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The Expression and Evolution of Nationalism in the History of Chinese Spring Festival Gala Dance

Qingyi Meng *

Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Sultan Idris Education University, Tanjung Malim 35900, Malaysia
*** Corresponding author Email:** mengqingyi777@gmail.com

Abstract: As the most representative cultural feast in China, the Spring Festival Gala has carried a lot of nationalist emotions in history. From the expansion of dance to the change and replacement of forms in different periods, as well as the reflection on Cultural identity and National symbol, this paper focuses on the expression and evolution of nationalism in the history of the dance of the Spring Festival Gala in China, aiming to explore the positive role played by the development of the dance of the Spring Festival Gala in the inheritance and development of Chinese national consciousness.

Keywords: Spring Festival Gala Dance; Nationalism; Cultural Identity; National Symbol.

1. Introduction

Since its first broadcast in 1983, the Chinese Spring Festival Gala has become one of the largest variety shows in the world. The numerous dance works presented on the Spring Festival Gala stage have also become an important component of Chinese culture. As one of the carriers of culture, Spring Festival Gala dance plays a crucial role in the transmission and expression of nationalist emotions in China. This article attempts to explore in depth the expression and evolution of nationalism in the history of Spring Festival Gala dance, in order to reveal the positive role played by Chinese Spring Festival Gala dance in the inheritance of Chinese culture and the enhancement of national consciousness.

2. The Expansion and Diversity of Chinese Spring Festival Gala Dance

2.1. 1983-1990s

The Spring Festival Gala dance, which is dominated by ethnic forms, has gradually developed in a diversified direction in terms of expression as the dance has become increasingly rich and expanding in scale. However, during the period from 1983 to the 1990s, the Spring Festival Gala was still dominated by a small number of traditional dances and song and dance programs, almost without the shadow of Modern dance. The Spring Festival Gala dance during this period mainly focused on traditional and local styles of dance, such as folk dance and classical dance, with a particular emphasis on showcasing the traditional spirit and ethnic characteristics of Chinese culture. This dance form more reflects the feelings and identity of Chinese nationalism.

2.2. 2000s

The Spring Festival Gala dance that integrates international styles, with China's reform and opening up and increasingly frequent international exchanges, has also begun to accept the influence and reference of internationalization. In the 2000s, the dance of the Spring Festival Gala presented a more diversified art form, including street dance, ballet, jazz and Belly dance. These dance genres themselves have distinct regional characteristics and cultural backgrounds, and integrating them into the Spring Festival Gala stage aims to showcase a more authentic and diverse image of China.

2.3. 2010s

Exploring contemporary art expression in Spring Festival Gala dance. In the 2010s, Spring Festival Gala dance was no longer limited to traditional and international dance genres, and began to explore the possibilities of contemporary art expression. During this period, the Spring Festival Gala dance focused more on innovation and aesthetic experience, such as the 2015 Spring Festival Gala dance "Internet Light" and the 2017 Spring Festival Gala dance "Tai Chi·Heaven, Earth, and Man", both attempting to combine traditional culture with modern technology, presenting a new visual experience. In addition, in terms of nationalism, the Spring Festival Gala dance of the 2010s paid more attention to the expression of Chinese characteristics, such as the 2011 Spring Festival Gala dance "Descendants of the Dragon" and the 2019 Spring Festival Gala dance "All Things Grow", which expressed love and cultural confidence for the motherland through symbols and elements that are representative of Chinese culture.

2.4. 2020s

Cross border cooperation and diversity in Spring Festival Gala dance. In the 2020's, Spring Festival Gala dance places more emphasis on cross border cooperation and diversity. In terms of dance form, the elements of the Spring Festival Gala dance are more and more diversified, including street dance, ballet, Latin dance, etc. These diversified dances have attracted a wider range of young audiences. In addition, in terms of stage performance, Spring Festival Gala dance has also begun to be combined with other artistic forms, such as music, drama, etc., enhancing the overall audio-visual effect. In terms of nationalism, the dance of the 2020s Spring Festival Gala will pay more attention to the integration of Chinese traditional culture and modern art. For example, the dance of the 2021 Spring Festival Gala "Brilliant Years" and the dance of the 2022 Spring Festival Gala "Lantern Festival Spring Festival Gala" will show the unique charm and style of Chinese culture by combining traditional instrumental music and popular music. At the same time, the Spring Festival Gala dance also actively explores the integration of world cultures, in order to better promote Chinese culture and

promote ethnic exchanges.

3. The Expressive Forms of Nationalism in Spring Festival Gala Dance

3.1. The Application of Cultural Symbols

The expression of nationalism in the Spring Festival Gala dance is first reflected in the use of cultural symbols. Dance choreography often selects elements with strong ethnic characteristics, such as traditional clothing, ethnic instruments, and folk songs. These cultural symbols are further demonstrated through the actions of dancers and stage settings. For example, beautiful details of traditional Folk costume may appear in the dance, such as bright colors and complex patterns, as well as well-designed headwear and accessories. These details create a strong ethnic atmosphere, allowing the audience to feel the national pride conveyed by the dance.

3.2. The Shaping of the Story Plot

Another manifestation of nationalism in Spring Festival Gala dance is through the shaping of story plots. Dance choreography is often based on a specific story, interpreted through the performance of dancers to convey the history, traditions, and values of the nation. These storylines may involve national heroes, legends, or important historical events. Dancers will vividly showcase the story through their actions and body language, triggering emotional resonance among the audience. This approach can stimulate the audience's identification and pride in national culture.

3.3. The Uniqueness of Dance Style

The choreography often combines traditional Folk dance elements with modern dance techniques to form a unique dance style. This style combines traditional and modern elements, which not only retains the unique charm of Folk dance, but also injects innovation and vitality into modern dance. The movements of the dancers are smooth and powerful, showing the exquisite skills and charm of Folk dance. This dance style can attract the attention of the audience and convey a love and admiration for national culture.

3.4. The Spirit of Unity and Cooperation

Nationalism is also reflected in the spirit of unity and cooperation in the Spring Festival Gala dance. Dance performances usually require the collaboration of multiple dancers, who collaborate with each other on stage to present precise and coordinated dance movements. This spirit of unity and cooperation is not only about cooperation between dancers, but also includes identification and unity for the entire nation. Dance works convey the power of national unity and the core values of nationalism by showcasing the close cooperation and unity of dancers.

3.5. Exploration of Artistic Innovation

Another manifestation of nationalism in Spring Festival Gala dance is through the exploration of artistic innovation. The choreography not only focuses on the presentation of traditional elements, but also actively introduces modern dance techniques and artistic techniques to make the works more contemporary and ornamental. Dancers endow traditional dance with new expressive power and connotation through innovative motion design and dance structure. This artistic innovation not only stimulates the interest of the audience, but also reflects the vitality and inclusiveness of Chinese culture, making the Spring Festival Gala dance more globally influential.

3.6. Emphasis on National Spirit

Dance works have always been one of the important programs in the Spring Festival Gala, not only because they have high artistic value, but also because they demonstrate the uniqueness of national culture and the importance of national spirit to the audience through the actions and emotional expressions of dancers. Every dance step, every bodily movement, and every expression is filled with deep emotions and power, inheriting and showcasing the traditions, history, and values of the nation. In such performances, the dancers opened up their inner world to the audience, interpreting their love for their motherland and admiration for traditional culture with deep emotions.

3.7. The Fusion of Diverse Cultures

The nationalism in the Spring Festival Gala dance is also manifested through the integration of diverse cultures. As a multi-ethnic country, dance choreography in China often selects dance elements and music forms from different ethnic groups, showcasing a diverse cultural landscape. This fusion of diverse cultures not only demonstrates China's national unity and diversity, but also reflects respect and tolerance for other cultures. By integrating multiple cultural elements, the Spring Festival Gala dance showcases the charm of China as a multicultural society to the audience, while also promoting mutual understanding and exchange among different ethnic groups.

4. The Evolution of Nationalism in the History of Chinese Spring Festival Gala Dance

The Chinese Spring Festival Gala is an important component of Chinese cultural tradition and an important window of Chinese culture. The dance program has always been a highlight of the Spring Festival Gala. As a cultural and artistic form, dance not only conveys beautiful emotions, but also reflects the evolution of social culture. In the history of Chinese Spring Festival Gala dance, the evolution of nationalism can be divided into three stages: cultural root-seeking, national unity, and globalization.

4.1. Cultural Root-seeking

In the 1980s, China began the process of reform and opening up, and domestic culture and art began to gradually open up and diversify. The Spring Festival Gala is an important component of traditional Chinese culture and one of the most influential literary and artistic performances in China. During this period, Chinese Spring Festival Gala dance began a journey of seeking roots, and a large number of traditional cultural elements appeared in dance works, such as Tang costumes, Song lyrics, guqin, and so on. These works aim to convey the traditional values of Chinese culture through the exploration and promotion of traditional culture. In the Spring Festival Gala dance at this stage, there are not only the restoration of ancient dance forms, but also the innovation and integration of modern dance forms. These works present the breadth, profundity, and diversity of

Chinese culture, while also expressing national pride and cultural confidence. Among them, many works focus on traditional culture and showcase the charm of Chinese traditional culture through dance. The Spring Festival Gala dance works at this stage have become a landmark product of the revival of Chinese culture and art.

4.2. Antique Craze - National Unity

In the 1990s, China's economic, political, and cultural environment underwent tremendous changes, and the Chinese Spring Festival Gala dance also underwent a transformation. The Spring Festival Gala dance during this period presented a strong nationalist color. There are a large number of antique elements in dance works, such as ancient palace dance, martial arts, Tai Chi, and so on. This antique inspired dance work aims to express admiration for traditional culture and the pursuit of national spirit through the imitation and reproduction of ancient culture. At the same time, these works also conveyed a strong sense of national unity and patriotism, reflecting the mainstream values of Chinese society at that time. At this stage, the stage scale and effect of the Spring Festival Gala dance have also been further improved, and the production level of the works has also reached a new level. Among them, many works showcase the Chinese national spirit and cultural confidence through dance with themes such as "heroes", "dreams", and "inheritance".

4.3. Globalization

At the beginning of the 21st century, China's economy and culture began to gradually move towards the world, and Chinese Spring Festival Gala dance also began to show a trend of globalization. The Spring Festival Gala dance during this period not only had traditional cultural elements, but also modern cultural elements, and more emphasis was placed on the innovation and expression of dance forms and stage effects. This globalized dance work aims to express the openness and diversity of Chinese culture through the absorption and integration of international popular culture. At the same time, these works also convey a deep cultural confidence and respect and tolerance for world culture. At this stage, the content and form of the dance works of the Spring Festival Gala are more diversified and international, covering a variety of styles and themes, such as pop dance, Jazz dance, folk dance, classical dance, etc., showing the diversity and inclusiveness of Chinese culture. Among them, many works convey China's attitude towards actively participating in globalization and cultural confidence through dance with themes such as "harmony", "sharing", and "friendship". At this stage, the production level of Spring Festival Gala dance works has also been further improved, with dance forms and stage effects becoming more exciting and shocking. Advanced technological means such as 3D projection and lighting effects are used in dance production, making the work more vivid, three-dimensional, and visually impactful.

Overall, the nationalist evolution of Chinese Spring Festival Gala dance reflects the evolution of Chinese social culture. From the three stages of cultural roots seeking, national unity, and globalization, Chinese Spring Festival Gala dance not only conveys national culture, but also continuously integrates and innovates, showcasing the diversity and inclusiveness of Chinese culture.

5. Conclusion

As a representative program of Chinese culture, Spring Festival Gala dance plays a crucial role in the transmission of national consciousness and cultural inheritance in China. Through the analysis of the nationalist expression and evolution in the history of the Spring Festival Gala dance, it can be seen that the dance of the Spring Festival Gala is constantly expanding and adapting in the changing background of the times, and also constantly strengthening the transmission and expression of national consciousness in Cultural identity and National symbol. I believe that in the future development, Spring Festival Gala dance will continue to carry the mission of Chinese culture and play a more important role.

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