







The 15<sup>th</sup> National and International Conference

"Global Goals, Local Actions: Looking Back and Moving Forward 2022"

21 March, 2022

This article further analyzes the contemporary value of the ballet Red Detachment of Women from two dimensions: semiotic meaning and female ideology.

### Objective

1. To interpret the aesthetic and symbolic meaning embodied in the ballet "Red Detachment of Women".
2. To analyze the characteristics of female consciousness in the Red Detachment of Women by quoting Judith Hannah's contemporary theories on dance, gender, and body.

### Research scope

1. Object scope: The object of this study is the revolutionary ballet "Red Detachment of Women". Closely focusing on the ballet, it analyzes the meaning of its non-verbal aesthetic symbols and linguistic aesthetic symbols from the aspects of color, music, costumes, dancing posture, and lyrics.
2. Time scope: 5 months, from April 2021 to September 2021.

### Research methods

1. Research methods. This qualitative research mainly using case analysis and observation methods to observe and study the revolutionary ballet "Red Detachment of Women" by watching videos.
2. The research process

This paper determines the research background and research objectives of this research and designs a related research plan by sorting out the Red Detachment of Women. There are three versions of the Red Detachment of Women Ballet: in 1964, 1970, and 1972. This paper uses the case analysis method to investigate and research the objects in the ballet "Red Detachment of Women" (Wang Kefen & Long Yinpei, 1999). Susan Lange said that art is a manifestation of emotions. In this sense, if the displayed symbols are to cause people's aesthetic resonance, they need to be displayed in an emotional form. This also means that art needs to show itself in the form of a symbolic image of human life, and it needs to present a feature that is closely related to the basic logic of the behavior and activities of the individual to the entire mankind. The creation of ballet actually reflects the projection of human reality activities on the screen in a more aesthetic way (Susan Lange, 1986). In the process of research, this research focuses on the linguistic aesthetics and non-verbal aesthetics symbols in the works of "Red Detachment of Women" and analyzes the meaning of its non-verbal aesthetics symbols from the perspectives of color, music, costumes, dance actions, and postures, the lyrics and from the perspective of props, analyze



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the meaning of their language of aesthetics and symbols. To explore its aesthetic orientation.

Judith Hanna states that the dynamic visual models displayed in dance performances reflect, maintain, and challenge society's expectations of each gender-specific activity and domination mode (Judith Lynne Hanna, 1988). By introducing Judith Hanna's dynamic visual model to reflect the gender characteristics and gender power relations in the Red Detachment of Women, on this basis, the female ideology in it is further clarified.

3. Data collection

This paper collects data on colors, music, costumes, postures, props, lines, and other data in the ballet "The Red Detachment of Women" in 1964, 1970, and 1972, and records it by watching videos and using tools such as observation tables that are approved for later in-depth analysis of the "Red Detachment of Women" video data.

4. Data analysis

This article sorts out the data content of colors, music, costumes, postures, props, and lines collected from the three ballets "Red Detachment of Women" in different periods. In the process of watching the video, each symbol feature is recorded one by one in the form of a table and classified according to non-linguistic symbols and language symbols. This article further analyzes the meaning of the aesthetic symbols and the characteristics of female ideology contained in "Red Detachment of Women".

**Research results**

1. The significance of non-verbal aesthetics in the ballet "Red Detachment of Women":

1.1 Color. Red has a special symbolic meaning in the ballet "Red Detachment of Women". Compared with the somber colors of gray and black, the color red will give people a shocking aesthetic experience. As shown in Figure 1, red is the main color of the protagonist's clothing, and red, as the main theme color of the revolution, can be seen in many scenes. It not only highlights the revolutionary theme but also satisfies people's aesthetic and psychological experiences. For example, as shown in Figure 1, in "Red Detachment of Women", the clothes Tsinghua wore when under pressure were like fire with their unyielding expression, which gave the audience a strong impact.

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Figure 1



Figure 2

1.2 Music. In "Red Detachment of Women", the themes of the Detachment of Women, Tsinghua theme, and evergreen theme run through, according to different plot arrangements interspersed with different styles of scene music. The overall musical characteristics highlight a strong national style. The Red Detachment of Women uses a large number of Chinese percussion, plucked instruments, and strong folk-style music, which not only narrows the psychological distance between the audience and the composer, but also makes it easier for the audience to interpret these complex musical symbols. From their inner perception and historical experience, the audience can understand the thoughts



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contained in musical symbols more deeply.

1.3 Clothing. In "The Red Detachment of Women", the costumes worn by the female characters are adjusted from the short skirts of the West to the military uniforms of workers and peasants with a strong revolutionary struggle background, as shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4. Under the political background at the time, the costumes of the Red Detachment of Women's Army well interpret the image of the Red Army of Workers and Peasants. The addition of Chinese image symbols makes the overall dance show the oriental charm and the rhythmic power of the integration of Chinese and Western culture.



Figure 3



Figure 4



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1.4 Movement. "The Red Detachment of Women" combines traditional Chinese elements into the interpretation of Western ballet and incorporates opera, Li ethnic dance gestures, and classical dance. This makes the localized Chinese symbols appear in "The Red Detachment of Women" with a passionate vitality. and finally demonstrated the beauty of red-hot revolutionary art. For example, as shown in figure 5, the actions of the protagonist of "The Red Detachment of Women" show the courage and strength of a revolutionary. At the same time, the shooting dance, stab dance, and other themes in the dance drama are derived from the actual training of the troops. The choreographer has also adjusted the delicate movements and postures of the traditional Western ballet, as shown in figure 6. This allows the body of the Chinese female dancer to express the precise form and function of the weapon. In addition, the changes in its movements and postures also draw lessons from traditional Chinese martial arts and Peking opera and use some traditional Chinese martial arts sequences. In these sequences, men and women perform standard martial arts routines when training or fighting. Each of these routines embodies a novel dynamic gestalt in which the functional characteristics of the weapon shape the performer's movement, posture, and quality of movement.

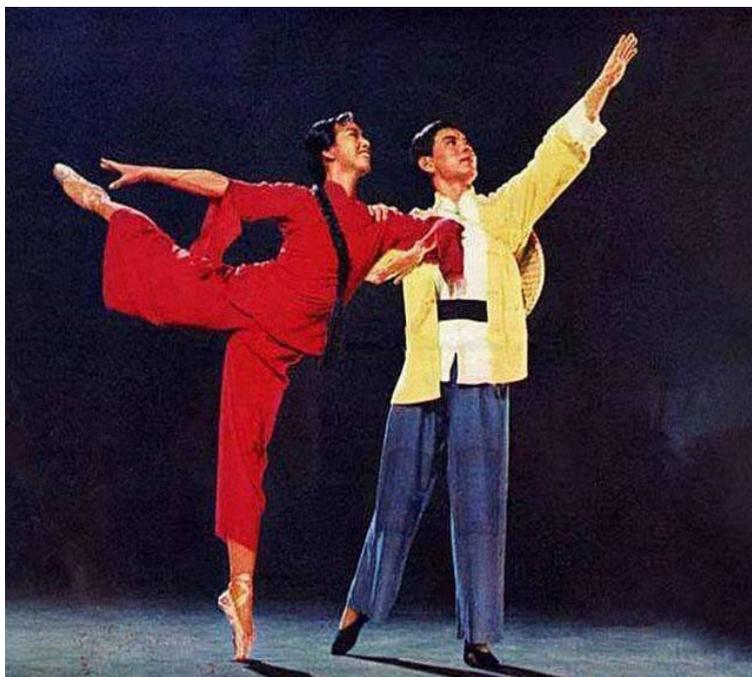


Figure 5



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Figure 6

2. Language aesthetics and their significance in the ballet "Red Detachment of Women":

2.1 lyrics. As one of the classics of the Red Ballet, the lyrics to "Red Detachment of Women" show certain characteristics of the time and social functions. During the period of the Revolutionary War and when the class struggle was intense, revolutionary songs were an important art form that the public liked to hear and see. The appearance of revolutionary songs in dance dramas was a form of expression of high art that was close to the public's aesthetics. The "Red Detachment of Women" strengthens the control of the content of the drama stage performance through the straightforward implantation of the language text in the lyrics. At the same time, at the end of the dance drama, accompanied by sonorous singing, the use of language symbols once again deepens the theme of the dance drama.

2.2 Props. Many representative language symbols appeared in the stage props of the dance drama "Red Detachment of Women". These language signs can clearly create an appropriate artistic atmosphere and play an auxiliary role in the artistic text that it needs to express. As shown in picture 7, the women of the detachment held rifles, pistols, swords, and other props for training and fighting. The form of these weapons and props expanded the energy lines expressed. In Picture 8, props with certain symbolic characteristics, such as the hats reflecting the "military and civilian rain" and the "Chinese Workers and Peasants' Red Army Women's Army Company" on the red flag, brought the audience a diverse aesthetic experience.

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Figure 7



Figure 8

3. Female ideology in the Red Detachment of Women:

3.1 This study uses Judith Hanna's dynamic visual model theory to focus on the analysis of the female ideology of the dancer's personal movements and the interaction between the actors.

Individual actions. The narrative development of "Red Detachment of Women" provides many opportunities for characters and movements that challenge the gender tradition of classical ballet. Women who command the army and conduct military exercises with weapons are given a sense of anticipation, and the female characters do have a wider



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range of roles and body movements than the swan princess or the sugar plum fairy. In many scenes from the Red Detachment of Women, women convey a sense of strength and tension in their poses, rather than the gentle and relaxed way traditional ballerinas show, as shown in figure 9. When conveying themes of revolutionary struggle and class spirit, the gestures and facial expressions of female dancers often showed anger and determination, as shown in figure 10. From a semiotics point of view, the female dancers in the Red Detachment of Women use greater personal body space and more pronounced dynamic movements. It is a sign of increased confidence and strength.

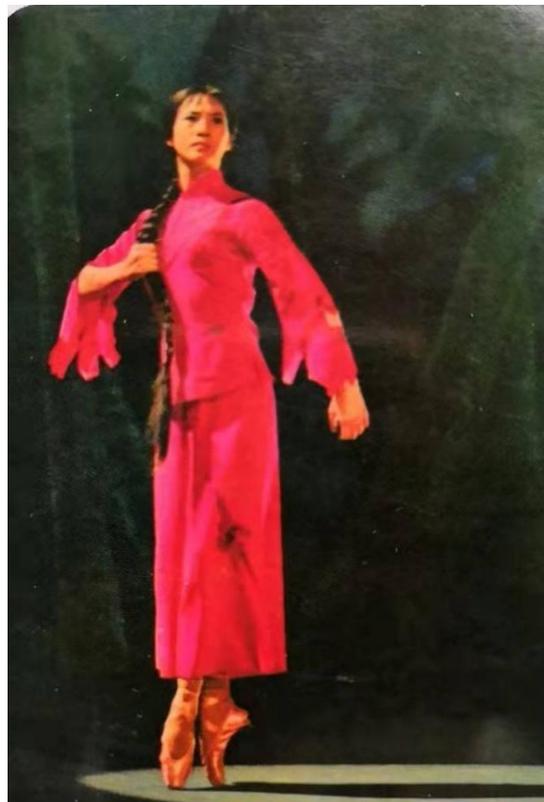


Figure 9



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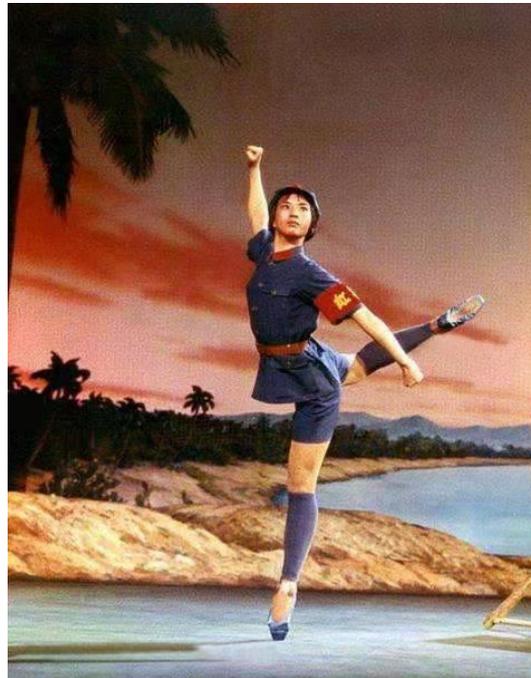


Figure 10

3.2 Interaction among dancers. In the ballet "Red Detachment of Women", the actors and actresses all play a role in supporting, lifting, pushing, and advancing other actors. The role of women has transcended previous gender boundaries, challenging the traditional gender norms of ballet and symbolically empowering women.

### Conclusion and discussion

The "Red Detachment of Women" has become a unique historical and cultural symbol. The longevity of the "Red Detachment of Women" to a large extent lies in the unforgettable inner aspirations of today's people for the past red historical revolution period, as well as its unique expression and innovative charm. Through the analysis and research of the language and non-verbal symbols in The Red Detachment of Women, this paper finds that in this classic ballet work, whether it is non-verbal aesthetic symbols such as color, music, costumes, movements, etc., or linguistic aesthetics such as lyrics and props, the symbols all reflect the characteristics of the Chinese red revolution and a strong national culture. At the same time, the individual movements and the interaction of the dancers also reflect the strength and power of women. As a classic that has spread over half a century, it has experienced unprecedented breakthroughs in terms of artistic expression and ideological aesthetics. In terms of ideology and aesthetics, the dance drama changed the narrative



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subject, emphasized women's awareness of rights, and gave a more advanced and fair view of equal rights.

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