**From historical relics to dance art: the contemporary "revival" of cultural heritage and its expression in dance**

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**Abstract:** This paper focuses on the "revival" phenomenon of cultural heritage in contemporary society, delving into the cross-disciplinary integration paths between historical artifacts and dance art. By analyzing the value and significance of the contemporary transformation of cultural heritage, it explores the artistic techniques for incorporating elements of historical artifacts into dance creation, revealing the innovative expression of cultural heritage in dance art. The study finds that dance art, with its unique bodily language and narrative style, infuses modern vitality into cultural heritage, achieving creative transformation and innovative development of traditional culture, providing new ideas for cultural inheritance and artistic innovation.

**Key words:** cultural heritage; historical relics; dance art; contemporary revival; innovative expression

In the context of cultural heritage preservation and innovative development, the contemporary value of cultural heritage is becoming increasingly prominent. Historical artifacts serve as the primary carriers of cultural heritage, bearing a nations historical memory and cultural genes. Dance art, with its vivid body language and emotional expression, has become an important link between the past and the present. When historical artifacts meet dance art, traditional culture can enter modern life in new ways. This study aims to explore how cultural heritage can be "revived" through dance art, and to analyze the internal logic and practical paths of their integration, providing theoretical references and practical insights for the inheritance and promotion of traditional culture.

**I. The contemporary background and value of the "revival" of cultural heritage**

Influenced by the waves of globalization and modernization, cultural diversity has faced challenges, and the issue of preserving and developing traditional culture has become a focal point of global concern. In recent years, China has placed great emphasis on the protection and inheritance of cultural heritage, issuing policy documents such as "Opinions on Implementing the Project for the Inheritance and Development of Fine Traditional Chinese Culture," elevating cultural heritage protection to a national strategic level and providing policy support for its contemporary "revival." At the same time, with the growing awareness of popular culture and the increasing sense of identity and belonging to traditional culture, the contemporary value of cultural heritage, as a symbol of national spirit, bearer of historical memory, and carrier of cultural genes, is becoming increasingly evident. The "revival" of cultural heritage in the contemporary era holds multiple values[1]On the cultural level, it serves as a bond that maintains ethnic cultural identity and enhances national cohesion and cultural confidence. Taking the digital protection project of the Dunhuang Mogao Caves as an example, modern technology is used to capture and virtually display thousands of years of murals and sculptures in high definition, allowing ancient art to transcend time and space boundaries and rejuvenate in the digital age, becoming an important window for the spread of Chinese culture. From an economic perspective, the revitalization and utilization of cultural heritage can give rise to new industries such as cultural and creative industries and the integration of culture and tourism, generating economic value. The cultural and creative products launched by the Palace Museum have successfully combined elements of cultural relics with modern design concepts, achieving annual sales exceeding 1.5 billion RMB, thus realizing dual benefits for both culture and the economy. The "revival" of cultural heritage not only has educational significance but can also be integrated into school curricula and social practices to enhance the cultural literacy and aesthetic appreciation of the public, especially young people, further promoting the inheritance of traditional culture across generations.

**The relationship between the contemporary "revival" of cultural heritage and dance**

Cultural heritage and dance art share a natural and intrinsic connection. Their deep integration not only provides an innovative path for the revival of cultural heritage in contemporary times but also infuses dance art with new vitality. Dance, as an ancient art form, is a significant component of cultural heritage. Traditional dances like the Tibetan Guozhuang and the Dai Peacock Dance embody the historical culture, religious beliefs, and living customs of their respective ethnic groups, making them treasures of living cultural heritage. In contemporary times, these traditional dances have been reorganized, adapted, and innovated, and are once again brought to the stage, serving as a primary medium to highlight the charm of national culture. Meanwhile, dance art, with its unique body language and expressive power, dynamically transforms static cultural heritage, giving it new life[2]The patterns, designs, postures, and cultural stories on historical artifacts, through artistic refinement and creation, can be transformed into dance movements, stage settings, and narrative threads. For instance, the dance-poetry drama Only This Green and Blue draws inspiration from the famous Northern Song painting A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains. It uses dancers movements to outline the contours of mountains and rivers, and employs dance language to convey the artistic conception and spirit of the painting, transforming static painting art into dynamic stage performances. This allows the audience to experience the charm of traditional culture from a new perspective. The dissemination characteristics and audience base of dance help expand the influence of cultural heritage. Dance works can attract audiences of all ages and regions through various means of dissemination, such as stage performances and online videos, thereby bringing cultural heritage out of museums and ancient documents into the public eye, facilitating the creative transformation and innovative development of traditional culture.

**The contemporary "revival" of cultural heritage and its expression in dance**

(1) The background and realistic motivation of the revival

In todays highly globalized and modernized world, cultural heritage is facing numerous crises such as generational gaps in transmission and the erosion of cultural identity. On one hand, the acceleration of industrialization has led to the gradual disappearance of traditional skills and lifestyles, leaving many intangible cultural heritages without successors. On the other hand, the influence of Western culture has weakened the younger generations understanding and interest in local culture[3]In this context, the contemporary "revival" of cultural heritage has become the only choice for safeguarding the roots of national culture and enhancing cultural confidence. In recent years, China has successively issued policies and regulations such as the "Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the Peoples Republic of China" and the "Opinions on Implementing the Project for the Inheritance and Development of Fine Traditional Chinese Culture," providing institutional guarantees for the protection and revitalization of cultural heritage nationwide. At the same time, the rise of "China-fashion" culture and the enhanced influence of social media have led to unprecedented public attention and enthusiasm for traditional culture, fostering a positive atmosphere in society for the appreciation of cultural heritage. From a practical perspective, the "revival" of cultural heritage not only holds cultural value but also harbors significant economic potential and social value. In the broader environment of integration between tourism and culture, tourism projects that emphasize the protection of cultural heritage have become a major driving force for local economic development. For example, the Palace Museum has successfully transformed cultural heritage into popular cultural items through two methods: "Digital Palace Museum" and "Palace Museum Creative Products." The annual number of visitors exceeds 19 million, and the revenue from cultural creativity surpasses 1.5 billion yuan. Additionally, the craftsmanship, ecological wisdom, and ethical concepts embodied in cultural heritage can provide historical references for addressing contemporary social issues,For example, the ecological building concept of traditional villages has enlightening significance for modern sustainable architectural design. These elements together form the realistic power of "revival" of cultural heritage in contemporary times, and promote cultural heritage to move towards modern life in multiple forms.

(2) Dance translation of cultural relics elements

Cultural relics, as one of the primary material carriers of cultural heritage, contain historical information and artistic characteristics that provide rich material for dance creation. The translation of cultural relic elements into dance language requires a process of transformation from concrete to abstract, from static to dynamic art. From a formal perspective, the contour lines and decorative patterns on artifacts are often refined to serve as the foundation for dance movements. For example, choreographers draw inspiration from the taotie patterns on bronze vessels, transforming the symmetry and tension of these patterns into the stretching and contracting of dancers bodies. The "S" -shaped postures of flying apsaras in Dunhuang murals are recreated through the gentle swaying of dancers waists and the fluttering of silk ribbons. From a narrative perspective, the historical stories and cultural implications behind cultural relics can be reconstructed into the plot threads of dances. For instance, the dance drama "Bronze Maiden" is based on the Sanxingdui bronze mask, using dance vocabulary to tell the mysterious legends of ancient Shu civilization, turning static artifacts into dynamic cultural narratives. The material texture and color characteristics of artifacts can also be transformed into visual symbols and emotional expressions in dance. The ancient and weighty feel of pottery can be conveyed through the dancers powerful footwork and steady body language; the smooth luster and delicate tones of porcelain are reflected in the silk fabrics of dance costumes and the soft lighting design. As seen in the dance drama "Powder and Ink," fromThe elements of facial makeup are absorbed from the opera relics, and the unique charm of opera art is expressed by the contrast of facial makeup color and the combination of hard and soft movements of dancers. This creative translation from cultural relics to dance language not only maintains the authenticity of cultural heritage, but also gives it new artistic vitality.

(3) The integration of traditional aesthetics on the stage

Traditional aesthetics, as the spiritual core of cultural heritage, are integrated into dance stage art, creating an aesthetic realm rich in Eastern charm. In spatial design, the concept of the interplay of reality and illusion is deeply embedded. Designers often use simple props and multimedia projections, such as Only This Green and Blue, which uses minimalist mountain installations, dynamic lighting, dancers green and blue costumes, and poses to recreate the ink wash atmosphere of A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains. The dance drama Li Bai skillfully combines projection through gauze screens with real-life props, creating a scene that blends poetry, painting, song, and dance, blending reality and fiction. In terms of choreography, the pursuit of vivid energy and rhythm drives choreographers to borrow the brushwork and rhythm from calligraphy and traditional Chinese painting, making the dancers movements as smooth as flowing clouds, forming a seamless visual rhythm. For example, the classical dance Fan Dance of Danqing integrates the lifting and turning of calligraphy into the opening and closing of the fan and body movements, achieving the artistic realm where dance is writing. Additionally, the concept of the beauty of harmony is reflected in the overall structure and emotional expression of the dance, emphasizing the balance of strength and softness, movement and stillness, and density and sparsity. For example, the Mongolian dance Gallop portrays the heroic and spirited posture of horses while incorporating gentle arm movements to convey the gentleness of the grasslands; the Dai dance Peacock.The \*Spirit\* successfully interprets the rhythm and melody of life through the alternation of gentle and lively rhythms. In terms of stage design, traditional aesthetics such as symmetrical composition, negative space art, and color symbolism are widely applied. The costumes in the dance drama \*Dream of the Red Chamber\*, with their red and black tones, and the garden-like stage setting convey the tragic aesthetics of classical literature; \*Silk Road Flower Rain\* recreates the beauty of cultural integration along the Silk Road through the restoration of Dunhuang mural colors and exotic stage designs, infusing traditional aesthetics with new life in contemporary dance.

(4) Modern reconstruction of intangible cultural heritage dance

Intangible cultural heritage traditional dance, as a living treasure of culture, faces challenges in inheritance and innovation in modern society. The modern reconstruction of intangible cultural heritage dance requires maintaining its cultural genes while integrating contemporary aesthetics and artistic techniques. Innovation in movement vocabulary is manifested by refining and transforming traditional dance elements. For example, Yunnan Huadeng Dance retains the core movements of "wai" and "zhan," combining them with the fluidity of modern dance and the deconstruction of body movements to create more dynamic new combinations. The Tibetan Reba Dance skillfully integrates traditional bell drum techniques with the power of street dance, attracting many young audiences. Secondly, innovations in narrative methods break the conventional stylized performance of traditional dance. The dance drama "Awakening Lion" integrates modern dramatic conflict and emotional expression, narrating the story of young people in modern Guangzhou and endowing traditional skills with new era significance. In terms of music and stage design, the restructured dance also exhibits a trend of cross-disciplinary integration. For instance, the Korean ethnic agricultural music dance combines electronic music with traditional percussion, paired with dynamic scene transitions on LED screens to create a modern audio-visual experience. The performance of Guizhou Dong Grand Song and dance integrates the original ecological singing style with immersive stage installations to recreate scenes of ethnic life. Additionally, intangible cultural heritage danceThe dissemination model has evolved from oral and heart-to-heart transmission to digitalization and industrialization. TikTok The Intangible Cultural Heritage Dance Challenge on the platform has attracted over a million users, while Tang Palace Night Banquet has achieved its circle-breaking spread through the advanced technology of 5G + 4K + AR. These methods have not only expanded the audience for intangible cultural heritage dances but also promoted their sustainable development in modern society and fostered an organic connection between traditional culture and contemporary life.

(5) Technology empowerment and multidimensional presentation

Along with the rapid advancement of digital technology, tech has emerged as a core driving force for the "revival" of cultural heritage in the field of dance art. This is primarily achieved through virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), artificial intelligence (AI), and other cutting-edge technologies, which provide audiences with an immersive, highly interactive multidimensional artistic experience. In terms of stage presentation, holographic projection technology has broken through the limitations of traditional stage space, seamlessly integrating historical scenes and artifact images into dance performances in a three-dimensional and dynamic manner. For example, the dance drama "The Crested Ibis" uses holographic projections to simulate misty wetland environments that echo the dancers graceful movements, making the audience feel as if they are immersed in the natural ecosystem where the crested ibis lives, enhancing the artistic appeal. AI technology has opened up new possibilities for dance creation; AI algorithms can analyze large amounts of cultural heritage data, extracting color, pattern, and movement elements to assist choreographers in creative thinking. At the same time, motion capture technology can accurately record the dynamic movements of traditional dancers, digitally preserving and applying them to modern dance teaching and creation, effectively addressing the challenge of losing detailed movements during the transmission of traditional dances. Additionally, digital twin technology can create 1:1 virtual replicas of historical buildings and cultural relics, providing a virtual environment for dance creationThe stage, for example, reconstructs the cave scenes of the Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes through virtual reconstruction, so that dancers can perform ancient music and dance in the digital space, thus achieving a leapfrog dialogue between history and modern times.

(6) Communication path and influence

Innovations born from the fusion of cultural heritage and dance art have gained widespread social influence through diverse dissemination channels. For traditional media, television variety shows and art documentaries have become key windows for communication. For instance, in Henan TVs "Chinese Festivals" series, dance pieces like "Water Ode to the Goddess Luo" and "Dragon Gate Vajra" employed innovative techniques such as underwater photography and real-scene stages. After being broadcast on television platforms, these works garnered nationwide attention and sparked heated discussions, with single video online views exceeding hundreds of millions, successfully achieving a "breakthrough" in the dissemination of traditional culture. In the new media era, short video platforms and social media serve as primary channels for the spread of cultural heritage dance works. Platforms TikTok and B use topic challenges and creator support programs to stimulate user enthusiasm for secondary creation and dissemination of cultural heritage dances, generating a viral effect. Meanwhile, the use of live streaming has broken down barriers of time and space in dance performances, allowing audiences to participate in artistic experiences through real-time online viewing and interactive rewards. For example, live dance broadcasts from the National Centre for the Performing Arts can attract millions of viewers per session, effectively expanding the audience base for cultural heritage dances. Additionally, international cultural exchange activities also contribute to the dissemination of cultural heritageIt has set up a stage for Chinese dance to enter the world, and presented the unique charm of Chinese culture to audiences around the world through overseas tours and art exhibitions. It has enhanced the influence of Chinas traditional culture in the international community and promoted exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations.

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By deeply integrating cultural heritage with dance art, we can pave a new path for the contemporary revival of traditional culture. By incorporating elements of historical artifacts into dance creations, we not only revitalize and preserve cultural heritage but also enrich dance art with profound cultural depth. Moving forward, we need to further explore innovative models that blend cultural heritage with dance art, continuously expanding the boundaries of cultural inheritance. This will enable traditional culture to gain new life and vitality in the modern era, achieving a win-win situation in both cultural and artistic value.

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