



The Development and Inheritance of Gansu Folk Song Hua'er

Xiaotian Wang and Nutthan Inkhong

Ph.D., Candidate, Arts Performance Communication, Academy of Arts and Philosophy
Shinawatra University

Email: 330331832@qq.com

Received August 1, 2024 Revise April 27, 2025 Accepted April 30, 2025

Abstract

This Review Article to study Hua'er" is a multi-ethnic folk song circulating in the three provinces of Gansu, Qinghai and Ningxia in northwestern China, and was successfully inscribed on the fourth session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in September 2009, with Gansu being the place of origin of "Hua'er". Gansu is the place of origin of "Hua'er". This study takes the intangible cultural heritage "Gansu Hua'er" as the research objective, and examines its origin, connotation and inheritance. The Objective of this paper is to study 1) the current development of "Gansu Hua'er"; 2) the cultural form of "Gansu Hua'er"; and 3) the development and transmission of "Gansu Hua'er". The development and inheritance of "Gansu Hua'er". The samples are "Gansu Hua'er" and examples of individual works, and the data collection tools are Knowledge Network Platform, Wanfang Data Platform, Baidu Encyclopaedia, fieldwork. Wanfang Data Platform, Baidu Encyclopaedia, and field research. Through descriptive analysis and content elaboration, the results of the study are as follows: 1. Distinguish the two cultural forms of "Hua'er": 1) artistic expression forms and 2) artistic expression systems; 2. The development and transmission of Hua'er under the "intangible cultural heritage protection" situation Multi-ethnicity singing Hua'er in Chinese Unique oral transmission culture of "Hua'er"; 3. "Gansu Hua'er. The development status of "Gansu Hua'er"; 4. Two protection and inheritance measures of "Gansu Hua'er": (1) the combination of traditional and trendy culture; (2) the development and inheritance based on the education system.

Keywords: Gansu Hua'er, heritage, inheritance and protection

Introduction

First of all, the choice of this research object is directly related to my personal growth background. I am a native of Gansu, and from my teenage years, I have noticed the folk Hua'er



performances and works around the school and the society, and the "Guansu Hua'er I was deeply attracted by the passion of the "Guansu Hua'er" singers for their art. Secondly, "Gansu Hua'er" is a folk music art passed down in the Northwest China, (Xiaoyan, A. & Qian., S. (2018). the content of which includes people's labour in the fields, the feelings of men and women, and is full of rich cultural connotations of countryside folklore. The inscription of "Hua'er" on the Intangible Cultural Heritage List is a new opportunity for "Gansu Hua'er" to move towards the global perspective, as it has a higher social value and cultural status. (Jiawen., M. (2021). It is a new opportunity to move towards a global perspective. At the beginning of the research, scholars focused on the origin of Hua'er, its regional distribution and the content of its lyrics, such as Zhou Xiaoyu of Lanzhou University of Finance and Economics, who wrote "A Study of Minxian "Hua'er" in the Context of Communication Rituals" in 2022; therefore, the study of "Gansu Hua'er" has not yet been completed, and it is not possible to find out more about it. Therefore, there is room for further research on the inheritance and protection system of "Gansu Hua'er". (Minmin., Q. (2014)

"Gansu Hua'er" is a national intangible cultural heritage, with the support of national policies and funds, but in the process of its inheritance, there is a dilemma of not being able to synchronise with the development of the society, this study, on the basis of reviewing previous studies, analyses the problems, development significance and measures to solve the problems in the inheritance process. On the basis of reviewing previous studies, this study examines the development status, cultural form and development and inheritance of Gansu Hua'er, and analyses the problems, development significance and solution measures in the process of inheritance. Facing the whole country, the people of various nationalities in the Northwest will be the main body of the inheritance and protection of Hua'er, promoting the concept of sustainable development of "Gansu Hua'er", and providing a broader platform for artistic exchanges between nationalities. (Xinhua., X. (2024).

The author will place himself in the context of intangible cultural heritage, use network data collection tools, participant observation and other methods to study the inheritance and protection of "Gansu Hua'er", analyse the actual inheritance situation of "Gansu Hua'er", and examine its inheritance and protection based on the historical documents traced back to "Gansu Hua'er" as the main body. The author will analyse the status of the actual transmission of "Gansu Hua'er", take "Gansu Hua'er" as the main body, and investigate its transmission and protection on the basis of historical documents.



Research Objectives

1. In the protection and transmission of the intangible cultural heritage "Gansu Hua'er", re-examine the issue of the transmission of "Gansu Hua'er", and promote the effective transmission of "Gansu Hua'er" in accordance with the logic of the development of Hua'er itself, based on the natural context in which the music and culture were created. In the protection and inheritance of the intangible cultural heritage "Gansu Hua'er", the issue of the inheritance of "Gansu Hua'er" should be re-examined, and the effective inheritance of "Gansu Hua'er" should be promoted in the light of the natural background of the creation of music and culture, and in accordance with the logic of the development of Hua'er itself;

2. There is relatively little research on the protection and inheritance of "Gansu Hua'er", and it is at an early stage of development in terms of the quantity and quality of monographs, dissertations and journal articles, so that academic and theoretical research on it should be strengthened while protecting and inheriting the outstanding culture.

3. Carrying out in-depth research on the formation, development, art form, value, protection and countermeasures of "Gansu Hua'er", analysing the historical environment, humanities, survival and development achievements of "Gansu Hua'er", and proposing how to do a good job of protecting and inheriting "Gansu Hua'er". Analyse the historical environment, humanities, survival and development of "Gansu Hua'er", and propose how to protect and pass on "Gansu Hua'er". (Xinhua., X. (2024).

According to the research theme of this paper, a literature review will be conducted on the current research status of "Gansu Hua'er". "Gansu Hua'er" is a unique musical art of Northwest China, which attracts a large number of folk song lovers and scholars to explore and study, and the research on the protection of non-heritage has been very hot in recent years, and the number of published papers is also very large. Based on the existing literature, the author divides its development into three stages, the first stage: from the 1920s to the 1940s; the second stage: from the 1950s to the end of the 1990s; and the third stage: since the beginning of the 21st century.

1. 1920s-1940s

After the May Fourth New Culture Movement, Yuan Fuli first introduced Hua'er to the nation, publishing thirty of his collected "Gansu Hua'er" in March 1925 in the publication "Ballads" published by Peking University. In 1929, Zhu Ziqing cited one of Yuan Fuli's thirty Hua'er in his lecture on Chinese Ballads at Tsinghua University, and in 1940 Zhang Yaxiong



published China's first monograph on Hua'er, *The Collection of Hua'er*. A Collection of Hua'er. This period was the early stage of Hua'er research, and the direction of researchers still remained in the collection, dissemination, and arrangement of Hua'er. (Qian, S. et al. (2018).

2. 1950s- 1990s

With the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, China underwent radical changes, and under the impetus of the "New Folk Song Movement", the northwestern Hua'er was well developed. Scholars, folk artists and singers of Hua'er have written books and discussions on Hua'er. The more influential collections of Hua'er include Zhu Zhonglu's *Hua'er Selection*, which contains 60 Hua'er song orders and more than 800 Hua'er lyrics, as well as a paper introducing Hua'er. In August 1961, the Qinghai Folk Literature Research Association compiled and printed the book *Qinghai Ethnic Folk Literature Materials-Hua'er Materials Special Collection*, which included more Hua'er than any other Hua'er collection. This book contains more Hua'er than any other Hua'er anthology, and is divided into five parts, i.e., Historical Hua'er, Love Hua'er, Labour Struggle Hua'er, War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression Hua'er, and Post-Liberation Hua'er. Post-liberation Hua'er, gradually formed a research team, played a significant role in promoting the development of Hua'er. During the same period, scholars' research attention turned to the discussion of Hua'er's origin, artistic characteristics, value, etc., and began to pay attention to Hua'er, forming a good tradition of collecting and arranging Hua'er and theoretical research. For example, Huang Rong'en's "The Ins and Outs of Hua'er in Qinghai", Zhao Cunlu's "Re-exploration of the "Ins and Outs" of Hua'er", and Sun Zhuqing's "The Ins and Outs of Hua'er". "The Origin of Hua'er", Wang Hao and Huang Rong'en, "An Initial Exploration of the Origin and Flow of Hua'er", and other essays that examine the issue of the origin of Hua'er from multiple perspectives and aspects. The articles such as Wang Hao and Huang Rong'en's "A Preliminary Exploration of the Origin and Flow of Hua'er" explore the origin of Hua'er from various angles and sides, and the in-depth exploration of Hua'er by this group of scholars has produced a favourable impact on the history of Hua'er research.

With the end of the Cultural Revolution and the advancement of reform and opening up, the study of Hua'er has gradually been fully restored, and more and more scholars and Hua'er enthusiasts have been involved in the study of Hua'er from different perspectives, including folk literature, folklore, sociology, ethnology, musicology, and religion. In 1979 Wang Zengqi published the first article on the metre of Hua'er since the 1980s, "The Metre of Hua'er: An



Essay on the New Poetry". Metre--Annotation on Some Problems of Learning New Poetry from Folk Songs", with Wang Zengqi's article taking the lead, and in the later period, voices different from those of Wang Zengqi's article appeared, such as Wang Hao's "The Style and Genre of Hua'er--Annotation on Some Problems of Learning New Poetry from Folk Songs", which was the first article on Hua'er. Hua'er's Metrical Style and Genre--Discussion with the Article on Hua'er's Metrical Style", Wang Hao thinks that the discussion of Hua'er's metrical style needs to distinguish between the genres of Hua'er, and that the metrical style of the genres varies greatly from one to the other; and Xi Huimin's "Hua'er's Metrical Style and the Work of Folk Literature", which is an article by Wang Zengqi. and the Science of Folklore Work". Xi Huimin's article also corrects Wang's inaccuracies by pointing out that the study of Hua'er metre must distinguish between genres and take rhythm as its main focus, and at the end of the article raises the issue of the scientific nature of folklore research in particular.

3.21st century

At the beginning of the 21st century, scholars started from the special geographical area, natural ecological environment, and humanistic environment, i.e., re-dividing Hua'er according to the administrative divisions or geographic characteristics, and carried out regional research on Hua'er. Scholars have achieved rich results according to this type. For example, "Lotus Hill and Lotus Hill "Hua'er"" and so on. This type of research allows us to gain a deeper understanding of the diversity and complexity within the Hua'er, especially the local regional qualities that have bred new characteristics in the development of the Hua'er. Wang Fengyi's Study of Ethnic and Cultural Integration of the Hezhou-type Hua'er explores the social value of the Hua'er in the process of ethnic integration by taking the Han, Hui and Tu Hua'er in Qinghai as an example. With the development of the new era, the inheritance and development of Hua'er have been challenged, and in order to solve this problem, many scholars have begun to explore the future of Hua'er development. Taking Hua'er in Jinfeng District, Yinchuan City, Ningxia as an example, Sun Xu researched the development and practice of school-based curriculum for primary and secondary school students on Hua'er. Exclusive Hua'er tea clubs and stage theatres in the city have become the platforms for the new era of exhibition and dissemination, and there are also campus folk song festivals and other inheritance methods that enable Hua'er to appear under the public's view.(Sun, X. (2017)

There are relatively few studies on "Gansu Hua'er", and it is still at an early stage of development in terms of the number and quality of monographs, dissertations, and journal



articles. Many scholars have studied the inheritance and protection of Hua'er, but fewer scholars have discussed the inheritance and protection of "Gansu Hua'er", which is an intangible cultural heritage. As an intangible cultural heritage, there is still room for research on the inheritance and protection of "Gansu Hua'er".

Conceptual Framework

This study is an investigative study based on the characteristics of "Gansu Hua'er", combined with the examination of the origin and connotation of "Gansu Hua'er" and the exploration of the non-genetic inheritance and protection of "Gansu Hua'er", the conceptual framework of the study is defined as follows. and the exploration of the non-genetic inheritance and protection of "Gansu Hua'er", the conceptual framework of the study is defined as follows:

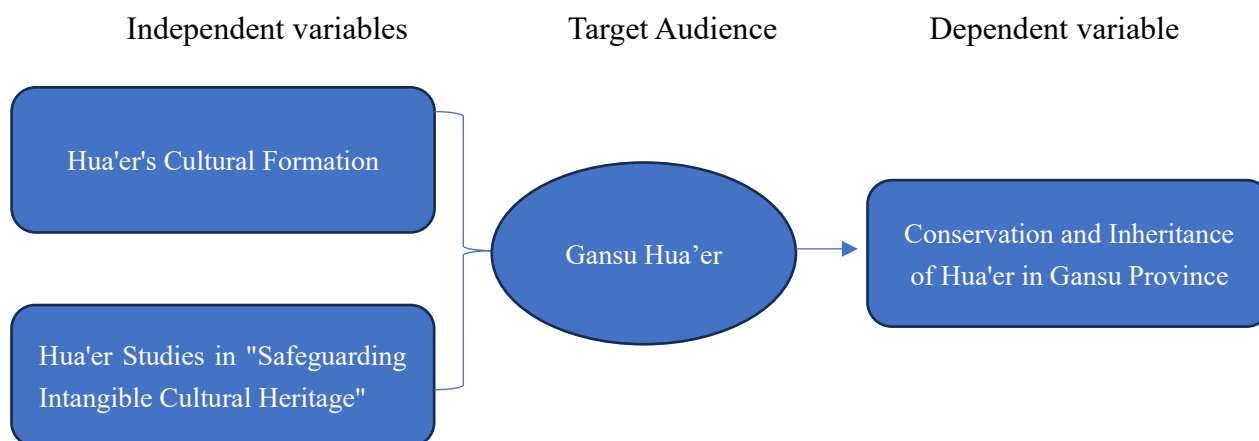


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

1. Using the existing information, inquiring into the published research results, using the participant observation method, comparative research method, on the basis of tracing back the historical documents, the research content of the problem, the phenomenon, the interest and the significance of the three aspects of the research, in exploring the cultural characteristics of Gansu "Hua'er" at the same time, and then In addition to exploring the cultural characteristics of Gansu "Hua'er", the study also proposes how to do a good job of protecting and inheriting Gansu "Hua'er".

2. By going through a large number of materials on "Gansu Hua'er" and consulting local records, the history of the formation and development process of "Gansu Hua'er" are sorted out. By going through a lot of materials on "Gansu Hua'er" and consulting local records, we will sort out the history of the formation and development of "Gansu Hua'er" and put forward the



corresponding thoughts on the inheritance and protection of "Gansu Hua'er" under the perspective of non-heritage.

Research Results

Objective 1. The results show that Hua'er has a variety of cultural forms, is a mode of folk song transmission with strong cultural carrying capacity, and as a folk song with strong regional characteristics, it reflects the content of multi-ethnic society and local cultural psychology. From the distinction of artistic expression form, it can be divided into two kinds of lyric Hua'er and narrative Hua'er; From the distinction of artistic expression system, it can be divided into two kinds of grass Hua'er and big transmission Hua'er.

Objective 2. The results show that "Gansu Hua'er", as an intangible cultural heritage shared by many ethnic groups, is a landmark oral heritage culture among western folk songs and even Chinese folk songs, and is a folk song rich in artistic appreciation and academic research value. Multi-ethnic people sing Hua'er in Chinese together, reflecting the spirit of national affinity and compatibility and coexistence; Unique "Hua'er" oral heritage culture, Hua'er in the process of inheritance for hundreds of years, basically relying on oral transmission, and the spirit of "Hua'er" is the most common folk song in China. During the centuries of transmission, Hua'er has basically relied on oral transmission, forming a set of internal creative singing mechanisms.

Objective 3. The results show that "Gansu Hua'er" as the representative culture of Northwest music and art, its inheritance needs to get more attention and protection, traditional culture combined with the trend of culture, we should take the essence in the process of inheritance, discard the dregs, combined with the trend of the times for its transformation and innovation; relying on the education system for the development of inheritance using the education system to protect the culture is a more direct and effective way, the school is an important place for the country to train talents, cultural inheritance, knowledge innovation. Relying on the education system for development and inheritance, using the education system to protect and inherit culture is a direct and effective way. Schools are an important place for talent training, cultural inheritance, and knowledge innovation in the country, and the use of schools to carry out the inheritance of "Gansu Hua'er" can expand the scope of the "Gansu Hua'er" culture. Using schools to inherit "Gansu Hua'er" can expand the scope of inheritance and improve the efficiency of inheritance.



Discussions

The inheritance of "Gansu Hua'er" has gradually entered a bottleneck, and in order to change this status quo, it is necessary to actively adopt corresponding strategies for inheritance and protection, "Gansu Hua'er" is an important part of Gansu traditional culture. Gansu Hua'er" is an important part of Gansu traditional culture because of its rich content, diverse forms, beautiful tunes and rich life atmosphere. It is because of these characteristics that "Gansu Hua'er" exists in the multiculturalism with unique value. With the continuous change of people's way of life and production, this form of singing, which originated from human production activities, has gradually become unknown, and the development space of "Gansu Hua'er" has been seriously restricted. Due to the influence and limitations of various factors, the strength and breadth of protection are both insufficient and still need to be further improved. Analysing the internal mechanism of the spread of "Gansu Hua'er" and the main problems faced in the inheritance, and how to better protect and inherit "Gansu Hua'er" after the success of Hua'er's bid for inscription, we will focus on the following issues After the success of Hua'er's inscription, how to better protect and pass on "Gansu Hua'er" as a precious intangible cultural heritage will be an opportunity to focus on the future development strategy of "Gansu Hua'er", which is of certain theoretical significance and practical significance for the development of Gansu as a strong cultural province.

Knowledge from Research

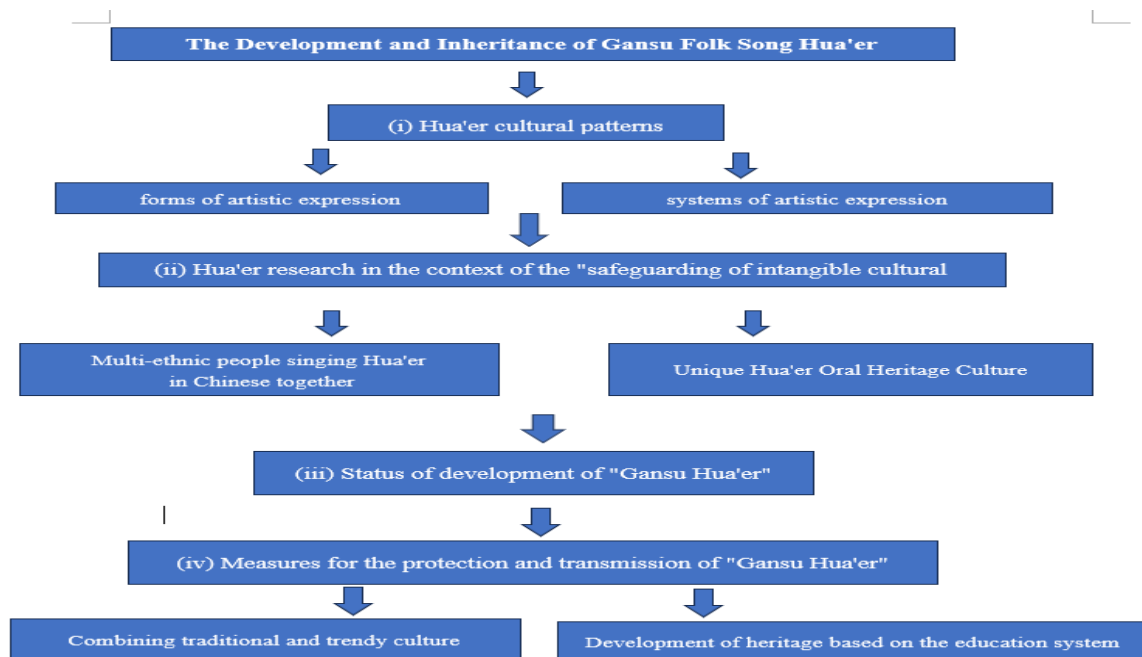


Figure 2 Show Knowledge from Research



"Hua'er is a regional culture that needs to be preserved, with its own unique lyrics, structure and ideological content. In the past, "Hua'er" was passed down by word of mouth, generally from master to apprentice, and apprentice to apprentice, but many excellent "Hua'er" songs have been passed down from generation to generation. However, many excellent "Hua'er" repertoires have been abridged, misunderstood, and lost in the course of this fixed generational transmission, and the backward way of passing on the repertoire has led to the loss of the original simplicity of the "Hua'er". The inheritance and protection of "Hua'er" should be carried on by human beings, and traditional festivals should be used to publicise and protect the art and culture of "Hua'er", and at the same time, the latest culture should be combined with "Hua'er". At the same time, the newest culture and "Hua'er" should be integrated with the times, so that it can gain more vitality and attention, and finally, relying on the education system, the excellent folk singers can enter the schools to give lectures, and the excellent teachers in the schools can enter the folk field investigation and cut into the two-way learning and interaction. Like other intangible cultural heritage, over the years, "Hua'er" has been given an unprecedentedly good premise for survival and development opportunities. We should cherish this great opportunity, and strive to open up new horizons for the survival, development and innovation of Gansu "Hua'er".

Conclusion

Cultural communication is the transmission of knowledge, information, ideas, emotions and beliefs, as well as social interactions related to each other. "Hua'er, which is both a culture and an art, is a folk song created and shared by the peoples of the three provinces (Gansu, Qinghai and Ningxia) in north-west China. Human beings create culture, culture in turn shapes human beings, and the influence of culture on human beings needs to be transmitted and passed on in order to be effective. "Hua'er" is a unique folk art created by the common interpretation of multi-ethnic cultures. In the process of researching Gansu "Hua'er", I have come across different genres of "Hua'er" works, which have different connotations and meanings. "Hua'er" is the feeling of sadness of those who go out to make a living; "Hua'er" is the relief of the people of various ethnic groups in the region where it is popular to cope with the harsh natural ecological environment; and it is also a way for the people of various ethnic groups in the region to overcome the difficulties and difficulties. It is also a channel and source of strength for the ethnic groups in the region to overcome difficulties and obstacles and to enjoy life.



Cultural preservation is not the end and direction of "Hua'er" art; the real meaning of cultural preservation is to let the people living on this land for generations to enhance their cultural confidence, and to protect these precious cultural memories of mankind for our future. The clever combination of cultural protection and the cultural market, through a series of innovative means, so as to adapt to today's tourism, cultural industry development trend, so that the inheritors of the benefits of this ancient art continues to integrate into the lives of modern people, the only way to truly solve the fundamental problem of the contemporary inheritance of the art of "Hua'er". Only in this way can we truly solve the fundamental problem of the contemporary inheritance of "Hua'er" art.

Suggestions

1. Local governments have organised professional musicians to carry out fieldwork to collect folk songs, build up a library of "Hua'er" songs, and dig deeper into the cultural value of "Hua'er". At the same time, localities regularly organise folk song competitions, touring exhibitions and folk songs in the classroom. In addition to the potential value of "Hua'er" as a tourism resource, effective publicity and promotion of this type of cultural product will be carried out to enhance its popularity, and the protection of "Hua'er" will be strengthened, with a view to further activating "Hua'er". These measures will have a positive effect on the protection of Hua'er, with a view to further activating the dissemination and ecological construction of Hua'er.

2. Fusing fresh and trendy culture with "Gansu Hua'er" makes "Gansu Hua'er" develop more vigorously and attract more people's attention and appreciation, thus forming an atmosphere of national efforts to unite and protect and pass on traditional Chinese music culture. This will make "Gansu Hua'er" develop more dynamically, attract more people's attention and appreciation, and then form an atmosphere of unity for all people to make efforts to protect and pass on the traditional Chinese music culture. "Gansu Hua'er" has a long history and various forms, but in recent years it has become less and less attractive to people. Therefore, innovation and breakthrough of "Gansu Hua'er" is a general trend, and in order to innovate, it is necessary to learn from other excellent cultures and integrate excellent cultural inheritance methods and concepts into the traditional "Gansu Hua'er". 'er' culture.

3. The inheritance of the "Gansu Hua'er" requires consideration from both the school and folk perspectives. On the one hand, we invite excellent singers of "Gansu Hua'er" into



colleges and universities to give lectures, so as to stimulate students' enthusiasm for understanding and exploring "Gansu Hua'er". On the other hand, we can also let the excellent teachers in colleges and universities to enter the folk to carry out field investigation, to further strengthen the study and practice of "Gansu Hua'er", so as to realise two-way communication, exchange and learning. On the other hand, we can also let the excellent teachers in universities enter the civil society to conduct field research and further strengthen the study and practice of "Gansu Hua'er", so as to achieve two-way communication, exchange and learning. Through positive interaction and practice, we can improve the quality of the inheritance of "Gansu Hua'er".

References

- Jiawen., M. (2021). Intangible Cultural Heritage Perspectives on the Inheritance and Protection Hezhou Hua'er Master's Degree (Dissertation, Lanzhou University). Master <https://link.cnki.net/doi/10.27204/d.cnki.glzhu.2021.002718doi:10.27204/d.cnki.glzhu.2021.002718>.
- Minmin., Q. (2014). Inheritance protection and innovative development of Gansu Hua'er. *Modern Women (Late)*(03),234-235.
- Qian, S. et al. (2018). Inheritance protection and innovative development of Gansu Hua'er. *Think Tank Times* (39),132+141.
- Sun, X. (2017). *Development and Practice of School-Based Curriculum of "Hua'er"* for Primary and Secondary School Students in Ecological Migration Areas (Pilot) Master's Degree (Dissertation, Yunnan Normal University). M.A. Form https://kns.cnki.net/kcms2/article/abstract?v=RkYMyaebi8WdZV9p6d2MXy6ut_hookcaLbqNhiWhH5rXZLGMGbXHFITK4LYU1je1k3JJKQT5xqEO1KXwFyRmHh4C8Ak9z1ZhNmA1phQlZzxihjOfIPoiUFmtOfZvd42SwhP35ZY0BD3ZrzygPGJkzDT0yF5XvHc&uniplatform=NZKPT&language=CHS
- Xinhua., X. (2024).Exploration of Gansu Hua'er singing. *Peony* (04), 102-104.
- Xiaoyan, A. & Qian., S. (2018). A discussion on the inheritance and protection of the Guansu Hua'er. *Communication Research* (29), 175.