

Analysis of the Artistic Characteristics and Cultural Inheritance of the Tea Picking Opera in Jiulong Mountain, Gannan

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Abstract: Tea picking opera is a traditional type of opera in China, and Gannan tea picking opera is a form of opera sung in dialects. Gannan tea picking opera is not only the source of tea picking opera, but also a representative of Chinese tea picking opera. This paper analyzes the artistic characteristics of Gan Nan Jiu Long Shan Tea Picking Opera and investigates its cultural inheritance. Based on the understanding of the origin of Gannan Tea Picking Opera, this paper further analyzes the dialect art characteristics and singing art characteristics of Gannan Tea Picking Opera, and provides suggestions for talent cultivation of Gannan Tea Picking Opera. It also describes how Gannan Tea Picking Opera innovates and develops in a market-oriented manner.

Keywords: Gannan Jiulong Mountain Tea Picking Opera; Characteristics and inheritance; Intangible culture

1. Introduction

The Gan Nan Jiu Long Shan Tea Picking Opera is an important part of Chinese traditional culture and a distinctive local opera genre in Ganzhou City, Jiangxi Province. As an art form full of vitality and local flavor, the Gan Nan Jiu Long Shan Tea Picking Opera is loved by local people and has attracted increasing attention from scholars and cultural enthusiasts. This paper, with the theme of "Analysis of the Artistic Features and Cultural Inheritance of Gan Nan Jiu Long Shan Tea Picking Opera," aims to explore the origins, artistic features, inheritance, and development of the Gan Nan Jiu Long Shan Tea Picking Opera. It intends to gain a deeper understanding and explore the intrinsic value and vitality of this traditional culture, providing theoretical support and practical references for the protection and inheritance of the Gan Nan Jiu Long Shan Tea Picking Opera.

2. The origin of tea picking opera in southern Jiangxi

Gannan Tea Picking Opera originated from the folk and is a form of opera developed from the folk song and dance "Tea Picking Lantern". Its development roughly went through three stages: "Tea Song", "Tea Lantern", and "Tea Opera"[1]. Gannan Tea Picking Opera is commonly known as "Tea Picking Lantern" by locals and "Taiping Tune" by outsiders. The locals do not call it a tea picking opera but call it a "tea picking lantern". The initial purpose was to facilitate the collection of tea during the day, help people pass the time at night, find fun for people, and sell tea at a good price. Gannan tea picking opera usually starts at dark, ends at sunrise, performs at night, and has a dedicated horse team on the way.

In the tea picking opera in southern Jiangxi Province, the profound influence of dialect culture on the art field has been concentrated. Specifically, the formation and characteristics of tea picking opera in southern Gannan are closely related to the geographical environment and human customs of southern Gannan, which not only makes the tea picking Opera in southern Gannan present the characteristics of cheerful and free melody, loud and clear tones, and rich and colorful emotions, but also makes the tea picking opera in southern Gannan show its distinctive characteristics in terms of language. The interactive relationship between local dialect and local folk art can be understood more deeply. The creative space and motive of Gannan Tea picking opera are special, that is, the art form created by Hakka people in the process of working for their own entertainment, which is the main reason why Gannan tea picking opera presents the characteristics of colloquial language and the atmosphere of life.

3. Artistic characteristics of tea picking opera in the cultural context of southern Gannan

3.1 Dialect artistic characteristics of tea picking opera in southern Jiangxi

The dialect artistry of Gan Nan Jiu Long Shan Tea Picking Opera is an important component of its unique charm. As a local opera, Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera is deeply influenced by the local language and culture, and its application of dialect possesses distinctive artistic value.

Firstly, the use of dialect in Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera showcases strong regional characteristics. Gan Nan region is located in the southern part of Jiangxi Province, and its dialect has unique phonetic, vocabulary, and grammatical features. In Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera, actors sing in the local dialect, making the performance more grounded and closer to people's lives. The utilization of dialect fills Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera with strong local colors, presenting vivid depictions of regional customs and landscapes to the audience [2].

Secondly, the dialect artistry of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera is reflected in its sincere expression of emotions. Dialect, as a tool for daily communication, naturally possesses the ability to convey emotions. In Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera, actors skillfully employ the fluctuations of tone, changes in intonation, and other techniques of dialect to portray the characters' inner worlds vividly. This genuine expression of emotions allows the audience to deeply experience the joys and sorrows of the characters, enhancing the appreciation and emotional impact of the opera.

Moreover, the dialect artistry of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera is showcased in the melodic beauty of its language. Gan Nan dialect possesses rich variations in pitch and rhythm, which give Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera a unique rhythmic beauty during singing. Actors, through flexible use of dialect's tones, rhymes, and other techniques, create melodies that are graceful and harmonious, providing the audience with pleasurable aesthetic enjoyment.

Lastly, the dialect artistry of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera also manifests in its cultural inheritance. Dialect, as a carrier of regional culture, carries abundant historical and cultural information. Through the usage of dialect, Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera not only showcases the living conditions and spirits of the local people but also inherits the historical and cultural traditions of the Gan Nan region. This makes Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera not only an artistic form but also a continuation and inheritance of culture [3].

3.2 Artistic characteristics of singing in Gannan tea picking opera

The most distinctive feature of a drama is the singing style of music. The singing style is based on the language, folk songs, and folk music of a region, and is appropriately absorbed from the music characteristics of other regions. There are various types of singing styles in Gannan Tea Picking Opera, with each play and song being the title of the opera. There are three main types of singing music in Gannan Tea Picking Opera, namely tea melody, tea insertion, and new singing melody.

One of the most basic singing styles in Gannan tea picking opera is the tea tune, which retains the basic tune of tea songs. The tea tune is mainly composed of five tone mode, five tone feather mode, palace mode and commercial mode, showing a kind of feelings and emotions, and the melody is smooth, simple and elegant. According to the source of the tea tune, it can be classified in more detail, including the original tea tune, derived tea tune and borrowed tea tune. The original tea tune originated from the earliest time and developed many different qupai in one tune, which made the singing more rich and more expressive, so it was also one of the most basic singing tones of the tea picking opera in southern Jiangxi. Different artistic characteristics of tea picking opera appeared in different regions, adding some new elements of modern society.

The performance program of Cha Cha's singing style, including gongs and drums, suona tunes, and plate variations such as Sanban, Allegro, and Jianban in traditional Chinese opera, has absorbed and borrowed the singing style and expression techniques of Han Opera, Peking Opera, and other major operas, especially in terms of plate variations. Tea cutting is the essence of music refined by some folk artists in China through long-term processing on the basis of tea tunes, inserting some typical local characteristic music. Adding it to the performance of Chaqiang not only absorbs these major foreign operas, but also boldly innovates and combines it with local tunes to make it more inclined towards opera and localization, forming Chajian. The main form of performance is small-scale singing, with richer and more vivid vocal music, and highly contrasting. The content of tea inserts is generally not fixed, and performers can improvise. The number of accompaniments is related to the size of the troupe

or troupe, and the length of time occupied by the performance is determined by the performers. Commonly used instruments in accompaniment include treble drum, alto drum, treble wooden fish, treble gong, etc. Some plays involve Shang mode and gong mode, enriching the accompaniment timbre and enhancing the expressive force of the opera band. Appropriate amount of the introduction of some western instruments as accompaniment instruments, in harmony, orchestration also made a bold attempt, singing at the end of the high octave singing method, in order to set off the characteristics of the tea insert content.

In order to increase the repertoire, it is necessary to design some new musical vocals based on the existing tunes - new tea tunes. This new singing form is based on the original tea tune and has been adapted, incorporating these new creative features, thereby deriving a new tea tune. Adapting to new rules of lyrics or repertoire content, while maintaining the charm and style of the original song, to make the character's temperament more novel, this form of performance has been continuously updated and created to better adapt to changes in emotions, plot, and atmosphere. Therefore, a method of changing one song into multiple songs has been adopted to expand the capacity of the original track. The overall performance is lyrical, with a relatively high melody, ups and downs, and a strong flavor of opera, reflecting the atmosphere of a new life and era.

4. Inheritance and development of tea picking opera in southern Jiangxi

4.1 Cultivation of tea picking talents in southern Jiangxi Province

As a unique cultural and artistic form, talent cultivation plays a significant role in the inheritance and development of Gan Nan Jiu Long Shan Tea Picking Opera, an intangible cultural heritage. However, faced with the impact of modernization and cultural changes, talent cultivation for Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera is confronted with numerous challenges. Therefore, how to effectively cultivate and inherit talents for Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera has become an urgent issue.

Firstly, it is crucial to establish a sound talent education system for Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera. This includes offering relevant courses at all levels of schools to guide students in understanding and developing an appreciation for Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera. Additionally, establishing specialized programs for Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera in vocational schools or institutions is essential for systematic education and training. Through classroom teaching, practical training, artistic practices, and other approaches, students can comprehensively master the performance skills, artistic features, and historical-cultural connotations of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera.

Secondly, it is important to strengthen the construction of teaching staff. Excellent teachers are essential for talent cultivation. Inviting experienced performers, experts, and scholars of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera to serve as teachers is necessary as they possess profound artistic accomplishments and can impart rich practical experience to students. Meanwhile, attention should also be given to the continuing education and training of teachers, constantly improving their teaching levels and professional competence.

Furthermore, emphasis should be placed on practical teaching. Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera is an art form with strong practicality, and only through practice can its essence be truly mastered. Therefore, during the talent cultivation process, practical teaching should be prioritized, providing students with ample opportunities for practice. For example, organizing students to participate in rehearsals, performances, and other activities related to Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera allows them to refine their performance skills and artistic qualities through practical experience.

Lastly, strengthening cooperation and communication with various sectors of society is important. The inheritance and development of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera rely on support and collaboration from all walks of life. Therefore, during talent cultivation, active efforts should be made to establish cooperative relationships with relevant departments, institutions, and businesses, working together to promote the development of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera. Furthermore, enhancing international exchanges and cooperation through various channels will enable Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera to enter the world stage and further increase its visibility and influence.

4.2 Innovative development of tea picking opera in southern Jiangxi

For Gan Nan Jiu Long Shan Tea Picking Opera, an ancient and unique art form, achieving innovative development in modern society is an important topic for its inheritance and advancement.

Firstly, innovative development needs to focus on the renewal of script creation. Traditional scripts of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera often draw inspiration from daily life and folk stories, embodying regional characteristics. In the pursuit of innovative development, we can attempt to incorporate modern elements into the scripts, making them more contemporary. For example, modern elements such as contemporary life scenes and values can be organically integrated with traditional elements, creating new scripts that convey both the spirit of traditional culture and resonate with modern audiences [4].

Secondly, innovation in actor performance is also a crucial aspect. Traditional Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera performances have diverse and rich forms, yet the aesthetic preferences in modern society towards stage arts are constantly evolving. While preserving the essence of traditional performances, we can integrate modern dance, music, and other artistic forms to make the performances more dynamic and visually appealing. Additionally, exploring the use of modern technological means such as lighting, sound, and stage design can further enhance the audiovisual effects of the shows.

Lastly, innovative development should strike a balance between cultural inheritance and innovation. While pursuing innovation, we must not neglect the respect for and inheritance of traditional culture. Innovation should be built upon the foundation of tradition, involving the recreation and reinterpretation of traditional elements rather than simply abandoning or overturning them. Thus, in the process of innovative development, we should emphasize the organic integration of tradition and modernity, inheritance and innovation, maintaining the artistic characteristics of traditional Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera while infusing it with new meanings for the present era [5].

4.3 Marketization development of tea picking opera in southern Jiangxi

Market-oriented development provides a broader platform for the inheritance and popularization of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera. In modern society, the introduction of market mechanisms can effectively expand the influence and enhance the visibility of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera. For example, through commercial performances, cultural tourism, film and television media, Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera can reach a wider audience, allowing more people to understand and appreciate this unique art form.

It is important to maintain a balance between artistic and commercial elements in the process of marketization. In promoting and popularizing Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera, it is necessary to preserve its original artistic characteristics and avoid excessive commercialization. At the same time, efforts should be made to actively seek integration with market demands, innovate methods of communication, and adopt marketing strategies that are down-to-earth and attractive, enabling more people to come into contact with and understand Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera [6].

Additionally, the government and various sectors of society should provide more support and guidance for the market-oriented development of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera. For example, the government can introduce relevant policies to support the cultural industry development of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera and promote its integration with tourism, film, and other related industries. Various sectors of society can also support the marketization process of Gan Nan Tea Picking Opera through funding and sponsorship, while monitoring and guiding its commercial development to ensure healthy and sustainable growth.

5. Conclusion

This paper analyzes the origin and artistic characteristics of the tea picking opera in southern Gannan. The tea picking opera in southern Gannan is a kind of opera art with distinct regional cultural characteristics. The inheritance and development of the tea picking opera in southern Gannan needs the joint efforts of people from all social strata to effectively promote its development in a benign direction.

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