

Research on Folk Ecology Status of Northeast Yangko in Heilongjiang Province

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Abstract

Julian Steward believes that environment and culture cannot be separated. Traditional folk dance is the reproduction of life, the expression of thoughts and emotions of ethnic groups, and has the attribute of national identity. In the process of urbanization evolution of Northeast Yangko Dance, it contains ethnic migration and cultural belonging. The participation and emphasis of Northeast Yangko Dance in folk affects the development of sub-ecological folk dance and stage art folk dance. This study uses the research methods of survey and interview, combined with the theory of dance ecology, to study the folk ecological status quo of Northeast Yangko Dance in Heilongjiang Province, and analyzes the status quo of urban square dance, middle-aged and elderly dance troupes, university dance clubs and activities. Through research, the main reasons that restrict the development of the Northeast Yangko Dance include: the traditional Northeast Yangko Dance costumes are rustic, the music is not fashionable, the dance movements are difficult to learn, there are few plays that can be learned, the lack of director, the lack of watching ways, the outdated style, and the lack of attention from schools and students. The study shows that the dance ecology of Northeast Yangko is not optimistic.

Keywords: Northeast Yangko, current situation, Heilongjiang, folk ecology

1. Introduction

Yangko Dance, commonly known as Yangko Dance (Yu Jia, 2007), refers to the Yangko Dance mainly popular in Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning provinces in northeast China (Xue Lianli, 2012). The Northeast Yangko Dance is a folk-art form created by northerners over a long period of time (Xue Chengyan, 2019). The Northeast Yangko Dance is characterized by hot, spicy, steady and humorous style (Bai shi, 2008; Ping yuan, 2009),

and the dance movements combine hardness and softness, reflecting the main style of *Gen*, *Qiao* and *Lang* (Xue Lianli, 2012). Northeast Yangko, which is popular with the public, has experienced the development process from rural areas to urban areas (Meng Nan, 2005) and from folk to stage.

Julian Steward believes that environment and culture are inseparable and interact with each other, feedback, or causation (Tang Jialu, 2005). Piao Yongguang believes that contemporary folk

dance exists in three different ecological environments (Piao Yongguang, 2004). As a unique cultural form, the survival and development of dance cannot be separated from the ecological environment. Therefore, it is necessary to combine the theory of dance ecology to see the evolution process of Northeast Yangko Dance. Dance ecology is a science that studies the relationship between natural and social environment and dance, and studies which factors affect and restrict the occurrence, development, and manifestation of dance (Zi Huayun, 2003). Traditional folk dance is regarded as the reproduction of life, the expression of national thoughts and feelings, and the attribute of national identity (Li Xuemei, 2002). In the process of urbanization evolution of Northeast Yangko Dance, it not only contains national migration and cultural belonging, but also contains the degree of public participation and attention of the Northeast Yangko Dance. At the same time, it influences the development of sub-ecological folk dance and stage art folk dance. Based on this cultural evolution process, this study uses the research methods of investigation and interview, and combines the theory of dance ecology, to study the folk ecological status of Northeast Yangko in Heilongjiang Province. Through the analysis of the city square dance, middle-aged and elderly dance troupes, university dance clubs and activities, find the main problems affecting the development.

2. The Present Situation of Northeast Yangko Dance in City Square Dance

Square dance is one of the branches of social dance. The broad concept of square dance refers to social dance behaviors occurring in an open field, which not only includes people's spontaneous square dance, but also includes those initiated and organized by external forces (Li Hui, 2012). After collecting, sorting, processing, and refining, it is a form popular among the public for self-entertainment or fitness, belonging to sub-ecological folk dance (Piao Yongguang, 2004). Contemporary Chinese square dance has the function of entertainment and fitness (Peng Wenge, 2012), which is the main purpose of the participants.

2.1 An Overview of the Current Situation of Square Dancing

Square dance is a part of the dance pyramid with the largest number of participants. The main participants are middle-aged and elderly people over 50 years old, and the elderly people between 60 and 70 years old are the most involved. Before 2000, groups of Yangko teams were often seen in fields and under square Bridges, which were gradually replaced by new forms of square dancing in the 21st century. New square dance way closer to the marching broadcast gymnastics, in upper limb movement primarily, emphasize the neatly and unity of action, not an impromptu performance or individual performance link, also does not have the story character set, usually using pop music accompaniment, fixed team members in the same style of leisure wear and sportswear, with white gloves, before the team led by 1-3 edifice. There are great differences between the new type square dance and the traditional Northeast Yangko square dance.

2.2 Survey and Interview on Square Dancing

Through the interview and investigation of 50 square dance teams in Heilongjiang Province, the purpose and experience of their participation in square dance were understood, and the people who had participated in Northeast Yangko square dance were interviewed. The interview covered three questions. First, why did not continue to participate in the Northeast Yangko square dance reasons. Second, like the northeast Yangko reasons. Third, the main reasons that influence participation in Northeast Yangko.

First of all, understand the reasons why people like to participate in square dancing. 97% of the respondents think it is because of fitness, 86% think the movements are easy to learn, and 73% think the music is good to listen to and has a sense of The Times. Secondly, survey respondents' experience in square dance. Among them, 58% have participated in the square dance of Northeast Yangko. Through the interview to understand the reasons for not being able to participate in the Northeast Yangko square dance, 83% of the respondents said that there are too few people now Yangko Dance, and it is difficult to organize a team, one of the old people introduced that "since I was a child Yangko Dance have about 60 years of experience, from the countryside to the city after moving, there is no place to Yangko Dance." Asked about the reasons for the Yangko Dance,

the old people introduced that “happy to Yangko Dance, can share their good things, not happy to Yangko Dance, and partners together when you can forget those unhappy things.” The interviewed people all expressed that the Yangko team can communicate with each other, exchange dance skills, dance can also be improvised and interactive. When asked about the main reasons affecting the Northeast Yangko Dance, the top three are: the traditional Northeast Yangko Dance costumes are rustic, the music is not fashionable, and the dance movements are difficult to learn.

2.3 Analysis of Causes

First of all, 91% think that the traditional Northeast Yangko Dance costumes are rustic, both the style and material are difficult to meet the aesthetic requirements of contemporary people. On the other hand, costumes specially designed for stage performances of Yangko Dance due to competitions or large-scale activities not only do not lose the traditional style, but also meet the needs of The Times. However, the cost of designing and making professional stage costumes is high, which makes it difficult for them to be popularized in square dancing. Square dance participants are middle-aged and elderly, generally fatter than professional dancers, without knowing how to shop online, can only buy pink, green, red and other bright colors, old-fashioned traditional clothing.

Secondly, 82% think that music is not fashionable enough. Traditional Yangko Dance is usually accompanied by a live band. The main musical instruments include Suona, gong, drum, and cymbals. The band can not only stimulate the participants’ emotions, but also interact with them to form a harmonious music and dance. However, the current traditional Qupai can hardly meet people’s needs. Although in recent years, there are also through the sound equipment for accompaniment, but always lack of the flexibility of the live band, at the same time, the reduction of musicians is also one of the factors restricting development.

Again, 57% think Yangko Dance is difficult, Northeast Yangko to highlight the *Lang* strength, eyebrow, eye, expression and movement to coordinate and unity, seemingly simple, but it is not easy to twist freely. Participants in the Yangko

Dance are usually for physical exercise, so they try to choose some simple and easy to learn basic movements. At the same time, they do not understand or have no confidence in the roles and stories in the Northeast Yangko Dance, which leads to more and more monotonous forms of expression.

In addition, lack of venues, unable to find a suitable Yangko team, children dislike and housework are also prominent factors. In the era of high development of urbanization, the soil that nourishes the traditional Northeast Yangko Dance is losing, which is the loss of culture and regional character. The extensive transportation network rapidly transforms people’s space and transmits information through various networks. While cities are being dedifferentiated, the differences between regions are decreasing and regional cultures are being assimilated.

3. The Present Situation of Northeast Yangko in Middle and Old Age Dance Troupes

3.1 An Overview of the Present Situation of Middle-aged and Elderly Dance Troupes

Middle-aged and elderly dance troupe than square dance team professional requirements are higher, according to incomplete statistics only Harbin has more than 100 adult dance troupe, the scale of the dance troupe is generally about 20–40 people, rehearsal venues and members are relatively stable, participants are over 45 years old, 55–65 years old female number is the most. Each dance company has a variety of repertoire and performance costumes. Comprehensive evening parties and art exhibitions are the main performance opportunities, and classes are arranged around the needs of works. Some dance troupes belong to Mass Art and Culture Center, while others exist independently, but they are self-sufficient. The expenses of directors, costumes and teachers are basically shared by the members, so the changes of members are very strict. In the case of Harbin Lilac Women’s Dance Company, new members need to take part in a business assessment, including professional ability, height, weight and image, and there is a strict attendance system for classes, rehearsals, and performances. There are two main performance seasons, from May to October and from December to February of the Spring Festival of the following year. The

number and scale of performances play a role in improving the dance performance ability of members and attracting new people.

3.2 Research Data

Through the investigation of 20 dance troupes in Heilongjiang Province. First of all, 91% of the respondents like to perform the Northeast Yangko Dance, but in recent years, the number of performances of the Northeast Yangko Dance is decreasing year by year, and 63% of them think that there is a lack of excellent Northeast Yangko Dance. For the reasons why they like the Yangko Dance, 57% think the atmosphere is warm, and 40% think it is in line with the personality characteristics of Northeast people. Secondly, the dance styles performed by each team were investigated. The performances of folk dances accounted for 57 percent of all the performances, among which the most representative were Tibetan folk dance (78%), Mongolian folk dance (73%), Northeast Yangko Dance (37%) and Korean folk dance (32%). In the large-scale activities, modern dance accounted for 58%, Tibetan folk dance accounted for 33%, Mongolian folk dance accounted for 27%, Northeast Yangko Dance accounted for 9%. In dance performances or competitions, modern dance accounts for 46%, Tibetan folk dance 35%, Mongolian folk dance 26%, and Northeast Yangko Dance 13%. In the survey, 55% of the respondents thought that the reasons for the lack of Northeast Yangko performances were the lack of plays to learn, and 34% of the respondents thought that the Northeast Yangko was lack of directors.

3.3 Analysis of Causes

Analysis of the reasons for liking Northeast Yangko. From the analysis of the nature of the performances, most of them are celebration activities. The style of Northeast Yangko conforms to the keynote of the performances, which not only expresses the festive mood, but also shows the regional feelings of Northeast China. In competitions and performances, the Northeast Yangko Dance is a cultural symbol of the Northeast, especially when participating in national events. Many people believe that the more local characteristics, the better results will be achieved.

Analysis of the reasons affecting the performance

of Northeast Yangko. Each dance company hopes to bring out the old and bring forth the new, by the experience of professional choreographers combined with the characteristics of dance company personnel to create, but due to lack of funds, often cannot afford to hire professional choreographers. Many dance groups can only learn dance videos and imitate works. During this period, due to the lack of new works of Northeast Yangko and lack of choice space, or because the movements in professional dance works are difficult to complete, many dance groups have no choice but to piece together by themselves. After selecting a piece of music, movements are extracted from several plays according to the rhythm and superimposed with the movements mastered by oneself to assemble the work. Such a program cannot be retained by the dance company because the movement style is not unified, and the picture is monotonous. As a result, the program is not mature and will not be performed after one or two performances.

Due to the restriction of practical conditions, the works of Northeast Yangko Dance performed by middle-aged and elderly dance companies are decreasing, and the soil that nourishes Northeast Yangko Dance is losing.

4. The Present Situation of Northeast Yangko Dance in Universities

As an important link carrying the future, university is one of the indispensable links in this research. Through the survey of 18 universities in Heilongjiang Province, 8 of them have established dance majors (including two universities with master's education qualifications). Mainly for the school dance club and school activities in the dance links to conduct research.

4.1 The State of the Dance Club

The 18 universities participating in the survey all have dance clubs, most of which are hip-hop dance clubs, and there are also social dance clubs, Han and Tang dance clubs and jazz dance clubs, but there is no folk dance or local dance clubs. It can be seen that contemporary college students' love and cognition of folk dance is very low. According to the survey, 67 percent of the students think they don't know much about folk dancing, and 17 percent watch it occasionally. 80 percent of the students do not like folk dancing, 67 percent

think it is not popular, and 31 percent think it is too slow. Among the respondents who like folk dance, 70 percent of the students had learned folk dance before entering university, among which only 23 percent had learned Northeast Yangko Dance, and 7 percent thought it would be a way to show themselves after leaving Northeast China or going abroad. 29 percent of the students think they can learn the Northeast Yangko Dance if they have the chance.

Through the interview, it is found that the main reason that college students do not understand folk dance is the lack of viewing ways. The main way for college students to contact information is the network and mobile media. Folk dance is non-mainstream among the media they accept, while the popular dance reality shows on TV, such as *New Dance Convention* and *This is Street Dance*, are basically foreign dance culture. Some universities offer dance appreciation courses, which include ballet, modern dance, Chinese classical dance, and folk dance. However, Northeast Yangko takes up very little or no proportion. In the absence of viewing ways, what is more lacking is the appreciation and interpretation of folk-dance culture.

Like square dance and middle-aged and elderly dance troupes, the main reason why college students don't like it is that they think the style of Northeast Yangko Dance is old and lack of excellent works that keep pace with The Times. Many students marveled at the varied handkerchief flower techniques of the Northeast Yangko, but they thought the music and costumes were out of date. The real classic works or can cause everyone's attention, such as Heilongjiang Vocational College of Art *Handkerchief Flowers Welcome Spring*, many college students have seen that the work is great, whether it is the impact of technology or the picture is very attractive, but the same wonderful works are few.

Due to the lack of viewing ways and the lack of interest in demand, the distance between college students and folk dance is becoming increasingly distant. Some students said that at present, the most chance to see the Northeast Yangko Dance is the large party on campus or TV.

4.2 The Current State of School Activities

The opportunities for college students to watch

dance on campus include large-scale art shows, *Elegant Art into Campus*, campus dance competitions (non-dance majors) and square performances in sports meetings. Schools with dance majors can also enjoy the dance through dance evening. At the present stage, large-scale art shows and campus dance competitions are the most representative.

The celebration party and welcome party of each school are comprehensive large-scale art party, which is rich in form and content and can represent the current situation of the development of culture, art, and sports of the school. Take Harbin Normal University's New Year Concert as an example. Music, dance, drama, and sports are featured in successive years of the event. The 2018 New Year's concert featured 13 performances, seven of which were dance-related, but no Northeast Yangko. The 2019 gala celebrating the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China has a total of 12 programs, six of which are dance related, again without the Northeast Yangko Dance. The situation of other universities in Heilongjiang Province is also very similar. The comprehensive evening party is dominated by works showing campus culture and achievements in art activities. It can be seen that daily art activities and large-scale evening parties in schools pay insufficient attention to the Northeast Yangko Dance.

The program of campus dance competition is created by non-major students independently, which is the wind vane of students' attention to campus dance. In the 2018 Harbin Normal University campus dance competition, there were a total of 26 programs, among which hip-hop dance programs accounted for 70 percent. In addition, there are jazz dance, Latin dance, contemporary dance, only two folk dances are Mongolian dance and Tibetan dance, no Northeast Yangko Dance. This situation again shows that college students' attention to the Northeast Yangko Dance is very low.

Young people carry the hope of the future, the degree of love and appreciation of art will affect the inheritance and development of the art. Art needs guidance and ways to enter and integrate into life. Professional dance practitioners bear the creative responsibility of bringing out the old and bringing forth the new, and educators also need

reasonable guidance. At the same time, excellent traditional culture and intangible cultural heritage works need to be exhibited to more people through various means.

5. Conclusions

Through the investigation and interview of the status quo of Northeast Yangko Dance in square dance, adult dance troupe and university, it is found that the main reasons restricting the development of Northeast Yangko Dance in square dance are the traditional Northeast Yangko Dance costumes are rustic, the music is not fashionable, and the dance movement is difficult to learn. The main reasons restricting the development of middle-aged and elderly dance troupes are the lack of plays to learn and the lack of directors. The main reasons that restrict the development of Northeast Yangko Dance in universities are the lack of viewing ways, the outdated style, and the lack of attention from schools and students. Through the analysis of the current situation and causes, it shows that the proportion of people who understand and love the Northeast Yangko Dance in the folk ecology is very low and decreasing, and the dance ecology is not optimistic. According to this trend, even if there are excellent Northeast Yangko works, it is difficult to resonate. Through the study of the folk ecological status quo of the Northeast Yangko Dance, we hope to trigger more attention and thinking, promote the study of the protection of folk ecological dance, better protection, inheritance and development of excellent dance culture.

Project

Lingnan Normal University 2021 Higher Education Teaching Research and Reform Project Reform and Practice Research on Promoting the Deep Integration of science, Industry and Education Based on the Output Orientation of University Dance Major, Project Number: 20210166.

The 2019 University-level higher education teaching research and reform project of Lingnan Normal University: Exploring Practical Courses in Accordance with the Certification of Dance Teachers by OBE Mode—Innovative research combining new media and musical teaching

content. Project Number: LSJGYB1933.

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