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Stylistic features and development trends of choreographic stage direction in Kazakhstan

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Abstract

The research is devoted to the problem of national art and the formation of the ideological principles of Kazakhstan's choreographic stage direction. The comparative method and art history analysis were used in order to study the problem. The analysis of the problem of choreography development in Kazakhstan showed that training of stage directors and choreographers is one of the main obstacles to the development of different choreographic directions. Based on the assessment of modern Kazakhstan stage direction and the state of national choreography, it can be concluded that the national heritage is being extensively enriched with new choreographic movements.

Keywords: Choreographic, Stage, Direction, Dance, Art.

Características estilísticas y tendencias de desarrollo de la dirección coreográfica escénica en Kazajstán

Resumen

La investigación está dedicada al problema del arte nacional y la formación de los principios ideológicos de la dirección de la escena coreográfica de Kazajstán. El método comparativo y el análisis de la historia del arte se utilizaron para estudiar el problema. El análisis del problema del desarrollo de la coreografía en Kazajstán mostró que la capacitación de directores de escena y coreógrafos es uno de los principales obstáculos para el desarrollo de diferentes direcciones coreográficas. Sobre la base de la evaluación de la dirección escénica moderna de Kazajstán y el estado de la coreografía nacional, se puede concluir que el patrimonio nacional se está enriqueciendo ampliamente con nuevos movimientos coreográficos.

Palabras clave: Coreográfico, Escenario, Dirección, Danza, Arte.

1. INTRODUCTION

Conservation of national traditions today is an important task of every nation, which reflects the attitude of modern society to its origins and culture. Folk-dance history is very rich. It was developed based on large-scale festivals and traditions, which are an integral part of any society and ethnic group. Each national dance has its color and specific features; therefore, dances of different nationalities are very specific.

The key feature of national choreography and folk dances is their diversity. Folk dances are the embodiment of the people's

character and soul. Careful attitude to national art and traditions is the most important factor for the modern society and its future.

Kazakh dance has ancient traditions, a unique genesis, specific formation and revival features. World science has opened and created universally accessible conditions for studying unique cultural phenomena of various ethnic groups. However, the problem showed that the development of the scientific thought on the study of Kazakh dance was identified mainly in its genesis and formation.

The authors of the article the ethnogenesis of the Kazakh dance emphasize that with due regard to the latest achievements of Kazakhstan ballet theatres and directors in national art, it can be concluded that Kazakh art has been internationally recognized as a cultural civilization with unique eurhythmics and national traditional forms (BUTTERWORTH & WILDSCHUT, 2017).

We share the opinion of the authors; however, in the course of our research we found out that the national dance as an integral choreography component has not been properly studied. Modern dancers and choreographers should exert all powers to make national choreography universally recognizable. We believe that this goal can be achieved through strengthening mutual respect and understanding between different styles. Renewal, daring experiment and a new search for stage directors and choreographers should not be hampered by the respect for tradition, conservation and development of national dance. The French art expert ROBINSON (2015) said, modern dance can

only be revolutionary (ROBINSON, 2015). And we are also deeply convinced that national and modern choreography should complement each other and contribute to the overall choreography development. Therefore, today there is a need for new directorial decisions and creative search in the ethnos history, aesthetics and philosophy to find the balance between stage practice and the forms of intellectual self-expression of modern choreographers (BLEEKER, 2016).

Today, the right approach to the development of ideological and aesthetic values necessary to preserve the ethnic group and increase the national culture should be found in stage direction (BLOK, 1987). The authors believe that the problem of conserving national traditions and the cultural national layer can be solved through modern approaches to directorial work, the creation of new choreographic paintings in the national context and their active popularization in Kazakhstan and all over the world. Recent performances of the leading ballet theatres of Kazakhstan in England, France, Germany, and other European countries have clearly emphasized the great interest of the audience in the unique culture, history and Kazakhstan national ballet.

The determination of stylistic features and development trends of choreographic stage direction in Kazakhstan at present revealed the need for considering and solving the following issues:

- It is necessary to conduct an art historical analysis of the development of Kazakh dance and its transition to the stage in the context of the choreography formation;

- It is necessary to determine the goal and problems of the dance heritage conservation; the development of national choreography in modern society, as well as its perspective development as a source of the ethnos intellectual culture, new search and interpretative work of modern choreographers;

- It is necessary to identify the impact of traditional culture and ideology on the development and creation of new choreographic forms of stage direction in the national context, which play an important role in the search for the implementation of the director's intention;

- It is necessary to analyze the main directing and choreographic methods in the productions of Kazakh dances;

- It is necessary to consider the process of creating performances and choreographic productions related to national culture and to determine the place of the stage director in the cultural and artistic context of the national culture.

2. METHODOLOGY

A comprehensive analysis of the cultural and social problems of modern Kazakhstan allowed us to determine the most significant directions in the formation of the aesthetic and intellectual culture of the young generation. The features of stage direction and its styles in

the choreographic works of Kazakh choreographers were determined with the help of the following research methods: art history and comparative analysis; observation, conversations with leading modern Kazakhstan choreographers and directors. Based on the creative work of famous choreographers and their directorial principles, we considered general ideological features of modern choreographic works and their style and determined choreography development trends in Kazakhstan.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Stage direction in the history of Kazakhstan choreography is the youngest art; it is younger than theater and film director. Ballet direction is one of the aspects of the choreographer's work that composes a choreographic text, interprets images and strives for the artistic unity of choreography, dramaturgy, music and visual arts that are subordinate to the ideological concept of the performance (FRETARD, 2014).

Not only specialists wrote about the diversity of national choreography. The great writer, N.V. Gogol, talked about the magnificence and diversity of folk dances. Brief descriptions of the dance intellectual and musical culture can be found in the notes of the eighteen and nineteen-century travelers.

A stage movement teacher of the Moscow Art Theater and a former ballet dancer, O.V. Vsevolodskaya-Golushkevich, studied folklore for 20 years. She reviewed several works devoted to the art history of Kazakhstan in the libraries of Moscow, St. Petersburg and Almaty. In the 1980s, she performed several choreographic works in the state folk dance ensemble Altynay. Vsevolodskaya-Golushkevich traveled a lot across the Kazakh steppes and villages, studying the culture of Kazakh people, their way of life and traditions. She mastered the features of the Kazakh dance and music folklore due to her frequent meetings with the experts on traditional dance culture. The choreographer had a unique style. She created more than 20 dance compositions and made a huge contribution to the conservation of Kazakh national dance. Vsevolodskaya-Golushkevich deserves credit for the revival of the ancient traditions of eurhythmics at the professional level in the 1980s. In her choreography, she recreates ancient life and Kazakh dances with a special national color and true identity.

Vsevolodskaya-Golushkevich created very interesting and informative dances, such as Kyiz basu, ritual compositions of oyyina - Baksy oyyina, Zheztyrnak (a fairy tale about the enchanted beauty copper claws), Buyn bi (dance of the joints), Zhar-zhar (wedding ritual), etc. The life of the Kazakhs, the aesthetic beauty of human labor, ancient rituals and ceremonies are reflected in dances.

The choreographer believed that the main purpose of the dance is to communicate the emotions of the person who gave rise to all

further every day and professional art of dancing. Early dance forms and further dance genesis always indirectly contributed to the birth of poetry, music and visual art. The development of the national dance of the Kazakhs acquired a fundamentally different and new function- the expression of the semantic meaning of the word through the poeticized and emotional dance eurhythmies. This has expanded the expressive possibilities of dancing (KRASOVSKAYA, 1999).

The new function allowed people to express not only their feelings, but also verbal and conceptual content through emotionally rhythmic movements. This means that the movements acquired figurative and associative character, illustrating and expanding the meaning of the word. Dancing has become not only a simple communication form and a specific activity of people, satisfying their natural and human needs, but also a common language expressing their thoughts.

Imagination is an integral part of any creative activity, including poetry. It is poetry that most fully reveals the human essence of dancing. People slightly modify usual movements in accordance with the laws of beauty and harmony in their imagination; they make movements flexible and perfect, thereby satisfying their aesthetic needs. It was in the 20th century that choreographic stage direction formed contemporary art, gradually acquiring a new form, semantic idea, role, and style. Of course, it still has its features. Dancing is still a performance, a pleasant pastime, social ritual, etc., but its main function is that it is a modern art and an actual artistic expression.

Undoubtedly, there are many directions of dancing: “sport (sports and ballroom dancing), therapy (dance therapy), the basis of social (youth) self-identification (hip-hop, break, funk, etc.). However, not all of these directions belong to contemporary art” (ERMAKOVA, 2003: 5). The rich past heritage combined with the creativity and variety of modern dance forms allows us to enjoy the dance in the repertoire of ballet troupes and other professional groups. Dancing is an integral part of a big number of creative works in drama theatre, cinema, musical performances and many other forms of art.

The ballet discoveries of the 20th century were presented at the beginning of the 21st century. Every choreographer tries to find their choreographic style based on the experience of predecessors and colleagues; thus, traditions and continuity are born. The problem of finding a new choreographic language and expressive means is one of the main problems of modern dancing. The development of the Kazakh stage direction and the stylistic features of individual choreographers are associated with a deep understanding of the national component in all forms of art and the search for new expressive means through the creation of contemporary works including a national component (TLEUBAYEV, KULBEKOVA & TLEUBAYEVA, 2018).

The opening of the Astana Ballet Theater in 2012 and the Astana Opera Theater in 2013 was a great cultural and historical event for Kazakhstan. Despite the short period, the national ballet theatres have already become popular and emerged on the world stage. When

determining the development trends of choreographic stage direction, it should be noted that synthesized principles and the fusion of national, classical and modern choreography are being intensively formed in Kazakhstan.

Thus, the theater presented the first project *Oriental Rhapsody* on May 13, 2013. The national dances of the peoples of the East were synthesized with stylized eurhythmics. The historical processes, the cultural wealth of the Kazakhs and their philosophy are reflected in *Alem*. This performance was one of the first attempts to combine classical dance and modern choreography in the national context.



Figure 1: The ballet *Alem*

It should be noted that modern Kazakhstan choreographers tend to seek for creativity from national culture and folklore with an extensive directorial vision. The analysis of national ballets showed that choreographers and stage directors increasingly often include a national component in their performances; they are in a constant creative search: they experiment, look for new images and develop the style of choreographic works. Today, the new generation of choreographers finds ethnic themes to be still important. Interesting and highly artistic works are being created in various genres of choreographic art. In addition to national ballets and Kazakh national dance, other genres of multifaceted art of dancing are being developed, including stylized national dance and neokazakh choreography (GRIGOROVICH, 1974).

In (The mysterious great steppe will be presented on March 22-23 in Astana Ballet, 2018), it is said that the one-act ballet of the modern choreographer Mukaram Avakhri Zhusan (Wormwood) immerses the viewer into the atmosphere of the mysterious Great Steppe, a symbol of our Motherland. Each of the nine ballet paintings is a sketch about the life of nomads. Like ancient legends transmitted by word of mouth through successive generations, they are brought to life to reflect the history of the steppe people. Heaven and earth, the steppe and the wind, as well as people and nature, cannot be separated. Their memory is kept in the tart scent of inconspicuous wormwood.



Figure 2: The ballet Zhusan, choreography by M. Avakhri, performed by the Astana Ballet Theatre troupe

Once the national dance became popular and ideological. It received a new life that meets the modern requirements of choreographic art due to folk and classical dance foundations. In the past, vocabulary and performing techniques were important in small choreographic forms (dances and miniatures); today, the small form is the performance where directorial approaches and decisions determine the integrity of the work.

It should be noted that the Kazakh dance has come a long way to acquire its unique nature and eurhythmics, as well as to restore its aesthetic and mental essence and identity. For various socio-cultural subjective and objective reasons, it has not been widely presented.

4. CONCLUSION

Conservation of the traditional basis in modern choreography ensures the continuity and vitality of national choreography. The analysis of modern Kazakh stage direction and national choreography allows us to conclude that today the national heritage is being extensively enriched with new choreographic movements. Stage direction in choreographic art defines ideas, the purpose and artistic perception of the work of art. Today, folk dances and national choreography are being transformed into directorial projects. There is a continuous search for directors able to interpret dance styles in dramatic performances and provide original dance content and forms of various stage images.

Today, the transformation and harmonious synthesis of conventionalism and modernity in expressive means, dramaturgy, as well as in the Kazakh dance and national choreographic art are becoming more popular. Thus, directorial approaches transform and stylize national choreographic art. As a result, this determines the direction of creativity and ensures the conservation of national traditions for successive generations. The analysis of the genesis of the Kazakh national art of dancing revealed that today Kazakh choreographic art has become unprecedentedly professional and the national Kazakh culture is recognized in the multifaceted world community of national cultures. In our research, we determined the development of modern stage direction, as well as the place of the stage director in the cultural and artistic context of the national culture,

which is especially important for maintaining the multinational layer of intellectual and world culture.

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