

Hakka Research Series of Hakka Research Center of Gannan Normal University

(赣南师范学院客家研究中心学术文库)

主编：曾志刚 执行主编：邹春生

# A Cultural Study of Hakka Folk Songs

## (客家山歌文化研究)

Translated By: TIAN MINGGANG

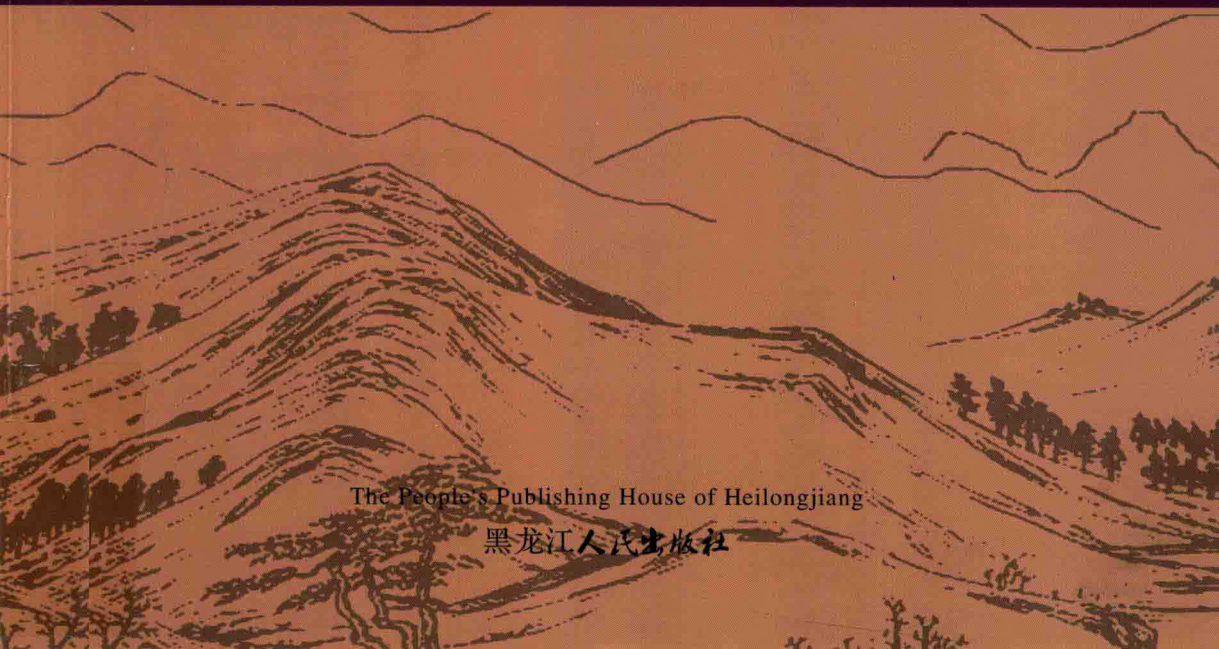
Written By: ZHONG JUNKUN

编译：田明刚

原著：钟俊昆

The People's Publishing House of Heilongjiang

黑龙江人民出版社



Hakka Research Series of Hakka Research Center of Gannan Normal University

(赣南师范学院客家研究中心学术文库)

主编:曾志刚 执行主编:邹春生

# **A Cultural Study of Hakka Folk Songs**

(客家山歌文化研究)

**Translated By: TIAN MINGGANG**

**Written By: ZHONG JUNKUN**

编译:田明刚

原著:钟俊昆

**The People's Publishing House of Heilongjiang**

黑龙江人民出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

客家山歌文化研究 = A Cultural Study of Hakka  
Folk Songs : 英文 / 钟俊昆著 ; 田明刚译. — 哈尔滨:  
黑龙江人民出版社, 2016.5  
ISBN 978 - 7 - 207 - 10730 - 5

I. ①客… II. ①钟… ②田… III. ①客家人—山歌  
—文学研究—中国—英文 IV. ①I207.7

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2016)第 106343 号

责任编辑:朱佳新

封面设计:鲲鹏

**A Cultural Study of Hakka Folk Songs**

**客家山歌文化研究**

Translated By: TIAN MINGGANG

Written By: ZHONG JUNKUN

编译:田明刚

原著:钟俊昆

出版发行 黑龙江人民出版社

地 址 哈尔滨市南岗区宣庆小区 1 号楼

邮 编 150008

网 址 [www.longpress.com](http://www.longpress.com)

电子邮箱 [hljrmchs@yeah.net](mailto:hljrmchs@yeah.net)

印 刷 黑龙江艺德印刷有限责任公司

开 本 787 × 1092 1/16

印 张 17

字 数 300 千字

版 次 2016 年 5 月第 1 版 2016 年 5 月第 1 次印刷

书 号 ISBN 978 - 7 - 207 - 10730 - 5

定 价 42.00 元

版权所有 侵权必究

法律顾问:北京市大成律师事务所哈尔滨分所律师赵学利、赵景波

## A Cultural Study of Hakka Folk Songs

**Abstract:** Hakka is a branch of Han Nationality which evolved into being during their migration from the Central Plains to the South of China during various phases. The Hakka culture is a typical immigrant culture of the Han people and the Hakka folk songs are an important cultural scene.

Hakka folk songs have been subject to the special geographical, economic, cultural, political and traditional influences. Their emergence and development is a gradual process along the Hakka people's southward migration.

According to the characteristics and principles of the traditional classification, Hakka folk songs fall into six categories, namely, love songs, life songs, didactic songs, nursery rhymes and miscellaneous songs. An analysis of these songs show the Hakka people's interest and spirit embodies therein.

Influenced by Chinese traditional literature since the Book of Songs, Hakka folk songs trace their origin to the constant clashes between and cultural of the Central Plains and the Southern native culture, with the former gradually infiltrating into the latter. That is why the Hakka folk songs are vigorous and robust in styles like the Northern folk songs while they retain the grace and temperance of the Southern folk songs. With their forms varying between AAAB and AABA, tetrameter in lines of seven characters, there is a number of techniques employed, such as puns, overlapping analogy, hyperbole, elaboration and metaphor.

Due to the historical causes their evolution and present status, the Hakka

## A Cultural Study of Hakka Folk Songs

客家山歌文化研究

folk songs are characterized by the Hakka society and culture, which are typically traditional, extensive, regional, emotional and rich in wisdom. It is good for the development of tourism if we can promote the inherit Hakka folk songs.

**Key words:** Hakka folk songs, emergence and classification, origin and style, artistic and cultural characteristics, folk ways, tourism development

# CONTENTS

<b>Chapter One</b>	<b>The Hakka Folk Songs Study: Spectra and Achievements</b>	1
I.	The Spectra of Hakka Folk Songs	1
II.	Achievements of Hakka Folk Songs Research	3
<b>Chapter Two</b>	<b>Origin, Formation and Characteristics of Hakka Folk Songs</b>	8
I.	Origin of Hakka Folk Songs	8
II.	Causes of Formation of the Hakka Folk Songs	14
A.	Geographical Locations	15
B.	Economic Conditions	15
C.	Cultural Level	16
D.	Political Situations	17
E.	Humanistic Tradition	18
F.	Religious Consciousness	19
G.	Styles of Hakka Folk Songs	21
H.	Emotional Needs	23
III.	The Tradition and Characteristics of the Hakka Folk Songs	24
<b>Chapter Three</b>	<b>Types of the Hakka Folk Songs</b>	31
I.	Classifications of the Hakka Folk Songs Considered	31
II.	Types of Hakka Folk Songs	33

# A Cultural Study of Hakka Folk Songs

客家山歌文化研究

A. Stylistic songs .....	33
B. Love Songs .....	37
C. Life Songs .....	45
D. Ritual Songs .....	48
E. Admonishing Songs .....	52
G. Miscellaneous Songs .....	61
III. Types of the Hakka Folk Songs in Case Studies .....	64
A. Winning and Losing People's Hearts .....	64
B. Philosophical Ideas about Life .....	66
C. Work Scenarios .....	70
D. Songs about Love's Plight and Complaint .....	75
E. Heart-break Love and Marriage .....	78
F. Good Wishes and Eulogies .....	81
G. Historical Legends .....	83
IV. The Mountain-Roaming Songs and Their Value of Longnan County .....	86
A. Aesthetic Value .....	89
B. Aesthetic Value .....	93
C. Economic Value .....	96
<b>Chapter Four Styles of the Hakka Folk Songs .....</b>	<b>97</b>
I. A Variety of Styles .....	97
II. The Formation of the Style of Hakka Folk Songs .....	102
<b>Chapter Five The Artistic Highlights of the Hakka Folk Songs .....</b>	<b>106</b>
I. The Expressions of the Hakka Folk Songs .....	106
A. Multiplicity of Artistic Expressions .....	106
B. The Use of the Traditional Methods of <i>Fu</i> , <i>Bi</i> and <i>Xing</i> .....	108
C. Expressions Related with Figures of Speech .....	110

II. An Analysis of the Rhythm of the Hakka Folk Songs .....	131
A. Characteristics of the Rhythm of the Hakka Folk Songs .....	131
B. Meanings of the rhythms of the Hakka folk songs .....	132
III. The Artistic Characteristics of the Hakka Folk Songs .....	135
A. Continuity and Historicity .....	136
B. Universality and Extensiveness .....	138
C. Distinct Regionalism .....	139
D. Sincerity and Subtlety of Feelings .....	140
E. Functional Value .....	142
<b>Chapter Six The Hakka Folk Songs and the Hakka .....</b>	<b>145</b>
I. The Characteristics of the Hakka Folk Songs and the Hakka .....	145
A. The Hard Life of the Hakka Revealed from <i>The Fifth Watch at Night</i> .....	145
B. The Tough and Firm Characteristics Revealed in the Hakka Folk Songs .....	148
C. The Hakka's Ways of Thinking seen through <i>The Icy Soaking Rain to         the Ground</i> .....	149
D. The Emotional Expressions in the Hakka Folk Songs .....	151
E. The Educational Views in the Hakka Children's songs .....	153
II. The Hakka Folk Songs and the Psychological Attributes of the Hakka .....	156
A. The Blessing Psychology in the Farewell Songs .....	156
B. The Use of the Curses and the Related Mentality Revealed from <i>Cursing My Lass</i> and <i>Cursing My Lad</i> .....	159
C. The Secret Psychology in the Hakka Bitter Love Songs .....	161
D. The Psychology of Love Betrayed from the Hakka Love Songs .....	164
III. The Hakka Folk Songs and the Hakka Women Images .....	170



# A Cultural Study of Hakka Folk Songs

客家山歌文化研究

A. The Emotional Life of the Hakka Women .....	171
B. The Praise of and Dissuasion to the Hakka Women .....	178
C. Dissatisfied Nuns: Uproar of the Youth .....	182
D. The Weeping Women's Pathetic Song .....	183
E. The Living Conditions of the Hakka Women revealed from <i>Women's Bitterness</i> .....	187
F. The Extramarital Love Songs and the Late - life Love .....	188
G. The Misery of Child Bride and the Girl Who Waits for the Child - Husband .....	190
H. The Ignored Widows' Mentalities .....	194
I. The Girls Who Are Getting Married Scold the Matchmakers .....	195
J. The Crying Wedding Songs of the Hakka Marriage Custom .....	197

## Chapter Seven The Cultural Explanation of the Hakka Folk Songs

.....	207
I. The Cultural Appeal of the Hakka Folk Songs .....	207
A. The Cultural Characteristics of the Hakka Folk Songs .....	208
B. The Cultural Connotation of the Hakka Marriage Rites Songs .....	210
C. The Cultural Implication of the Hakka Exhortation Songs .....	217
D. The Tragicomedy Psychology of the Hakka .....	218
II. The Cultural Context of the Hakka Folk Songs .....	220
A. The Natural Features .....	220
B. The Psychological Characteristics .....	222
C. The Emotional Function .....	226
D. The Wise Appearance .....	228

## Chapter Eight Hakka Folk Songs and Folklore .....

I. The Folk Custom Characteristics of Hakka Folk Songs .....	232
A. The Relationship between Hakka Folk Songs and Folk Custom ...	232

B. Hakka Scenery Songs .....	234
C. Hakka Girls' Sachets .....	235
D. Hakka Folk Songs and Communication Folk in <i>Letter Song</i> .....	236
E. Cultural Atmosphere in Farewell .....	238
II. Comparison of Folk Culture between Hakka Folk Songs and Yi Poetry .....	240
<b>Chapter Nine Tourism Development of Hakka Folk Song Culture</b> .....	245
I. Development Conditions of Hakka Folk Song Culture-based Tourism Exploitation .....	245
A. Long History .....	245
B. Substantial Content .....	246
C. Striking Local Characteristics .....	247
II. Meaning of Hakka Folk Song Culture Tourism Development .....	248
A. Promote the Protection and Development of Hakka Folk Song Culture .....	248
B. Promote the Economic Development of Hakka Area .....	249
C. Expand the Development Space of Tourism in Hakka Area .....	250
D. Enhance the Image of Tourism in Hakka Area .....	251
III. Hakka Cultural Tourism Developmental Modes .....	253
A. Festivals .....	253
B. Museums .....	254
C. Experiences .....	256
D. Souvenirs .....	257
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	259

# Chapter One

## The Hakka Folk Songs Study: Spectra and Achievements

### I. The Spectra of Hakka Folk Songs

As a form of folk literature, Hakka folk songs have been principally kept in oral transmission and writing in addition, their expressions being solos, duets in mountains and fields and public singing contests. They are lively and interesting constituents of folk literature that has ample cultural characteristics and rich psychological personalities of the Hakka people. They serve as a mirror held up to society and time that reflects the spirit, conventions, mindset and aesthetics of Hakka people and Hakka community as a whole.

It is supposed that the study of Hakka folk songs involves these aspects. However, the sad fact is there still much room for improvement. To begin with, most of the researchers are literary and historical critics who are apt to fix their eyes on the literary texts and history of Hakka folk songs, the former in particular, have generated many stylistic studies that focus upon the synchronic phenomena in literature, such as structure, tempo, style and theme. It is, therefore, obvious that the diachronic research in the structural and stylistic development of the Hakka folk songs, conditioned by economic and social facts, has not been adequately carried out. The current genetic research of the Hakka folk songs fail to account for the social, cultural, economic, political intricacies that have made

## A Cultural Study of Hakka Folk Songs

客家山歌文化研究

the stylistic development possible on the one hand; and it fails to understand the developmental view of the Hakka folks, and therefore fails to present a clear picture of the origins, mutations and modes on the other hand. Furthermore, the comparative study of the folk songs between Hakka people and other nationalities is still scarce, which makes it difficult for researchers concerned to identify their unique marks, let alone their characteristics and achievement. Stalin once said that every nation, small or big, has her own essential characteristics and distinctiveness exclusively belonging to her own, and they contribute to the treasure house of the world culture by supplementing and enriching it. In this light, it is necessary and valid to understand the cultural mentality through folk songs, which is the value of a comprehensive study of Hakka folk songs.

Up to now, besides Hakka literature, there has been research of of Hakka folk culture and music, which is nevertheless not adequate, and the analytic study of the Hakka folk songs, on the basis of the her cultural conventions, ethnical psychology including spirit and character, ethnical modes of thinking, beliefs and value judgment, is still quite scarce, to say nothing of any exact and persuasive logical demonstrations concerned. We should, therefore, collect the historical folk songs and contemporary material of Hakka folk songs as the guide and frame of reference of the comprehensive study in order to acquire clear and sound knowledge of the Hakka community sociologically, anthropologically and aesthetically.

Examples are always beneficial. Currently, the commitment to Hakka studies in Hong Kong and Taiwan is deepening. The economic focus shifted to South-east Asia will bring about shift of the cultural focus in degrees. To accommodate this trend, looking for one's cultural root has become a fad. The ancestral search not only means looking for one's ancestors, but also means the identification with his cultural origin and attention to the cultural trend, which engenders the urgency of reinforcing the comprehensive study of the mainland Hakka culture, with an aim to end our backward research situation and join and then lead the research in

this area as soon as possible. We must, for this purpose, aim high and look far in researching Hakka folk songs by drawing heavily on the research achievement both at home and abroad, and publish original works. This is our emphasis and target. Only hard work can help us realize our desired goal.

## II. Achievements of Hakka Folk Songs Research

As far as the author of the book is concerned, the early attention to the Hakka folk songs in the academic circle was paid to the debate of Hakka and indigenous people. Huang Zunxian had accumulated and recognized Hakka folk songs in the later period of Qing Dynasty before Hakka Studies became a discipline. In early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Li Jinfu, author of *Love Songs of Easter Guangdong*, Luo Xianglin, author of *Easter Guangdong Lyrics*, Zhong Jingwen, author of *A Collection of Hakka Love Songs*, and writers like Zhu Xizu and Zhu Ziqing showed their interest in Hakka folk songs while Zhang Ziping incorporated Hakka folk songs into his novels. These precursors have made great achievement in collecting Hakka folk songs and making comparative study between Hakka folk songs and other ethnical folk songs. They benefited much from the Lyrical Study Seminars launched in Peking University and Zhongshan University as a result in a way of Hakka vs Indigenous debate in the twenties and thirties of the 20th century. Owing to the special context, the researchers used excessive words of praise in their study of literary techniques instead of broader perspectives.

From 40s to the end of 70s of the last century, researchers contributed very little to the Hakka Studies except some collected and revised folk songs such as *Hakka Love Songs* by Jiang Cheng and Shi Dan, which was very popular indeed. In Taiwan, Hakka folk songs have until this day been collected, revised, written and researched along with the diasporic cultural study and the promotion of Hakka dialect as one of the methods to promote Hakka dialect, which is also a political and economic measure to win diasporic independence because of the long-term

## A Cultural Study of Hakka Folk Songs

客家山歌文化研究

problem of diasporas.

Since 1980s, with the triad project of “folk lore, folk tales and folk proverbs” well under way, and accelerated by the overseas root-search fad, the implementation of the open policy and foreign investment invitation, a series of research achievement has been made in the upsurge of Hakka Studies. Yan Yuntong and Ling Huojin of *Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region* published *Guangxi Hakka Folk Songs Study*, Huang Huoxing of Guangdong Province 1900 *Selected Hakka Folk Songs*, Hu Xizhang and others *A Complete Book of Hakka Folk Songs*, Hu Xizhang *Who's Who of the Hakka Folk Songs: A Brief Introduction*, Ye Yunzhang and Huang Huoxing *Appreciation of Hakka Folk Songs*, Luo Xuan and Yang Chun of south Jiangxi *King of Hakka Folk Songs, A Novel*. Besides, there have been collections of folk songs published by some cities, such as *Xingguo Folk Songs*, *Folk Songs of the Origin of the East Branch of Pearl River*, and essays like *A Discussion of Hakka Folk Songs* by Zhong Luoyuan of Sichuan Province.

Let us discuss two instances to show what was going on in Hakka Studies during this period. Huang Huoxing had amassed material for his 1900 *Selected Hakka Folk Songs* before he published *Meizhou Landscape: A Selection of Hakka Folk Literature*. The former book is now really difficult to find although 75,000 copies were printed. This book collects a large number of folk songs, most of them being love songs arranged in the development of relationship, and further subcategorized into prelude, introduction, antiphony, composition, question, courtship, refusal, family background, age, qualifications, first love, exhortation, parting, love-sickness, sighs, reprimand, jilting and consolation. Most of them are still popular and are carefully chosen with care



Xie shuilian, one of the Red Army Singers, is teaching the Hakka Fove song. Shot by Gong Yinghua

from *The Hakka Folk Songs of East Guangdong* and substantiated for publication of *Travel Companion*. This book also includes ten more songs such as *Love Songs of Overseas Chinese Hometown*, *Ten Visits to Taiwan for A Missing Husband* and *Tail Against Tail*. It is also prefaced by Yi Zheng, a poet and critic, and concluded with *Words at the End of the Book*, a postscript by the author himself.

In his Preface *The Artistic Beauty of Hakka Love Songs*, Yi Zheng captures the beauty of Hakka love songs with his poetic sensuality, saying that “they reveal deep love, ardent pursuits and good wishes of the true nature of the laborers, without any embellishment and affectation on the one hand; they have strong earthly aroma, striking mountainous color and deft use of analogy and association that constitute their artistic characteristics on the other.”

Besides, metaphors are effectively employed to express the Hakka people's feelings because they are derived from life and work and add a special interest to the Hakka love songs. Yizheng's *Meizhou Landscape: A Selection of Hakka Folk Literature* is a combination of paperwork with videos as a collection of the Hakka literary pieces which include love songs.

*The Folk Songs of the East River Source* compiled by Lu Xianxing is a work to commemorate the anniversary of Hong Kong's return to China. This work has five parts: folk songs and love songs, long songs and ditties, Ballads of the Soviet Area, Children's songs and ballads, idioms and proverbs, and it is prefaced by Zhang Tao, chairman of Jiangxi Folk Art and Literature Association, and concluded with a postscript by the compiler himself. The east river has its source at An Yuan, a county in the south Jiangxi province. *The History of Ming Dynasty* records that there is a river called dragon river, which lies in the south of Long Chuan, that flows from An Yuan county. As this river flows to Hong Kong, this book takes in folk songs that are popular in the Hakka region of the upper stream of the East River, by blending into them local oral literary pieces and Hakka culture. In his postscript, Zhang Tao evaluates these folk songs as numerous, popular and sentimental since they adopt the local language to express strong feelings

of men and women. It also contains An Yuan idioms and proverbs as well as folk cultural legends and stories, which is very helpful to the understanding of this region.

These two instances show that the study of Hakka folk songs can roughly be categorized into material collection, textual reading and creation based on the subject-related folk songs. It is regrettable that up to this day, some works are still confined to the literary devices, such as *A Research of the Hakka Folk Songs of Guangxi Autonomous Region* and *Comprehensive Knowledge of Hakka Folk Songs*. They have set limits to the research in this area but also opened new academic possibilities as well.

During this period, also published were *Xingguo Folk Songs* and *A Research of the Hakka Folk Songs of Jiangxi Province*, which made contributions to the collection and analyses of lyrics and musical notations. More encouraging was that the academic team of Zhongshan University, out of the textual confines, researched into Hakka folk songs by way of folklore, anthropology and religion and made substantial achievements, such as *Hakka Folk Songs* by Liu Xiaochun and others, one of the series of non-material cultural heritage, *Singing and Gods-Worshipping: Lives of the Hakka Women in Villages and Towns*, a doctoral dissertation by Xu Xiaoying, *A Literature View of Hakka Folk Songs Study and The Sunset Glow of the Hakka Folk Songs* by Jie Liying who also discussed Hakka folk songs in her doctoral dissertation in which she insists on the importance of the interaction between singing background, singers and audience in the framework of the passing and protection of the non-material cultural heritage. Besides, Wang Weina, a doctor of Zhongshan University, conducted field study in Changting county, Fujian, of Hakka folk songs, which is expected to be fruitful.

*A Cultural Study Hakka Folk Songs*, likewise, attempts to make interpretations of the weaknesses in the study of the literary devices, such as types of Hakka folk songs, the use of Hakka dialect, Hakka folk songs and customs. With a view to Hakka culture, special emphasis will be laid upon the external study of



Hakka folk songs, that is, to investigate the cultural origins, Hakka folk songs and women, the relationship between Hakka folk songs and folkways and cultural patterns by way of sociology, cultural anthropology and folklore, together with field study, so that a tentative explanation can be made of its origins, types, connotations and innovations.

For this book, I have made many preparations for almost ten years, from the time when I studied as a graduate student in Sichuan University to the days when I presided over *On Hakka Folk Songs*, a provincial project of Jiangxi Educational Department and The Hakka Literary History of Fujian, *Guangdong and Jiangxi*, a National Social Science Planning Fund project in recent years, in which I made a systematic study of Hakka culture and literature and published *Hakka Culture and Literature and History of Hakka Literature*. These two books, incorporated with creations of men of letters and oral legends as well new reflections upon Hakka culture and literature, provide the basis for this book. I have also published a dozen of articles, such as *The Cultural Context of Hakka Folk Songs*, *The Cultural Interpretation of Hakka Folk Songs*, *A Tentative Discussion of the Formation of Hakka Folk Songs* and *The Styles of Hakka Folks Songs* in *Journal of Gannan Normal University*, *Literary Critique*, *Journal of Jiaying University*, *the Periodical of Hakka Research and Agricultural Archaeology*, and I have been awarded prizes for some articles by Jiangxi Literary Association and Jiangxi Social Science Association. I have also been recognized by Liu Shahe, a famous poet, Professor Zhang Fang of Sichuan University Professor Wang Jianzhong of Beijing Normal University and praised by the anonymous experts with the national social science projects.