum dance. In addition, in the investigation of the ecological environment of Fengyang flower drum published in popular literature and art in 2004, Wang Bing compared the dance movements of Fengyang flower drum with ballet, emphasized the enduring beauty and balance in Fengyang flower drum dance, praised Fengyang flower drum as "Oriental ballet", and expounded the reasons why the inheritance of Fengyang flower drum needs to be paid attention to from another angle. The third category focuses on the music system of Fengyang flower drum, mainly represented by Xu Guohong's research on Fengyang song system. Based on the original music score and a large number of documents, this paper combs the characteristics and evolution history of Fengyang song system, which lays a solid foundation for improving the music system research of Fengyang flower drum. From this point of view, the research on Fengyang flower drum mainly focuses on music, dance and inheritance and innovation. From 1970 to now, the research perspective has been continuously ushering in the peak from Historical Tracing to educational innovation. As one of the most influential performance forms with a large audience, the theoretical research of Fengyang flower drum has experienced many stages. From the initial analysis only from the score and dance movements, the linear narration ① is more and the cross-sectional attention ② is less; In the later period, the research on historical tracing showed the phenomenon of more text research and less practical exploration; In today's society, the attention to intangible cultural heritage has greatly increased, so the inspiration for the inheritance and innovation of Fengyang flower drum burst out again. Although there is a solid theoretical foundation, there is still insufficient attention to the transfer of cultural characteristics and modern meaning, and there is a lack of systematic and in-depth research and analysis. This paper intends to focus on the current situation of the dissemination and inheritance of Fengyang flower drum as an intangible cultural heritage in the 21st century, in order to pave the way for future related research.

## 3. Origin of Fengyang Flower Drum

Fengyang flower drum was formed in the middle of the Ming Dynasty. Its birth and development has its special historical background, which is embodied in several aspects. Now it seems that these historical conditions can be indispensable. Fengyang flower drum originated from frequent natural disasters. Fengyang in the middle of the Ming Dynasty suffered a variety of natural disasters, resulting in the failure of agricultural production in Fengyang, the serious destruction of people's lives, the

famine, the displacement of people, and the people of Fengyang embarked on the road of begging. Singing and begging for a living, "more money when singing well" is an important reason for the emergence of Fengyang flower drum.

Fengyang flower drum originated from traditional farming and mulberry life. Historically, Chinese society was dominated by agriculture and handicrafts, and the people lived on agricultural mulberry. Local agricultural mulberry life promoted the emergence and development of folk customs, so as to express people's hope for a better life. Fengyang men in the north of the Yangtze River are very good at playing three stick drums. They often play and sing while working. This is the original origin of Huagu gongs and Fengyang minor. Women in Fengyang are also active in working in the fields. Men and women play drums and sing to each other, which has become a distinctive local folk custom. Fengyang flower drum has a long tradition. People express their feelings during work with the help of performance, which has become another important condition for the emergence and popularity of Fengyang flower drum, and laid a good mass foundation for the emergence and development of this art form [3].

Fengyang flower drum originated from specific historical figures. Fengyang county is the hometown of Zhu Yuanzhang, the founding emperor of the Ming Dynasty. As the "hometown of kings", Fengyang became an important construction place in the Ming Dynasty, building a large number of buildings, including Zhu Yuanzhang's imperial mausoleum. In order to guard the imperial mausoleum, Zhu Yuanzhang established a special organization and took the "ancestral hall" as the sacrificial Department of the imperial mausoleum. Fengyang flower drum has become an important form of performance in Chaohe. When Nanjing was the capital of the Ming Dynasty, the people of Fengyang went to Chaohe to sing eulogizing songs while beating flower drums. During Zhu Yuanzhang's period, the tax reduction and exemption was carried out for Fengyang County, which further accelerated the development of Fengyang flower drum, greatly improved the living conditions of Fengyang people, and they were more grateful for the beautiful life brought by Zhu Yuanzhang. They used Fengyang flower drum as an art form to praise Zhu Yuanzhang's great achievements and sing a beautiful and happy life for more people to know. Fengyang flower drum has been further spread and developed.

#### **4. Cultural Connotation of Fengyang Flower Drum**

Culture shapes an individual's personality and helps people have the attribute of socialization. As far as social groups are concerned, culture integrates the behaviors, goals and norms of different people and guides the trend of the whole society. Fengyang flower drum is a kind of folk art form in Fengyang area. It is not invented by a person, but the crystallization of folk collective wisdom. It originates from people's production and life and embodies the cultural function of collective consciousness. Through folk dance, singing and performance, we can see the cultural ecology with Chinese national characteristics, so as to better understand and understand the nature of Chinese culture [4].

Music and dance are not simple note playing and coherent body movements. They have deep cultural connotation and philosophical significance, and even have a directional effect on mankind and society. Society is an organism, which links all parts of it into a harmonious and unified whole through culture. Each cultural phenomenon is irreplaceable in the overall cultural environment of the whole society and undertakes the role of different societies. Various common or characteristic cultural elements jointly maintain the stability of the whole cultural system. The internal reason for the emergence of each culture is that its function met the specific social needs at that time. Therefore, if you want to better understand a culture, you must first understand its social function.

Fengyang flower drum is a form of artistic exchange with Chinese characteristics. Fengyang flower drum is not an isolated art form. It has a strong openness. Through the combination and collision with other folk arts of the Han nationality, it has derived a series of folk art forms. Chinese culture and art can be divided into elegance and vulgarity, including both the elegant art of sunny spring and white snow and the folk art of xialiba people. China's song and dance art is also divided into "flower" and "elegance". Fengyang flower drum represents "flower".

Fengyang flower drum does not often appear in elegant banquets, but its figure is accompanied by folk temple fairs and lantern fairs. It has the same root and different branches as Yangko, stilts, flower sticks and other song and dance forms in temple fairs and lantern fairs. In today's operas, there are a large number of operas named "flower drum", which are related to Fengyang flower drum [5]. Even Yangko and other operas are inextricably linked with Fengyang flower drum. In the form of folk art, based on Fengyang minor, Xiaoqu, Qinshu and other characteristic types have been developed. Among

them, Shandong Qinshu, the ancestor of Qinshu, first adopted the tune of Fengyang song. Fengyang song comes from Fengyang flower drum, which shows the extensive influence of Fengyang flower drum on all kinds of art forms in China. Fengyang flower drum, an art form, has penetrated into various art fields of the Chinese nation, even including sculpture, painting, puppets and other fields that seem to have nothing to do with song and dance art. For example, Fengyang flower drum is often seen in string puppet performances. Fengyang flower drum and "Fengyang song" have become common materials in Chinese art circles. They are not only spread among the people, but also spread abroad in later history and are loved by people of all ethnic groups in the world.

In the view of the folk art circles, Fengyang flower drum derived from lianhualuo, which was introduced into the northeast and integrated with the large Yangko art with local characteristics in the northeast, and further derived the characteristic "Er Ren Zhuan" art. The famous way of "one ugly once" in its performance also came from Fengyang flower drum at first. The characteristic tune "Fengyang song" in Fengyang flower drum is good at expressing various types of emotions. Its characteristics of being fast, slow, long and short make it widely used and derive various art forms in the field of music. Fengyang flower drum has a very important influence on China's quyi circle, and is also closely related to various types of folk songs and dances in China [6]. Flower drum dance is one of the important categories. When dancing, the action and rhythm of beating the drum are incorporated into it, which can obtain the double aesthetic feeling of vision and hearing. Flower drum dance has won many awards in various competitions. These art forms are constantly developing and changing, but their roots are Fengyang flower drum, which shows that Fengyang flower drum is an art exchange form with Chinese characteristics.

## 5. The Significance and Function of Fengyang Flower Drum

Fengyang flower drum, as an art form with local characteristics in Fengyang, Anhui Province, preserves the local folk culture. The reason why Fengyang flower drum is enduring is that as a song and dance art, it itself has a high technical level. In the poetry, writing and painting of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Fengyang flower drum is often seen. It records the beautiful dancing posture and superb skills of Fengyang flower drum, and on this basis, it derives the performance methods such as "double strip drum". This characteristic drum beating method is also unique in the whole country. In the process of development, Fengyang flower drum also has the functions of entertainment, aesthetic education and fitness.

Entertainment is an important function of song and dance art. The Han people like to perform songs and dances on various festivals. They will also celebrate the harvest with songs and dances and express their best wishes. Leisure and entertainment is one of the most important functions of folk dance and the support for folk people to express their feelings. The people in Fengyang area have their own unique forms of etiquette activities. Gongs and drums are one of the important rites and music. On this basis, a variety of percussion music has been developed, among which the flower drum is the leader. In the ritual activities in Fengyang area, the flower drum is a tool shared by human beings and gods. The repertoire sung by Fengyang flower drum was quite popular at that time, and it is still very famous, including Fengyang song, mulberry picking, flower tune and so on. The Xiaoqu of Ming and Qing Dynasties reached the same height as Tang poetry, Song Ci and Yuan Opera in China's history, which made this period the heyday of Fengyang flower drum. Fengyang flower drum completed the prosperity of "walking in all directions", sang all over China, and provided seed and nutrition for the cultural reproduction of China [7]. Fengyang flower drum is not immutable, but develops continuously in the process of dissemination and inheritance to meet the cultural needs of that time. At present, the descendants of Fengyang flower drum in China also adhere to the new arrangement and creation of Fengyang flower drum, so as to make it glow with new vitality. Some famous contemporary works include farewell to eldest sister to Beijing, duet between aunt and sister-in-law, Fengyang flower drum is so beautiful, etc. He won many awards in the competition and performed everywhere. The inclusion of Fengyang flower drum in China's intangible cultural heritage protection list has continuously increased the attention of the state and the people to Fengyang flower drum, and laid a foundation for the dissemination and inheritance of Fengyang flower drum in the contemporary era.

Song and dance art, especially dance art, embodies the importance of sports. Fengyang flower drum also has the function of strengthening the body. In the process of dancing, it can smooth all parts of the body and help the body move. Fitness function is not the main purpose of the birth of dance, but it is accompanied by entertainment. It has unexpectedly become a folk fitness way, displaying the charm of folk culture and playing a fitness role at the same time. Fengyang flower drum is a kind of open folk art.

Because of its popular adaptability to both refined and popular tastes, it has been loved and welcomed by the public in all historical periods. It will always glow with the brilliance of artistic youth in the continuous reform at present and even in the future.

## 6. Difficulties in the Dissemination and Inheritance of Fengyang Flower Drum

### 6.1 *The performance form is single and the content is more traditional*

Fengyang flower drum is a kind of folk art with a long history. Up to now, its form and content have not changed significantly, which makes Fengyang flower drum unacceptable to many young people. After the founding of the people's Republic of China, Fengyang flower drum has a certain degree of reform and development, but its performance content is mostly the living state of the working people in the period of liberation, which has a strong historical nature of the times, and can not resonate with the young people who have not experienced this history.

In terms of the form of communication, Fengyang flower drum is separated from the soil of production and life. At present, only stage performance is left, and the performance requires a large venue, which increases the difficulty of Fengyang flower drum Communication [8]. In this context, Fengyang flower drum has become a large-scale performance on some specific occasions. It mostly appears on the stage of various parties, and has little contact with the people at the bottom. As a kind of drama born from labor production, the vitality of Fengyang flower drum lies in the people. Now it only exists in large-scale official activities, which is divorced from the vision and attention of ordinary farmers. While limiting the spread of Fengyang flower drum, it has lost the source of creative spirit.

### 6.2 *The traditional mode of communication is difficult to adapt to the new era*

Fengyang flower drum originated from the production and life of the working people at the bottom. It was once an important daily leisure and entertainment activity of the working people. Its transmission channels are mainly personal experience and word of mouth. In ancient times when there was no entertainment, Fengyang flower drum was widely spread among the working people with its vigorous vitality, which met the spiritual needs of the people at that time. In the fast-paced information age, people have a variety of ways of leisure and entertainment, and the viewing of large-scale live performances has decreased sharply. In the dissemination and inheritance of Fengyang flower drum, this reality has not been fully considered, and it is still carried out in the traditional way of oral and ear communication, with poor effect. The traditional way of communication is difficult to adapt to the new era, which leads to the obstruction of the communication of Fengyang flower drum and the lack of inheritance.



Figure 1: Hefei Wanda Cultural Tourism City Exhibition Center

### **6.3 Into the square, into the campus, looking for new vitality**

As an excellent art form of singing and dancing in China, Fengyang flower drum also undertakes the function of aesthetic education. Dance teaching is an important part of aesthetic education and plays an important role in changing social customs in China's thousands of years of history. Dance teaching is a kind of teaching form carried out by all classes [9]. Although it is not very complex, the vigorous characteristics and lively rhythm in it make the dance art have a spectacular momentum and symbolize the indomitable struggle spirit of the Chinese nation, which is also the initial educational function of dance. The rhythm and dance steps of Fengyang flower drum well reflect the working people's desire for a better life. Its role in aesthetic education teaching also includes gratitude for farming life [10]. At present, the main aesthetic education function of dance education is to combine realistic beauty with artistic beauty, so that the educated can improve their aesthetic taste, better understand the world, stimulate their creative potential, and shape their sound personality and excellent aesthetic quality. Fengyang flower drum is a very important part of contemporary aesthetic education teaching. Walking into the square and into the campus, Fengyang flower drum finds new vitality.



*Figure 2: Integration of Fengyang flower drum and square dance*

## **7. Conclusion**

Fengyang flower drum is a kind of characteristic culture and art that both sings and dances. It was first included in China's national intangible cultural heritage. It can be seen that it plays an important role and has unique value in the history of China's social development, understands its characteristic cultural functions, protects, inherits and develops Fengyang Flower Drum Art suitable for the current society, and can better promote China's social development through its characteristic cultural attributes, Further complete the inheritance and protection of Fengyang flower drum in the process of development.

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