



"EXPRESSING NATIONAL DANCES ON STAGE: PROBLEMS OF CHOREOGRAPHIC THINKING"

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the issues of choreographic thinking that arise in the process of presenting national dances on stage. National dances are an art form that reflects a nation's cultural heritage, and during their stage adaptation, aspects such as artistry, imagery, historicity, and aesthetic harmony play a crucial role. Choreographic thinking serves to integrate these elements into a unified conceptual framework. The article discusses the challenges encountered in staging national dances, examines their causes and offers possible solutions, along with relevant suggestions to improve the process.

National dances are a vivid expression of each nation's cultural heritage, traditions, and worldview. They convey values passed down from generation to generation, historical processes, national character, and emotional depth. National dances possess a rich spiritual legacy, and their stage performance embodies a unique combination of aesthetic, dramatic, and cultural significance. A staged performance of a national dance is not merely a sequence of movements, it is a work of art that conveys meaning and emotions to the audience. Through every step, gesture, and movement, the dancer expresses ideas connected to their homeland, people, and culture. Historical records mention that dancers from ancient Turan performed their art in distant regions such as Rome, Egypt, Eastern China, Korea, and even Japan via the Great Silk Road. For example, Uzbek dances such as *Lazgi*, *Tanovar*, and *Andijon polkasi* are distinguished by region-specific movements, costumes, and musical ornamentation. The process of adapting a national dance for the stage involves several stages. First, the theme or emotion to be expressed through the dance is defined. Then, the movements are refined and adapted for stage performance; rhythm and dynamics are enhanced. Costumes that reflect national identity, along with stage design and background elements, enrich the overall presentation. Through dance, feelings of national pride, beauty, and positive emotions are conveyed to the audience. **"Rock carvings and archaeological findings discovered in Central Asia, particularly in the territory of present-day Uzbekistan, testify to the ancient origins of dance in this region.** Historical sources indicate that as early as the time of the Zoroastrian holy book *Avesta*, the art of dance had already begun to take shape, developing in two distinct directions: folk and professional dance. Moreover, throughout various stages of historical development, the interaction between dance and games in our homeland led to the emergence of traditional performances such as *Beshqarsak*, *Katta o'yin*, *Lazgi*, *Kema o'yin*, and



Ashshadaroz." [2]A national dance performed on stage is not only an artistic expression but also serves an educational purpose. It helps the younger generation understand, appreciate, and take pride in their cultural heritage. Especially when performed on international stages, these dances help introduce Uzbek culture to the world. The staging of national dances reflects not only the performers' skill but also the historical and cultural consciousness of the people. Through these dances, we comprehend our national identity, cherish it, and pass it on to future generations. Therefore, the development of national dance and the refinement of its stage presentation are key responsibilities for every devoted artist. The art of national dance is a unique artistic representation of a people's historical memory, aesthetic worldview, and social-psychological state. Dances are no longer limited to rituals and celebrations; they have become a vital part of stage art. However, adapting traditional dances for the stage presents a variety of creative and theoretical challenges, including contradictions that arise within choreographic thinking. [3.94]**Choreographic thinking** refers to the dancer's or choreographer's ability to express meaning, imagery, mood, and dramatic ideas through movement on stage. This form of thinking lies at the core of the creative process and plays a decisive role in the success of a stage performance. More precisely, **choreographic thinking** in dance is the ability to express ideas and imagery through creative movement and to construct a coherent stage composition. It involves shaping thought, emotion, and meaning through dance, using the dancer's body, emotions, and consciousness as expressive tools. **In the art of dance, movement is the primary means of expression.** A person with choreographic thinking is able to assign meaning to each movement they can "speak" with their body and convey emotions. The identification and organization of the sequence, rhythm, and dynamics of movements into a cohesive stage composition is a product of creative thinking. A choreographer envisions the beginning, development, and conclusion of a dance performance. Choreographic thinking reflects a person's ability to create imagery through movement. For example, the blooming of a flower, the flight of a bird, or a person's inner emotional experiences can all be expressed through motion. Movement must not only be technically correct but also beautiful, balanced, and impactful. **Choreographic thinking** is the ability to perceive beauty in movement and elevate it to the level of art. It is the art of creative thinking through movement. This ability is essential for every dancer and especially for choreographers, as it determines the meaning, beauty, and emotional impact of a dance work. Through this mode of thinking, a person can express their thoughts and emotions wordlessly solely through bodily motion. Historical sources indicate that dancers from ancient Turan demonstrated their art in distant lands such as Rome, Egypt, Eastern China, Korea, and even Japan via the Great Silk Road. [3.94]Regional differences in Uzbek dances — such as the lyricism of Fergana, the dynamic style of Khorezm, and the static aesthetics of Bukhara face certain artistic and precision-related demands when adapted for the stage. National dances are a unique form of art that reflect a people's spiritual world, historical development, cultural traditions, and aesthetic values. Uzbek national dances embody the ancient history, lifestyle, customs, and dreams of the nation. When adapted for stage performance, these dances are enriched, becoming deeply expressive works of art that touch the hearts of the audience. The dance schools formed across Uzbekistan notably the Fergana, Bukhara, and Khorezm schools each have their own distinct styles, movements, and imagery. Staged national dances reveal the dramaturgy of the piece, enrich the system of



images, provide aesthetic pleasure to the audience, and demand a deeper level of preparation than traditional oral folk performances. National dances and the stage are two essential components that complement one another. While national dances express the soul and cultural memory of a people, the stage serves as a bridge that delivers this art to a wider audience. Therefore, the staging of national dances requires not only technical skills but also deep artistic and spiritual approaches. Each dance is the heartbeat of a nation rendered in rhythm. Movements must be precise, expressive, and in harmony with the music. When adapting national dances to stage dramaturgy, care must be taken not to harm their authenticity. It is crucial to study the dramaturgy of dance in depth and adapt Uzbek dances to the stage without distorting their internal meaning. Every stage movement must carry content, achieved through strong expressive preparation, imaginative thinking, and developed musical awareness. Improving educational programs, particularly in art schools and higher education institutions, and placing special emphasis on strengthening choreographic thinking is essential. The stage expression of national dance requires not just technical skill, but also a deep sense of choreographic imagination, artistic taste, and the ability to preserve the national spirit. Dances are not only a medium of beauty but a powerful artistic expression of a people's spiritual essence conveyed through stage performance. This places a great responsibility on art professionals to constantly seek innovation, explore creatively, and remain open to experimentation. National dances are a form of cultural heritage that reflect ancient traditions, lifestyles, philosophies, and emotional states through movement. Uzbek dance is characterized by regional diversity for example, *Fergana* dances are gentle and lyrical, *Khorezm* dances are rich in strong expressiveness, *Bukhara* dances are stately and dignified in movement. These dances are rooted in ritual and social meanings. Elements such as national costumes, music, rhythm, and facial expression (mimicry) play a vital role in shaping the dance's identity. A staged national dance is not a direct reproduction of a folk dance. Rather, it is a thoughtfully reworked, compositionally complete performance designed for an audience. It follows a clear narrative, emotional arc, and stage logic, and is enriched both aesthetically and technically. It is often performed as a solo, duet, or group piece, enhanced by lighting, costumes, and set design. Preserving the national spirit in staging requires that the original essence, symbolism, and expressiveness of the dance remain intact. Each movement, gesture, and musical rhythm must create an emotional connection it must "speak" in a language the audience understands. Achieving technical and aesthetic excellence involves, Precision of movement, Synchronization, Stylistic purity. However, choreographers often face various challenges when adapting national dances to the stage. These include, maintaining authenticity while enhancing theatrical elements, balancing regional styles within a cohesive stage composition, translating traditional meanings into a modern stage language without distortion, developing dancers' expressive and choreographic thinking to meet both traditional and professional demands. **National dances must be embodied on stage in their own rhythm, spirit, and expressive essence.** Stage adaptation can offer a modern interpretation of this art form, but such interpretations must be grounded in the spiritual and aesthetic values of the people. **Choreographic thinking** is the creative consciousness that breathes life into national movements it is the artistic mind that animates tradition through motion.



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