

A Review of Doctoral Dissertations in Music Aesthetics in China, 2003-2023

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Abstract:

Between 2003 and 2023, doctoral dissertations in music aesthetics explored the field from diverse angles. Systematic analysis of 68 related works reveals in-depth research on music's essence, existence, and significance in human spirituality. Systematic analysis of 72 related works reveals in-depth research on music's essence, existence, and significance in human spirituality. Key topics include philosophical consideration of music's essence, interpretation of aesthetic categories, construction of musical ontology, and the role of music in human life. Key topics include philosophical consideration of music's essence, interpretation of aesthetic categories, construction of musical ontology, and exploration of philosophical and cultural roots. By integrating Chinese and Western philosophies and employing interdisciplinary methods, these studies combine philosophical reasoning with empirical analysis, forming diverse argumentation. By integrating Chinese and Western philosophies and employing interdisciplinary methods, these studies combine philosophical reasoning with empirical analysis, forming diverse argumentation paths. They showcase music aesthetics' theoretical development, methodological innovation, and cross-cultural interaction, offering a foundations reference for future research and reflecting the balance between theoretical depth and practical value in music aesthetics. They showcase music aesthetics' theoretical development, methodological innovation, and cross-cultural interaction, offering a foundations reference for future research and reflecting the balance between theoretical depth and practical value in music aesthetics.

Keywords:

Music Aesthetics, Doctoral Dissertation, Review

1. Introduction

Music aesthetics, as a cross-cutting field spanning philosophy, art and cultural studies, has always been centred on the theoretical exploration of music's intrinsic attributes, modes of existence, and its significance in the world of human spirituality. Music aesthetics, as a cross-cutting field spanning philosophy, art and cultural studies, has always been centred on the theoretical exploration of music's intrinsic attributes, modes of existence, and its significance in the world of human spirituality. Between

2003 and 2023, relevant doctoral dissertations have advanced the development of the discipline from a variety of perspectives, covering philosophical discourse on the nature of music, the paths of interpretation of aesthetic music, and the development of a new approach to music. The relevant doctoral dissertations have advanced the development of the discipline from a variety of perspectives, covering philosophical discourse on the nature of music, the paths of interpretation of aesthetic categories, the logical methods of constructing ontology, as well as the philosophical and cultural roots of the discipline. Through the systematic sorting of 68 papers, the theoretical lineage, methodological innovations and cross-cultural dialogue have been developed. Through the systematic sorting of 68 papers, the theoretical lineage, methodological innovations and cross-cultural interactions of music aesthetics research can be clearly presented, providing a basic reference for The researchers have also been able to identify the most important issues in the field of music aesthetics.

2. An Argument for the Essence and Form of Being of Music

This kind of research takes the essence of music and its forms of existence as its core topic. Some studies focus on the philosophical definition of the essence of music and its intrinsic stipulations, which are related to the identity and value positioning of music as an art form, while others are concerned with the pluralistic forms of music's existence, its ways of existence and the mechanisms of generating meanings in different contexts. The Chinese and Western philosophical traditions have provided differentiated theoretical paths for such research: the Confucian ethical view and the Taoist naturalistic view interpret the essence of music in terms of social function and transcendence, respectively; while Western phenomenology, existentialism, and critical theory focus on subject-object relationship, truth manifestation, and social critique. At the same time, the intervention of interdisciplinary methods further reveals the complexity of the existence of music, combining philosophical discourse with empirical analyses to form a multifaceted argumentative path.

2.1. Philosophical definition of the nature of music

Most of the philosophical studies on the nature of music take Chinese and Western thought as their theoretical foundation, and the differences and complementarities between the two as their research paths. Among them, the Confucian ethical view starts from the dimension of social function. For example, Zhang Xiaoyu [1] analyses the rites and music system of the pre-Qin Dynasty and proposes that “harmony” is the core criterion of Confucian ethical aesthetics, and believes that music achieves the harmony of the social order through the “harmony of rites and music”; the Daoist view of nature points to the transcendence with “emptiness and quietness” and “nature”. The Taoist concept of nature points to the transcendental realm of “emptiness and quietness” and “nature”. He Yanshan [2] takes Laozi's thought as an example, argues that the essence of music is metaphysically isomorphic with the Tao, and emphasises that “great sound is like sound”. It also emphasises the philosophical connotation of “the great sound has no sound”. The study of Western phenomenology and existentialism as theoretical cornerstones focuses on the subject-object relationship, with Zhang Luqian [3] proposing that “music is the reconciliation of subject and object” based on the Hegelian dialectic, and arguing that music realises the externalisation of the concept of freedom through content. Tang Yinglong [4] from Adorno's perspective, emphasises music as an “aesthetic salvation” against the

alienation of the cultural industry. There are also studies that highlight the cultural adaptability of music through the modern transformation of classical theories [5].

2.2. Multiple forms of musical existence

Focusing on the study of the multiple forms of musical existence, it is developed from the three dimensions of subjectivity, objectivity and subject-object interaction. Han Zhong'en [6] proposed from a phenomenological perspective that musical meaning is generated through intentional activities, and the listener's conscious projection is the core of meaning construction. Sun Yue [7] combined with Heidegger's existentialism to further argue that music is the manifestation of truth placed into the work by itself. He Ying [8] explores the nineteenth-century notion of the autodidactic concept of the "musical work" and its relation to sensual aesthetic experience. Cheng Bin [9] Studies the epistemology, existentialism and pragmatics of the concept of musical sensibility based on phenomenology and philosophy of experience. Wu Wenhua [10] explores musical perceptual experience from three dimensions: theory, practice and aesthetics, and proposes the theory of "duality". Wu Jia [11] Combined with Kant's a priori theory of sensibility, he puts forward the hypotheses of "perceptual sound structure" and "perceptual opportunity", which are supported by analyses of musical works. Qian Yuezhi [12] proposes that musical time is abstract and persistent because it exists in the intrinsic time dimension of the subject's consciousness. Li Xiaodong [13] proposes reversing the subject and object of music through a review of musical perceptual experience and formalism. The existence of object emphasises the property of music as an independent entity or symbolic system. Huang Hanhua [13] reveals the abstraction mechanism of music to emotional archetypes through semiotic analysis, and constructs the symbolic transformation model of "sound-heart isomorphism"; also focusing on the deconstruction of "sound-heart", Xu Haidong [14] proposes to invert the subject-object of music. Also focusing on the deconstruction of "sound-heart", Xu Haidong [15] advocates the existence of subject-object interaction and pays attention to dynamic meaning generation. He reveals that "sound and heart" is based on the basic connotation of "harmony", "nature" and "virtue", while "quietness" is the basic connotation of "harmony", "nature" and "virtue". "Static" as the common core of these three provides tension for music, making "sound heart" as a standard for evaluating music independent of Western aesthetic judgement; Chen Xinkun [16] explains the practicality of music interpretation by virtue of the theory of metaphor, "the text and the listener", "the text and the listener", "the text and the listener", "the text and the listener", "the text and the listener", and "the text and the listener". "The interaction between text and listener constitutes a network of meaning". Interdisciplinary approaches further expand the boundaries of research. Zhang Weixia [17] employs neuroimaging to verify the neural response mechanism of harmonic melody and reveal the physiological basis of aesthetic judgement; Shi Yong [18] confirms the cognitive association between aesthetic preference for "Shang Pian" and cross-sensory associations by combining with psychological experiments, and Li Haiyan [19] in her research on the basis of metaphorical theory. Extends the aesthetic preference to: "Shangbei" "Tonggan" "Imagination" on its basis. Li Xiaonan [20] further deconstructs philosophical historical ontological, epistemological, and linguistic representations, affirming the predictability and inevitability of changes in musical modes of existence.

Based on the dialogue between Chinese and Western philosophical theories, this type of research integrates interdisciplinary approaches to systematically explain the essential attributes and forms of existence of music. Confucian ethics and phenomenological intentionality theory complement each other, and Taoist naturalism and critical theory collide, while the introduction of empirical paths pushes the discipline to a deeper development, forming an academic paradigm with both theoretical depth and practical value.

3. Interpretation of Musical Aesthetic Categories

This kind of research reflects the methodological plurality and cultural exclusiveness of the discipline through the differences in the paths of interpreting the categories of music aesthetics. The complementarity of Chinese and Western philosophical theories, the interaction between artistic practice and scientific verification, and the cultural dialogue in the context of globalisation have constructed an academic picture of the interpretation of musical aesthetics.

3.1. Paths of philosophical discernment

Some studies take philosophical discourse as the logical foundation and value framework for the interpretation of music aesthetics categories, focusing on core categories such as “harmony”, “neutralisation”, “tranquillity”, “nature”, “intentionality”, “a priori sensibility” and “non-identity” to develop theoretical traceability and connotation deepening. They focus on core categories such as “harmony”, “harmony”, “emptiness and tranquility”, “nature”, “intentionality”, “a priori sensibility”, “non-identity” and other core categories to develop theoretical traceability and connotation deepening.

Among them, Confucian ethical concepts take “harmony” and “neutralisation” as the core. For example, Zhang Xiaoyu, through the analysis of ritual and music system, “emphasises that harmony” as Liu Li [22] takes “harmony” as the ideological source of music aesthetics in Wei, Jin, and North-South Dynasties, and explores the philosophical implications of the categories of “music image” and “music teaching” in the context of “Music Out of the Void Fugue”. The philosophical implications of the categories of “music image” and “music teaching” are discussed in the context of the “Music in the Void”. Taoist philosophy points to the transcendental realm of “emptiness and quietness” and “nature”, and Yan-Shan Hao [2] argues the metaphysical isomorphism between the essence of music and the Tao with the thought of Lao-Tzu. Li Guoqiang [22] organises 43 ancient Chinese music aesthetics categories from the pre-Qin period to the Ming and Qing dynasties. In Western philosophy, phenomenology reveals the subject-object interaction of musical meaning around “intentionality” [6], and Kant’s a priori philosophy explains the universality of aesthetic judgement through “perceptual opportunity” [11]. In addition, Fan Xiaofeng [23] and Jia Bo [24] use the research method of phenomenological philosophy to define the theoretical category of “understanding”, clarify the way of understanding from language to music language, and arrive at the result of understanding. The complementarity between Chinese and Western theories not only deepens the modern transformation of traditional categories, but also provides a philosophical foundation for disciplinary dialogue in the context of globalisation.

Through the theoretical complementarity between Chinese and Western philosophies, the above study systematically expands the boundaries of the

interpretation of the categories of music aesthetics. Confucianism's ethical practice of "harmony" and "neutralisation", Taoism's transcendental pursuit of "emptiness and tranquillity" and "nature", phenomenology's subject-object interaction of intentionality, Kant's universal presupposition of a priori sensibility, and critical theory's power, The subject-object interaction of phenomenological intentionality, the universal presupposition of Kant's a priori sensibility, and the reflection of power in critical theory have jointly constructed a multi-dimensional category system. This kind of interpretation not only deepens the modern transformation of traditional categories, but also provides a philosophical foundation for theoretical dialogue in the context of globalization.

3.2. Practice and evidence-based pathways

Some of the studies have transformed abstract music aesthetics categories into actionable propositions through practical techniques and scientific evidence, focusing on the technical realisation and physiological verification of such categories as "timbre view", "realm theory", "harmony" and "sadness". It focuses on the technical realisation and physiological verification of such categories as "timbre concept", "realm theory", "harmony" and "compassion". On the one hand, physical control is used as a practical path to visualise abstract aesthetic categories: Lu Yong [25] studies the cavity theory in the Ming and Qing singing theories, revealing how the "theory of sound and rhythm" and the "theory of oral method" jointly shaped the Ming and Qing "from elegant to popular" and "from elegant to popular". It reveals how the theories of "sound and rhythm" and "oral method" jointly shape the aesthetic pattern of "from elegant to popular" to "elegant and popular" in the Ming and Qing Dynasties; Shen Xiaolong [26] analyses the relationship between words and sounds, the way of embellishment, and the relationship between qi and sound in the singing of kunqu and proposes that the "rhyme" and "cadence" of "words" and "cadence" of "words" and "cadence" of the singing of kunqu should be analysed. "cadence rhyme" and "qi rhyme" as the aesthetic judgement standard; Zhong Libin [27] explores how the Meipai style of Peking Opera expresses the aesthetics of "neutralisation" through its artistic characteristics; Duan Yan [28] studies the tension of the erhu from its tonal characteristics. Duan Yan studies the tension, breath, and musicality in the performance of erhu from the perspective of its tonal characteristics, pointing out that the performer needs to realise the unity of subject and object in order to achieve the "realm of transformation"; Zang ZhuoMin [29], Guo Yixuan [30], and Zhang Di [31] study the aesthetics of guqin performance from different perspectives respectively. Zang Zhuo Min combed through the aesthetic criteria of the guqin through the ages, and pointed out that "meaning" is the constant aesthetic pursuit of guqin performance; Guo Yixuan, in light of the historical development of guqin theory, revealed the embodiment of the principle of "neutrality and harmony" in performance by analysing the basic elements of the guqin and the problem of tension; Zhang Di, based on the literature of guqin studies in different periods, pointed out that the principle of "neutrality and harmony" has been the key to the development of guqin performance. Zhang Di, based on qin literature of different periods, explained the evolution of the aesthetics of the guqin in the two Han dynasties, the Wei, Jin, North and South Dynasties, and the Tang and Song dynasties. In addition, Line Yingying [32], Tian Xiaobao [33], Pan Mingdong [34], and Wang Yanyan [35] revealed the specific embodiment of aesthetic categories in different musical practices from the perspectives of singing ancient poetic songs, Western classical choral singing, analyses of vocal cadences of the "Transmission of the Sound of the Lefu", and the

study of pipa art, respectively. On the other hand, empirical studies in neuroscience and psychology have provided physiological basis for music aesthetics: Zhang Weixia found that harmonious melodies activate the prefrontal and limbic systems by using brain imaging technology, which verified the physiological basis of the aesthetics of “harmony” [17] ; Zhao Huaiyang [36] verified the neural coding mechanism of harmonious intervals through the experiments of music rule processing. The neural coding mechanism of harmonic intervals has been verified through musical rule processing experiments.

The practical and empirical approach anchors metaphysical aesthetic categories in concrete artistic practices and physiological mechanisms. The technical analysis of vocal and instrumental music, which is rooted in body control, highlights the operational connotation of the category, while the intervention of neuroscience and psychology provides empirical support for the universality and cultural specificity of aesthetic judgement, thus facilitating the transformation of music aesthetics from a discursive to a scientific paradigm.

3.3. Interdisciplinary approaches and cross-cultural comparisons

Some of the studies reshape the theoretical vitality of the categories through interdisciplinary and cross-cultural comparisons, focusing on the semiotic decoding and globalisation regeneration of the categories of “reality”, “beauty of imagery” and “concept of equilibrium”. Semiotics analyses the structured emotional expression of music symbols through the transformational chain of “object→mind→sound” [14], while neuroaesthetics experimentally verifies the neural response mechanism of harmonic intervals [17] , which provides empirical evidence to support the abstract categories. The creative dialogue between Chinese and Western aesthetic categories is reflected in the poetic resonance between the Chinese theory of “reality” and Liszt’s “imaginative beauty” [37] , the Confucian “harmony” and the neoclassical “concept of balance” [14], providing empirical support for the abstract category. The Complementary Interpretation of Confucianism’s “He” and Neoclassicism’s “Balance” [38] and the Cross-cultural Interaction of Tragic Consciousness between East and West in Mahler’s “Song of the Earth” [39] . In the context of globalisation, Sun Hui [40] takes Chen Qigang’s creation as an example, arguing that the fusion of pentatonic modulation and modern techniques realises the contemporary transformation of traditional symbols, while Zang Heng [41] points out that the reconstruction of traditional symbols by digital technology extends the critique of “non-identity” and activates the digital regeneration of cultural memory.

The above research focuses on the interpretation of music aesthetics, and forms a multi-dimensional and three-dimensional theoretical system through philosophical discourse, practical transformation and interdisciplinary dialogue. The ethical practice of Confucianism’s “harmony”, the transcendental pursuit of Taoism’s “emptiness and quietness”, the subject-object interaction of phenomenological intentionality, the physiological verification of neuroscience, and the creative fusion of cross-cultural symbols all together build a scholarly picture that combines both depth and breadth.

4. Music Ontology and Doctrinal Form Construction

Articles that take the construction of musical ontology and doctrinal form as the core of their research rely on the two-way interaction between methodological innovation and the inheritance of academic ideas. In these articles, the in-depth

integration of practice and theory reveals the formal logic and social significance of musical language through the complementarity of technical analyses and cultural interpretations, while the theoretical radiation of philosophers connects the historical clues of the discipline's evolution through the inheritance of the ideological lineage and critical development.

4.1. Dovetail of practice and theory

Some of the studies take the deep interpenetration of practice and theory as the core of their methodology, revealing the inner structure and outer function of music through the complementarity of technical analysis and cultural interpretation. Among them, technical analyses of musical language focus on formal elements such as internally, rhythm, and texture. For example, Yueying Wang [42] proposes that “intervallic tension” is the basis of musical emotional expression through music ontology, and argues that the physical properties of concordant intervals and the universality of auditory perception jointly define the harmonic nature of music; As well as Xiangkui [43] takes the three linguistic elements of tonality, harmony and melody as research clues, the aesthetic value and significance of Hundert's music theory; Xia Erkang [44] takes Beethoven's “Violin Concerto in D Major” as a musical illustration material, to explore the reasons for the formation of the historical viewpoints of fidelity to the original work or recreation and the law of development of the music performance. The cultural coding of creative practice, on the other hand, emphasises the unboundedness of social meanings, such as the study of Anqi Guan [45] through the isomorphic study of music and painting theories in ancient China, which points out that “vividness of chi rhythm” in the “Six Methods” of painting is similar to that of music creation, and that “reality and falsehood are mutually exclusive”. Through the study of the isomorphism of ancient Chinese music and painting theories, it is pointed out that the “six methods” of painting, “chi yun vividness”, and music creation, “the mutual growth of reality and emptiness”, have the homology of formal logic, and it is argued that the theoretical mapping of the cross-artistic disciplines strengthens the cultural interpretation dimension of music. Zhou Zhong's [46] study of Buddhist music philosophy explores the influence of Buddhist culture on music aesthetics, analyses the ontology and function of music from the perspective of religious philosophy, and provides a case study for understanding the intersection of music and religious culture. In addition, some articles further expand the boundaries of research through the application of interdisciplinary methods, such as Li Xuejuan [47] Through the study of the ontological status of sheet music, it is argued that notation is not only a recording tool of musical symbols, but also a carrier of cultural power and social structure, and its function dynamically evolves with the historical context.

It can be seen that such studies have constructed a multidimensional interpretative framework of music ontology through the two-way interaction of technical analysis and cultural interpretation. The physical attributes of formal elements and the universality of auditory perception, the formal isomorphism across artistic disciplines, and the social encoding of musical notation together reveal the dual characteristics of music ontology as both self-regulation and other-regulation, and provide a practical path for the comprehensive innovation of the discipline's methodology.

4.2. Figurehead central axis style (math.)

Part of the research is centred on the theoretical contributions of the philosophers, linking the historical clues and paradigm iterations of the discipline through the transmission and critical development of ideas. Liu Yanfu [48] and Fu Xiaoqing [49] integrate Xunzi's aesthetic thought from the perspectives of poetry and music theory, and music theory respectively. The former explains Xunzi's aesthetic concept of poetry and music creation in the light of his philosophy of "Born to be Human", while the latter explores the value of the "Neutralisation and Harmony Theory of Aesthetic Education". Shi Tianran [50] Analyses Jikang's life and his "Theory of Sound and Music", and discusses his musical ideas. Heng Rongrong [51] Summarises Su Shi's musical aesthetics according to the stages of his career. Dongdong Zhang [52] Combing Xiao Youmei's music aesthetics system and revealing his concept of "eclecticism". Based on Hegelian dialectical aesthetics, Zhang Luqian proposes that music achieves absolute spiritual externalisation through "sensual manifestation" [3]. Lin Hang [53], Li Yang [54], Ji Lu [55] study Stravinsky's music aesthetics from different angles. Lin Hang reveals Stravinsky's "humanism" by combining the Chinese aesthetic category of "supreme goodness"; Li Yang focuses on "self-discipline and other-discipline", and divides Stravinsky's aesthetic thought into three phases: escape, transition, and expansion; Ji Lu analyses neo-classical aesthetics; and Li Yang analyses neo-classical aesthetics. Ji Lu analyses the concept of neoclassical music and discusses the unity of formal purity and historical consciousness. Shuyu Liu [56] Analyses Liszt's thought from the dimension of the concept of "musical artist". Liu Yusi [57] Reinterpretation of Either This or That, and Kierkegaard's Satire on Romantic Music. Wang Fangfang [58] A systematic discussion of Peter Kivy's cognitivist aesthetics of emotion, explaining the relationship between music and literature. Tang Yinglong expands Adorno's concept of "aesthetic redemption" and emphasises its critical spirit [4]. Gao Fuxiao [59] compares Mayer with Hanslick and Susan Langer, and reinterprets the musical expectations and styles in Mayer's aesthetic system.

To sum up, the construction of musical ontology and doctrinal form systematically reveals the formal logic, cultural coding and historical evolution of musical language through the mortise-and-tenon interaction between practice and theory, and the axial connection of characters' thoughts. The objectivity of technical analysis and the subjectivity of cultural interpretation complement each other, and the inheritance of classical theories and the dialogue of contemporary criticism jointly construct an academic system with both depth and breadth.

5. Philosophical Attribution and Cultural Retroactivity

This kind of thesis deeply recognises that the theoretical roots of music aesthetics need to be traced back to the cultural genes and historical contexts of philosophical thought. Because the diversity of philosophical roots shapes the methodological framework of the discipline, and the dynamics of cultural context gives the theory its regional characteristics and practical directions, the cross-influence of the two gives rise to interdisciplinary dialogue and paradigm fusion. Such research can be summarised into three levels, namely, philosophical derivation, cultural exploration and cross-examination, so as to reveal the underlying logic and the vitality of the discipline.

5.1. Philosophy Derivation

These studies focus on the logical support and methodological construction of philosophical theories on music aesthetics, emphasising the complementary interpretation of Chinese and Western philosophical resources. Confucian ethical philosophy gives music a social integration function through “ritual and music edification”, for example, Zhang Xiaoyu [1] argues from the ritual and music system the role of “music to develop harmony” in Confucian ethical practice; Taoist philosophy points to music and Taoism through “emptiness and quietness” and “nature”. “Taoist philosophy, on the other hand, points to the metaphysical isomorphism between music and Tao through “emptiness and quietness” and “nature”, and how Yanshan [2] interprets the transcendental meaning of “great sound” in the light of Laozi’s thought. The meaning of the transcendence of the “great sound” is interpreted by Laozi’s thought. In Western philosophy, phenomenology reveals the subject-object interaction of musical meaning around “intentionality” [6]. In addition, Kantian a priori philosophy explains the aesthetic universality through the “opportunity of sensibility” [11], and Hegelian dialectics connects the concepts of form and freedom with the theory of subject-object reconciliation [3], which expand the methodological boundaries of the discipline.

5.2. Cultural Background Exploration

Such research focuses on the role of cultural context in shaping the value orientation of music aesthetics, and emphasises the dynamic influence of historical practices and regional characteristics. The Chinese ritual and music system regards music as an ethical vehicle. For example, Zhang Pengju [60] reveals the isomorphism between Confucian music aesthetics and political ethics from the “culture of music sense”, while the Mongolian long tune music maps the ecological consciousness of nomadic herdsmen through the natural melody [61]. Western classicism is governed by rational order, as Ji Lu [55] points out that Stravinsky neoclassicism realises the unity of history and form through technical transformation. The study of regional music further highlights the aural expression of cultural symbols: the pentatonic scale of Ordos folk songs embodies the qualities of grassland culture [62]; Lijiang’s cave scripture music balances religious rituals with secular aesthetics [63]; Cai Zhao [64] The study of Taoist internal refining and Chinese instrumental music culture explores the influence of Taoist philosophy and refining methodology on the aesthetics of instrumental music and demonstrates how Taoist culture and music aesthetics are related. the deep integration of Taoist culture and music aesthetics, further enriching the research dimension of cultural background exploration. Li Xuejie analyses and reveals the influence of Judaism’s aesthetics on Schoenberg’s compositions before and after his religious conversion. Ye Songrong [65] analyses the limitations of musical innovation caused by subjective and objective factors in “new music” during the two historical transitions of music in the 20th century in the West. In the context of globalisation, Sun Hui takes Chen Qigang’s creations as an example to demonstrate the contemporary transformation of traditional categories through the fusion of Chinese and Western techniques [40].

5.3. Cross-cutting inquiries

This kind of research focuses on how the cross-interaction between philosophy and culture gives rise to new paths and promotes the deep development of the discipline into cross-fields. Ling Xianchu alternates theoretical analyses with musical analyses to explore the correlation between ethics and changes in musical styles in the light of

the transmutation of music ethics. In some of the articles, empirical science provides verification of traditional propositions, such as neuroimaging technology revealing the physiological basis of “Shanghe” aesthetics [17]; and psychological experiments demonstrating the cognitive connection between “Shangpai” preference and association [18]. Technological innovation further expands the intersecting boundaries: Zang Heng [41] points out that digital technology reconfigures traditional symbols, extending the critique of “non-identity” and activating the digital regeneration of cultural memories. Through the fusion of paradigms, this kind of research promotes the contemporary interpretation of categories such as “reality” and “beauty of imagery”.

6. Conclusions

By systematically combing the 72 doctoral dissertations in the field of music aesthetics between 2003 and 2023, the following conclusions can be drawn: research on music aesthetics in this period has shown a multidimensional and deep development, covering such important aspects as philosophical deliberation on the essence of music, the path of interpretation of aesthetic categories, the construction of ontology, and the exploration of philosophical and cultural roots. In the exploration of the essence of music, researchers have fully explored the philosophical resources of both Chinese and Western philosophies, combining the Confucian ethical outlook and the Taoist concept of nature with Western phenomenology, existentialism, and critical theory, and forming a diversified path of argumentation, which not only reveals the essential attributes of music, but also demonstrates its form of existence in different cultural contexts. Through philosophical discourse, practical transformation and interdisciplinary dialogue, the interpretation of music aesthetics has expanded the connotation and boundaries of the core categories and constructed a multi-dimensional theoretical system. The study of the construction of music ontology and doctrinal form reveals the formal logic and social significance of music language through the in-depth integration of technical analysis and cultural interpretation. In addition, the exploration of philosophical attribution and cultural tracing further deepens the understanding of the theoretical foundation of music aesthetics, highlighting the role of cross-interaction between philosophy and culture in promoting the development of the discipline. These research results not only provide a solid foundation for the theoretical development of music aesthetics, but also point out the direction for future academic exploration, which has important theoretical value and practical significance, and promotes the continuous progress of the discipline of music aesthetics.

Conflicts of Interest

Rui Yang and Xiaoyang Xuan declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization: Rui Yang.Xiaoyang Xuan.; Methodology: Rui Yang.Xiaoyang Xuan.; Resources: Rui Yang.; Writing – original draft preparation: Rui Yang.; Writing – review and editing: Rui Yang. Xiaoyang Xuan.; Supervision: Xiaoyang Xuan.

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