

Analysis of the Creative Features and Performance of "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal"

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ABSTRACT

"Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" is the aria of Li Tiemei in the modern Beijing opera "The Red Lantern", which depicts the character Li Tiemei's great sorrow as a revolutionary force and the heroic sentiment of fighting against the enemy to the end. It has a strong and profound revolutionary imprint. Yin Chengzong and others adapted this work into a piano accompaniment, which perfectly integrates traditional Peking Opera and piano art, opening up a new path for the nationalization of Chinese piano music. This article analyzes the music creation characteristics and piano accompaniment performance of the work from the perspective of the accompanist, providing some reference theoretical support and practical experience for performers and learners.

Keywords: Piano accompaniment "The Red Lantern", Peking Opera, Piano performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The adaptation of "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" is based on the aria of Li Tiemei in the fifth scene of the revolutionary modern Peking Opera "The Red Lantern", "Painful Commentary on Revolutionary Family History". "Painful Commentary on Revolutionary Family History" is the key scene of the drama and also an important turning point in the life of the character Li Tiemei. The adapted piano accompaniment, "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal", runs through both China and the West. While showcasing the rich timbre of the piano and utilizing Western composition techniques, it is worth mentioning that it retains traditional Chinese creative thinking and strong national style. As the first and only work in China to use piano as accompaniment to Peking Opera, how to ensure the unique charm of Chinese Peking Opera in the performance process is a noteworthy issue. Based on this, this article analyzes and studies the music creation characteristics and performance essentials of "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal", providing some reference experiences for performers and learners, and further delving into

the unique charm of Peking Opera and the Chinese national style in the work.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF MUSIC CREATION

"Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" adopts the A-mode, seven tone musical scale, relatively large in scale, rich in emotional changes, from sadness to resentment, and finally sublimated into a revolutionary and heroic sentiment, showcasing Li Tiemei's great grief as a revolutionary force, as well as Ling Yun's ambitious struggle against the enemy to the end, with strong drama.

2.1 Music Material Selection

The piano accompaniment of "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" basically follows the musical melody of the original drama, drawing on the traditional creative thinking and accompaniment techniques of Peking Opera in the original opera. By utilizing the rich and broad timbre and musical expressive characteristics of the piano to imitate traditional Peking Opera accompaniment instruments (such as the three-

major-items, pipa, daruan, gongs and drums, etc.), piano accompaniment can achieve a high degree of integration with Peking Opera singing. At the same time, the accompaniment fully utilized the rich sound level of the piano, a Western instrument, and incorporated the symphonic materials from the original opera ("Revolutionary Modern Peking Opera 'The Red Lantern' Score", performed in 1970) accompaniment, adding a vertical harmony color to the work. The combination of Chinese and Western elements, embracing both sides, has given new vitality and charm to Chinese Peking Opera in piano accompaniment, and has also opened up a broader space for later piano creation in China.

2.2 Plate Type Application

The comprehensive aria of "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" includes various forms of Peking Opera, such as erhuang yuanban, duoban, and allegro. Through the changes in beat, rhythm, and speed of different forms, it comprehensively and deeply portrays Li Tiemei's psychological state from "sadness" to "anger" and then to "bloody battles with enemies". Among them, sections 1-31 refer to the erhuang yuanban, which has a moderate speed and a structure of one board one eye. Through the lyrical and narrative characteristics of the erhuang yuanban, the aria reflects Tiemei's emotions and indignation after listening to grandma's painful account of revolutionary family history. Sections 32-63 use duoban, which is fast and has a board without eyes. With the changes in rhythm, speed, and tone, the emotions of the characters also change, from sadness and emotion to anger, and they need to repay the enemy with blood and blood. The bars 64 to 133 are allegro, with a fast rhythm and only playing the board without drums. Each word is pronounced with a compact and powerful sound, with strong narrative and dramatic effects. Tiemei vowed to follow her father's footsteps and hold up

the revolutionary banner to fight against the enemy to the end. This aria uses allegro to express Li Tiemei's firm fighting spirit of "fighting generations by generations" and the urgent and intense emotions of "fighting against jackals".

2.3 Analysis of Accompaniment Music

The reason why the piano accompaniment of "The Red Lantern" can go global with "one person, one qin" is to replace the huge Peking Opera accompaniment system with a piano instrument. It is because the arrangement of its piano accompaniment accurately utilizes the sound effect of the piano as an instrument, using various textures such as single notes, leaning notes, octaves, chords, tremolo, and arpeggios to express the characteristics of traditional Chinese Peking Opera and the Western music materials in the original music. As an empirical example of "adapting foreign things to Chinese needs" and "making the past serve the present", the accompaniment texture of its piano part has a distinct characteristic of integrating Chinese and Western art.

2.3.1 Peking Opera Accompaniment Features

Firstly, the main characteristic of its Peking Opera accompaniment is reflected in its creative thinking in the main melody. As can be seen from the piano accompaniment score of "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal", the left hand accompaniment is mostly composed of decomposed chords, and the melody in the high voice part of the right hand is basically consistent with the singing melody. This is similar to the common accompaniment form in Chinese opera that follows the melody of the singing style with three major pieces, rather than the common harmony accompaniment form in Western art songs.

Figure 1 Example 1: Piano accompaniment: "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" bars 6-11.

Example 1 ("Figure 1") is the accompaniment of the vocal part of the aria "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal". In the example, the piano accompaniment consists of chords and smooth arpeggios. The high pitched part of the right hand has a high octave singing melody,

replacing the three major accompaniment functions of the Peking Opera accompaniment. The thickened chord texture and arpeggio below make the entire aria full of singing and narrative, expressing Li Tiemei's emotional state after learning the truth.



Figure 2 Example 2: Piano accompaniment: "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal", bars 23-33.

Example 2 ("Figure 2") is the accompaniment of the melodic part of this aria, which is an important form of expression in Peking Opera singing. This segment adopts the form of "one character with multiple sounds" to express a specific emotion of the character in depth, detail, and vividly, in order to achieve the effect of enriching the character's image. The accompaniment of the "洋 (yang)" character in the drag part of Example 2 is basically consistent with the melody of the singing style. The first two bars

use column and string structures to fill in the rhythm of the single tone melody, promoting emotions. The last two bars are consistent with the singing melody, strengthening the melody lines and the singularity of the melody, showcasing the traditional Chinese creative mode of "linear" thinking.

Secondly, the ethnic style of this aria is also reflected in its reference to the traditional Beijing Opera accompaniment creation technique of "supporting melody and maintaining melody".



Figure 3 Example 3: Piano accompaniment: "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal", bars 6-11.

The part with red box in Example 3("Figure 3") uses the technique of "level-up" in "supporting cavity and preserving tone", which is composed of sixteen diaeresis with dots. In this segment, the "level-up" is used at the singer's breath, connecting the previous and the following,

singing style, filling the melody and rhythm with flowers on the melody. This not only makes the song more coherent, but also enables the auxiliary singer to better express the emotions contained in the song, making the character image more vivid and lively, with distinct ethnic characteristics.

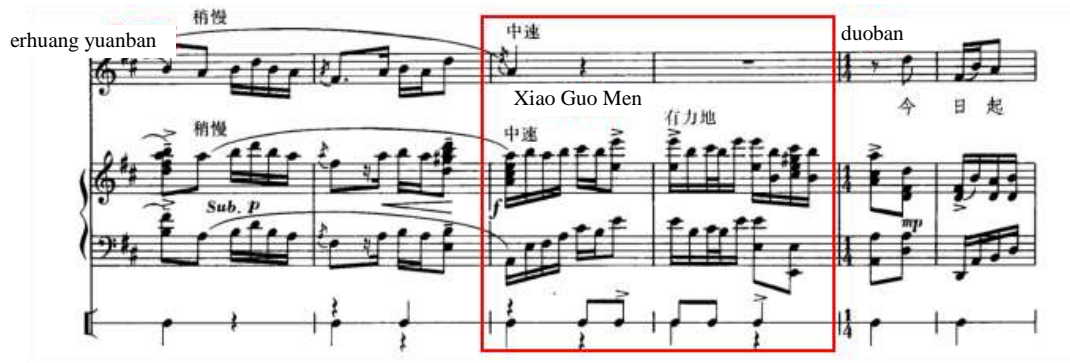


Figure 4 Example 4: Piano accompaniment: "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal", bars 28-33.

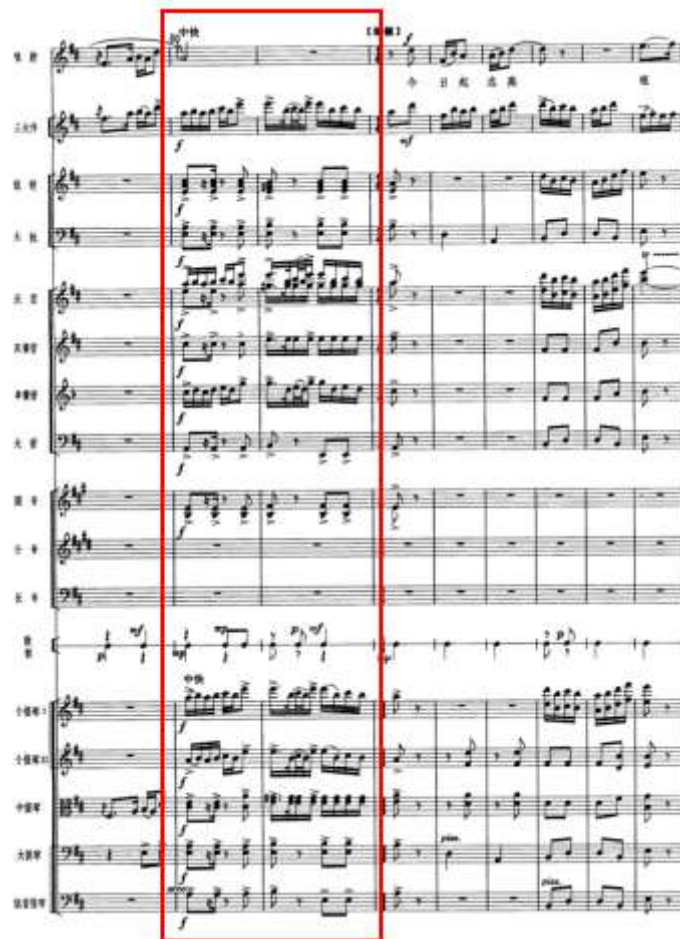


Figure 5 Example 5: Revolutionary modern Peking Opera "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" bars 29-37.

The two bars in the red box section of Example 4 ("Figure 4") and Example 5 ("Figure 5") draw inspiration from the accompaniment technique of "Xiao Guo Men" in Peking Opera. The purpose of this segment is to connect the musical styles of different types and speeds before and after. This interlude adopts the entrance melody from the orchestral version, in which the performance of the entrance section basically includes the sound of all orchestral instruments. Therefore, the piano accompaniment adopts a thickened chord texture,

steady speed, strong strength, and combines the performance method of stress to express this grand sound, effectively transforming emotions. At the same time, it also indirectly suggests that after a deep emotional statement, Tiemei is about to turn grief into fighting spirit and vow to repay the enemy with blood.

Finally, the texture of the piano accompaniment song "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" imitates a series of traditional Chinese ethnic instruments.



Figure 6 Example 6: Piano accompaniment: "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal", bar 63 (part).



Figure 7 Example 7: Revolutionary modern Peking Opera "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" bars 80-84.

theory, beat is organized according to a certain time scale and strength as a rule, and the changes in intensity and speed follow a certain rule to form a periodic and repetitive cycle. In traditional Chinese music, the rhythmic relationship between notes is diluted, and instead the melody changes according to the language environment of the text and the logic of the sentence. So, the positions of strength and weakness are fluid, and stress will appear in words that need to be emphasized or in areas where emotions are prominent. In addition, the duration of

music beats can also be stretched and contracted due to changes in emotional expression, tone, and language logic, creating an elastic quantitative beat between words, sentences, and patterns. Based on this, performers must combine the lyrics of Peking Opera, character emotions, the strength of sentence words, language logic, and other aspects when performing, and grasp the changes in the tempo of Banyan. This is an indispensable part of expressing the unique traditional opera style in the work.

The image displays a musical score for piano accompaniment, consisting of four systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line with lyrics in Chinese and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: 我 爹 爹 像 松 柏 志 坚 强, 天 立 地 是, 英 勇 的 共 产 党, 我 跟 你 前 进 决 不 拖 后, 红 灯 高 举 四 闪 亮, 照 我. A red rectangular box highlights a specific section of the piano accompaniment in the second system, which corresponds to the lyrics '天立地是'.

Figure 9 Example 9: Piano accompaniment to the allegro section of "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal".

As in the allegro section of Example 9 ("Figure 9"), "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal", this scene is the journey of Li Tiemei's revolutionary fighting spirit, determined to fight the enemy to the end, after experiencing despair and sadness. Observing the spectral markings, the beat

is 1/4 beat. If the performers follow the 1/4 beat characteristics when playing, each bar is a beat, and each beat is a strong beat. Therefore, it is necessary to play word by word and note by note. This performance method causes excessive consumption of arm and finger strength, and is also too

Example 10 ("Figure 10") is the prelude to the aria. The right hand part of the piano accompaniment imitates the accompaniment theme tones of the three major pieces, and the left hand part uses the eight degree thickened accompaniment texture to imitate the magnificent, brilliant, thick timbre and grand, broad volume of

the brass instrument group. In the performance of the prelude, the strong bass should touch the key decisively, the big arm strength runs through the fingertips, and the palm joint supports the strength, highlighting the bass with extremely strong strength, creating a thick sound effect of the brass instrument group.



Figure 11 Example 11: Piano accompaniment "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal", allegro section.

In the first three bars of Example 11 ("Figure 11"), the left and right hands use a column style chord accompaniment texture, with the aim of imitating the performance effects of pipa and daruan's sweeping strings, and combining gongs and drums to predict the rhythm of the vocal characters' emotions. The accompanist needs to use their fingers to neatly and quickly touch the keys while playing, incorporating the use of dot shaped pedals to achieve a full, bright, and spacious resonance effect, as well as a decisive and crisp timbre when plucking the instrument. Starting from the fourth section of the libretto of Example 9, the right hand part of the piano accompaniment began to simulate the vigorous and powerful timbre of Jinghu, using a large length of eight diaeresis time, three and six degree dual tone accompaniment texture with singing melody. The accompanist should use staccato playing method in this part of the dual tone performance, highlighting the upper melody voice part with elastic and firm touch, expressing Li Tiemei's excited mood, and unwavering revolutionary beliefs and determination. The left voice part of piano accompaniment uses

the accompaniment texture of three, four double tones and eight degrees with the time value of four diaeresis, and assumes the accompaniment role of moon lute filling harmony in Peking Opera accompaniment. In this part of the performance, the accompanist should push the power of their large arms to their fingertips, playing decisively and steadily, imitating the rich and rounded sound effect of the moon qin in Peking Opera accompaniment.

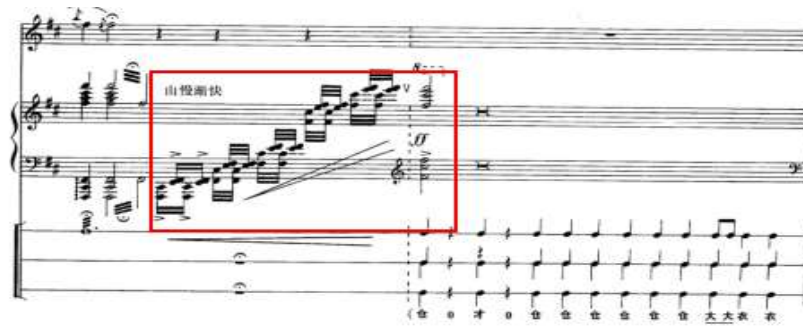


Figure 12 Example 12: Piano accompaniment: "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" bar 63 (part).

Example 12 ("Figure 12") is the interlude part of piano accompaniment. After the lyrics of the singing style "shining all-around", the accompanying voice is driven by a bright and thick column chord and the tremolo evolved from the column chord, which then abruptly stops. Then, the left and right hand dual fifth and second intervals continue to alternate slowly to quickly, and the sound range rises from F1 straight line to f 3, with extreme changes in intensity, pushing it to extremely strong. Due to the fact that this part of the original score is driven by gongs and drums, in order to imitate the solid, short, penetrating, and seamless sound effect of percussion drums, when playing this accompaniment, it is necessary to highlight the lines of the left hand's low and right hand's high voices, pay attention to the support of the palm and the continuity of the arm's strength, and quickly transfer the hand position by pressing keys with both hands for coherent and coordinated coordination, showing a clean playing.

4. CONCLUSION

In summary, the piano accompaniment "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" and the modern revolutionary Peking Opera "Never Go off the Battlefield Until Defeating the Jackal" have the same ideological and emotional lineage. In order to achieve better performance of piano music, performers need to understand the content and background of the aria, and from the perspectives of melody, intensity, timbre, and characteristics of Peking Opera, enhance the national and artistic characteristics of the final presentation work, express the unique charm of Peking Opera and the Chinese revolutionary spirit contained in the work.

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