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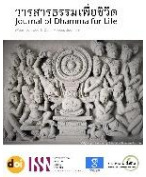

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The Importance of Field Investigation to the Creation of Red Dance

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the challenges encountered in the creation of Red Dance and underscores the significance of fieldwork in this process, with a focus on emotional expression, authenticity, and the preservation of red cultural memory. Fieldwork enables a deep understanding of local cultural heritage and values by observing and documenting daily life and celebratory activities, thus providing critical insights into the cultural background of Red Dance. The research highlights the emotional expressions employed in the dance's creation and how these resonate with audiences, elucidating the function and role of Red Dance in various contexts. Through engagement with local communities and dancers, the study assesses the authenticity of Red Dance, evaluating the balance between traditional elements and innovative practices. Additionally, fieldwork contributes to documenting the historical evolution of Red Dance and its role in cultural memory inheritance, emphasizing the importance of authenticity and emotional expression in dance creation. These findings offer a foundation for both the creation and preservation of Red Dance, while also fostering a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of its cultural significance.

Introduction

Red dance is an important manifestation of red culture, which is of great value in inheriting red culture and carrying forward revolutionary spirit. During the revolutionary period, the red dance inspired the soldiers' fighting enthusiasm with full emotions and enhanced the revolutionary cohesion; In peacetime, red dance reflects and praises the great course of the construction of new China, and it is an important art form to show the Communist Party of China (CPC)'s hard struggle and selfless dedication in the new period. (Rao Hua,2022)

In China, "Red Dance" is the mainstream of China's dance creation. These works promote the creative process of China's dance art with positive and enterprising artistic power.

The creation of "Red Dance" is not only the embodiment of the dancer's personal will, but also the spiritual need of the whole society based on the same cultural psychology, which is closely related to the Communist Party of China (CPC)'s literary policy. As an important guide to literary theory, literary thought, literary creation and cultural governance, literary policy is a concentrated expression of the state's will in the development of literature and art. From May 2, 1942, Comrade Mao Zedong called for literature and art to "go deep into the masses" in his Speech at the Yan 'an Forum on Literature and Art, and from October 15 to 18, 2011, at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Seventeenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), he proposed "promoting the great development and prosperity of socialist culture". On November 9, 2013, the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee in communist party, China proposed to "improve aesthetic education and improve students' aesthetic and humanistic qualities", and on October 18, 2017, The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China put forward the policy of "strengthening cultural self-confidence and promoting the prosperity of socialist culture", which not only witnessed the development and changes of society, but also reflected the general direction of China's literary and artistic development. (Jiangdong,2021)

Red dance is the product of the combination of strong spiritual belief connotation and cultural and artistic forms. Its profound spiritual connotation is a precious national spiritual treasure precipitated by the baptism of revolutionary years and the test of revolutionary history, and it is also one of the core internal factors that support the continuous development and prosperity of contemporary dance art. Since its birth, the creation of red dance has witnessed the important historical periods of the Chinese national liberation struggle, such as the New Democratic Revolution, the Long March, the construction of anti-Japanese revolutionary base areas, the founding of New China, and the reform and opening up. The creation in different periods will show new revolutionary spirit connotation and vitality of the times, but its spiritual essence is to express the eulogy of the party and the motherland, the people and revolutionary heroes, the expectation and pursuit of a better life and bright hope, and the rich guidance and positive encouragement of the people's spiritual beliefs. (Cao Xiaojuan,2022)

Objective

This paper mainly introduces the significance of field investigation to the creation of red dance, with special emphasis on the role of emotion, authenticity and the inheritance of red cultural memory.

Research Methodology

Literature research

The researcher conducted a comprehensive literature search using resources such as the website https://www.baidu.com,www.cnki.net,Chinese and foreign literature is reviewed, including academic journals, dissertations, books and other relevant materials. Focus on collecting the data of red dance, and investigate the creative methods of red dance in the field to expand the knowledge.

Research results

1. Problems existing in the creation of red dance.

1.1 Dance is ambiguous

Red dance is not a single red costume, red props, red lights and so on. At present, some red dances have obvious unclear meanings in the creation process. Although the dance movements are beautiful and the dance skills are superb, the dance connotation and meaning they want to express are unclear and incomprehensible, which brings visual impact to the viewers, but fails to leave a deep impression on people. This phenomenon shows that the moral design of dance is unreasonable, or that the dancers simply don't know how to express the moral of dance. In fact, dance was originally produced to express human emotions. A good dance work should transmit emotions to the audience, so that the audience's emotions can be happy or sad, excited or fresh with the changes of the stage. This is the foundation of art. Dance without emotion is gymnastics, which does not belong to the category of dance at all. Dance thoughts and movements cannot be integrated, which can be said to be the primary problem in the current red dance creation.

1.2 Creative reference too much

Too much reference in dance creation is the biggest drawback of dance development. In the process of creation, many dances learn from each other, and too many references lack performance characteristics. For example, at present, there are similarities in the work and team expression of many ethnic dances, so many people who watch the dance will feel deja vu, and then they are unwilling to watch dance programs, which ultimately makes the dance market far less effective than other art types. Zhang Jigang, a famous choreographer, once said: "There is a bad tendency in the creation of dance art, that is, the choreography of the creator has no characteristics, no style, and blindly grandstanding." This passage shows that the current dance creators are caught in the bottleneck of dance style research. If they can't innovate, the dance creators will have no inspiration and no idea, and finally they will run out of Jiang Lang, which makes the dance creation work blindly imitate and form a vicious circle.(Wang Wenpin,2017)

1.3 Acrobatic dance

Dance creators have no creative inspiration and can't find a suitable life. In the end, they have to take a strange road and take a dangerous road in action arrangement, which eventually makes red dance too acrobatic from creation. For example, Yang li Ping's "The Spirit of Sparrows" and Huang Doudou's "Drunken Drum" and "The Soul of Qin Fighters" have high difficulty in dance movements, but they show their love for the nation and nature, with rich dance connotations and shared dance enjoyment. However, at present, the acrobatic dance

type is a combination of various acrobatic techniques, such as: somersault splicing jump; Flip splicing leg press bow; Full-court Xuanzi splicing threatens to fly empty. This kind of dance is not the enjoyment of beauty, or even the torture of the viewer. Although it is matched with beautiful dance costumes and stage design, the dance has no beauty and enthusiasm for action, but only a highly acrobatic performance, which cannot conquer the audience and is not a high pursuit of beauty. (Wang Wenpin,2017)

1.4 Out of life

At present, many creators ignore the integration of red dance and red culture, and are unwilling to walk into battlefield sites, red culture memorial halls and revolutionary martyrs cemetery. They just sit in their own homes and wait for inspiration, or sit at home and watch some dance videos to find inspiration. Such a dance creator is divorced from life factors and can't find real inspiration.



Picture 1: Self-enclosed
Source: sogou Photo Website 2024.8.7.

2、The Creation of Red Dance in Field Investigation

2.1 Fieldwork and research on emotion and authenticity

Field investigation is recognized as the basic methodology of anthropology, the earliest anthropological methodology, and the practice and application of direct observation. Field investigation is a research method that goes deep into the real situation of the research object, which can help researchers obtain first-hand information and understand and explain the research object through qualitative analysis of these materials. In dance creation, field investigation also plays an important role, especially in emotional expression and authenticity.(Zhao Ruihong,2024)

Red dance is an art form to express emotion and spirit. Through field investigation, red dance creators can walk into the Red Culture Memorial Hall, the battlefield site, and the revolutionary martyrs cemetery to personally feel the traces left by those red years. Go deep into the people, interview and exchange with revolutionary veterans and descendants of martyrs, and understand the development of that period of history. Observe their daily life.

And learn about local cultural heritage, values and religious beliefs. This will help the red dance creators to grasp the local customs and language more accurately and understand their emotional expression.

Take the ballet "Red women soldiers" co-edited by Jiang Zuhui, Li Chengxiang and Wang Xixian as an example. Before the creation of this ballet, all the dancers went to Hainan Island to live in depth, from the hats worn by local women to the bell-bottoms like sectors. From bright clothes with bold colors to the dynamic image of bodybuilding with strength and softness; From the coconut grove in the night to the dancing "running and jumping" of fellow villagers, etc., it inspired many ideas of the founders and accumulated a lot of valuable materials for their creation.

In the class education exhibition in Qionghai, the founders witnessed the "water dungeon" where the landlords and bullies held the poor. In an interview, the chairman of the local women's Federation, who used to be a maid in the landlord's house, told them that she tried to escape but failed because she couldn't stand the bullying of the landlords. After the landlord took her back, she poured boiling hot water on her. Jiang Zuhui said, "Every time I think back to what the interviewee said, I still can't help crying.". In Coconut Forest Village, artists can't get well for a month after being bitten by mosquitoes. The harsh environment also inspired Jiang Zuhui: "We saw that some coconut trees may have been hit when growing, first growing horizontally, and then growing upwards. I feel that this is very similar to the fate of Qionghua." She immediately communicated with Ma Yunhong, the designer of Wu Mei, and set the scene of Qionghua's escape in Yelinzhai during her creation. Women in Hainan Island have never given up their resistance despite their bitter hatred under the oppression of landlords and bullies. Veteran women soldiers said that during the March of Qiongya Column, women soldiers people carried machine guns unequivocally, and the spirit of "I will resist if I can't be killed" was vividly reflected in women soldiers. In Lenin Square, an old Red Guards told artists that Red Guards and children's league members used to gather here for meetings, and the scene was very warm. Jiang Zuhui said that Qionghua was inspired by Lenin Square when she came to the base to join the army in the ballet. (Dancer Platform,2019)



Picture 2: prologue: Nanbatian's water dungeon
Source: Central Ballet WeChat WeChat official account



Photo 3 Scene 1: Qionghua escapes from the water dungeon in Nanbatian and hides in the dark coconut grove.
Source: Central Ballet WeChat WeChat official account

After the ballet was discharged, some leaders of the Beijing Military Region were invited, and Lin Mohan, Dean Zhao Wei and other relevant leaders also came to see it. After watching it, the leaders of the military region said that the lady was nowhere to be seen, with a poker in her hand. (Dancer Platform,2019)

In response to the criticism, in order to change the problem of female ballet dancers' performance, all the actors, including the members of the orchestra, went to a certain army in Datong, Shanxi Province to experience life. Bai Shuxiang said: "In the army, we learn to walk, March, stand in line, look up and count off. We also learn to assassinate and shoot guns. Three times a day, we stand, lie down and kneel. We practice shooting in various positions. We aim when we get up in the morning. At night, we go with the soldiers to March at night and watch the soldiers shoot at night. During the day, the sun is shining, and people are sweating on the ground. (Dancer Platform,2019)

Bai Shuxiang used "thoroughly remould oneself" to describe his creative feelings after this military training. "We went to Datong, Shanxi Province not only to experience the life of the army, but also to visit countless' mass graves' with white bones, and received profound historical education and revolutionary education, which made us tempered from body to heart, and then returned to creation with a completely different understanding and a brand-new look. Therefore, only when we fully display the characteristics of' Lady' and the temperament of soldiers can such a red classic aesthetics be fully reflected.(Dancer Platform,2019)



Picture 4: The actors went to Datong to learn shooting as soldiers.
Source: Central Ballet WeChat WeChat official account

2.2 Fieldwork and the inheritance of red cultural memory

The inheritance of red cultural memory is an important factor in the creation of red dance. Field investigation plays an important role in the creation of red dance. Through field investigation, the creators of red dance can understand the local red cultural history, national integrity and socialist core values. It is helpful for the audience to have a deeper understanding of the people's liberation and anti-Japanese war spirit in China while watching the red dance works, and then cultivate their patriotism and anti-Japanese war spirit. The unity of the Chinese nation is hard-won, so we should unite as one and jointly resist foreign enemies.

Conclusion

Field investigation plays an extremely important role in the creation of red dance, especially in emotional expression and the inheritance of red cultural memory. Through in-depth understanding of the local red cultural and historical stories, the creators of red dance can understand the local customs and customs, and learn the spirit of heroes and martyrs who made selfless dedication and sacrifice for the country and people in War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the revolutionary period. It can enrich the red cultural background and creative inspiration of the red dance creators, better explore and reflect in the creation, and make the red culture and red dance more accurately express the theme and the connotation in the dance.

Creators should actively explore the course of the revolutionary road, enter revolutionary museums, revolutionary sites, martyrs' cemeteries, red cultural centers, etc., and form creative motives and impulses. This can effectively avoid the problem of creative reference and enrich the connotation of dance. The motivation and impulse of dance creation is what is usually called "inspiration coming". Generally speaking, the formation of the motivation and impulse of dance creation is a vague feeling. The main ideological factor is that the dance creators inadvertently form emotional experiences and emotional resonance in their daily life feelings, which in turn triggers the creative motivation and produces a sublimation feeling of dance art.

The creation of red dance needs to mobilize imagination and create a new artistic image in the collision between red culture and dance. The imagination carried out in dance creation is not created out of thin air, but needs concrete imagination content and imagination inspiration, and finally forms imagination content under the guidance of sensibility and intuition, accompanied by strong aesthetic creation, and finally becomes the sublimation of dance essence. Being close to folk customs will enable the creators to better develop the fusion of imagination and image.

Discussion

At present, on China HowNet, most researchers study the history of red dance and its ideological and political education. And the researchers in this field of red dance creation are almost blank, which can be said to be very lacking. On China HowNet, there is only one article related to the creation of red dance: "Red Dance" has played a very positive role in socialist economic construction and socialist cultural construction and development, improved the people's entertainment spirit, met the people's spiritual and cultural needs, and has a very positive educational significance for college students' life values.(Byron,2012)

This article only talks about the significance of red dance creation and its educational value. There is no mention of how to create red dance and how to improve the creation of red dance. A person who has never been in the water can't learn to swim. As a direct observation method, fieldwork is a pre-step to obtain first-hand raw materials. It is not only recognized as the basic methodology of anthropology, but also the basic research methodology of cultural anthropology and archaeology. Through in-depth on-the-spot investigation and research, field investigation can provide rich materials and inspiration for red dance creation.

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