

The Shaping And Sublimation of The Characters of “Haitang” In The Opera “Yimeng Mountain”--A Case Study of “Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents”

Xiaoyan Li

Graduate University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Shao Yang University, Shao Yang City, China

Email: 390148689@qq.com

How to cite this paper: Li, X. Y. (2025). The Shaping And Sublimation of The Characters of “Haitang” In The Opera “Yimeng Mountain”--A Case Study of “Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents”. Education and Social Work, 2(1), 132–137. ISSN Print: 3079-515X; ISSN Online: 3079-5168. <https://doi.org/10.63313/ESW.9067>
Published: 2025-06-26

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and Erytis Publishing Limited.
This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Abstract

This paper focuses on the core cantata “Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents” in the national opera “Yimeng Mountain”, and analyzes its important role in shaping and sublimating the character of “Haitang”. Through the analysis of the musical characteristics, lyrics, and the connection with the plot development, we show the course of Haitang’s growth from an ordinary village girl to a great revolutionary woman, and reveal how the section visualizes the spirit of Yimeng in Haitang, which provides a unique perspective for understanding the characterization and spiritual expression of national opera.

Keywords

Yimeng Mountain; My Eternal Parents; Haitang; Characterization; Yimeng Spirit

Introduction

Set in the revolutionary base of Yimeng during the Anti-Japanese War, the opera “Yimeng Mountain” vividly demonstrates the touching story of the “blending of water and milk, life and death” between the military and the people, and portrays many vivid characters. Among them, the female protagonist Haitang runs through the whole play, and her experience and growth are the core clues of the plot development. As the grand finale of the play, “Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents” not only emotionally condenses and sublimates the revolutionary enthusiasm and great dedication of the people of Yimeng Mountain, but also finalizes and sublimates the character of Haitang, making Haitang a typical representative of the Yimeng spirit (Dandan, 2024). An in-depth study of the significance of this section in shaping the

character of Haitang helps to explore the artistic value of national opera in passing on the red culture and showing the national spirit.

1. Overview of the plot of the opera Yimeng Mountain and the experiences of Haitang's characters

(1) Plot summary

The opera "Yimeng Mountain" is divided into six acts and opens with the wedding celebration of Haitang and Lin Sheng at the entrance of Yuanzi Ya village, which is suddenly attacked by Japanese invaders. In order to save the nation from peril, Lin Sheng joins the army to fight against the Japanese, and the villagers' lives are plunged into the flames of war. When the Japanese invaders enter the village to search for the wounded, Haitang's uncle Sun Jiulong dies bravely to protect everyone; Xia He, a female soldier of the Eighth Route Army, dies bravely at the front line and entrusts her daughter Xiao Yimeng to Haitang. Later, in order to protect the children of the wounded soldiers of the Eighth Route Army, Haitang endured the pain of sending her own flesh and blood, Xiao Shanzi, into danger, and Xiao Shanzi was unfortunately killed. After the victory of the war, the Eighth Route Army returned, and Haitang was looking forward to welcoming her husband, Lin Sheng, only to learn the sad news of his death.

(2) Haitang's characterization and pre-existing image-making

Haitang is initially an ordinary village girl living in the Yimeng mountainous area, she is kind, simple, optimistic, and has a spirited personality, with the qualities of a Shandong "tigress". During the Japanese invasion and the rescue of the villagers by the Eighth Route Army, Haitang felt the justice and responsibility of the Eighth Route Army, and her heart began to change. She is warm, simple and selfless, and even if she is starving, she still wants to save the last ration for the Eighth Route Army at the front line, showing the softness and warmth of her character.

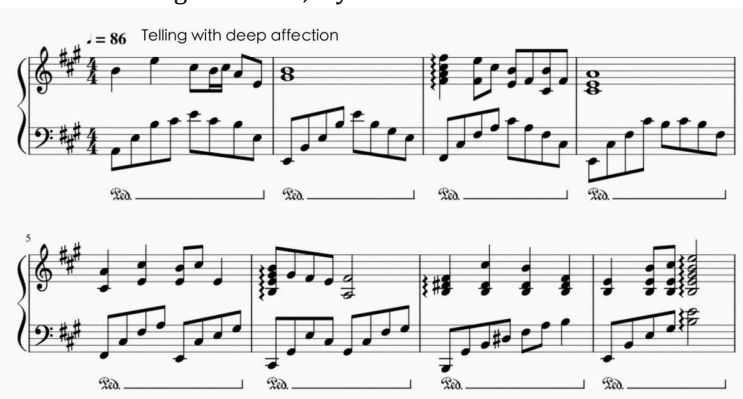
When she sends her husband to join the army, although Haitang is reluctant to let him go, she resolutely chooses to support him to go to the front line, and at this time, her character identity begins to change from an ordinary citizen to a "Red Sister-in-Law". After her uncle Sun Jiulong and the villagers sacrificed their lives in defense of the village, Haitang was not beaten down by grief, but grew up quickly, took up the banner of the revolution, and became tough and brave. She takes the lead in making uniforms and delivering food for the Eighth Route Army and actively participates in the revolutionary work. In the process of raising Little Yimeng, Haitang even showed the greatness and selflessness of a mother's love (Yadong, 2022). These previous experiences gradually shaped Haitang's character of perseverance, bravery and selflessness, laying the foundation for the further sublimation of her character in the stanza of "Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents".

2. Analysis of "Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents" Sung Sections

(1) Musical Characterization of the Emotions of Haitang Characters

“Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents” opens in E-flat mode and closes in B-flat mode, which is rich and creative. The use of this tuning is in line with the tonal characteristics of national operas, which makes the melody not only have national characteristics but also express the emotions in a delicate way.

Table 1. “Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents” Prelude



The introductory part of the cantata (bars 1 - 8) is soothing and gentle, as if it brings people into the beautiful scenery of Yimeng Mountain, and at the same time, it also opens the prelude for the story that Begonia is going to tell. The first phrase tells the story of the misfortune of her parents, and the lyrics move the heart. At this time, Haitang's emotion is deep and introverted, with the thought of her deceased relatives.

The A section (bars 9 - 52) becomes exciting and expresses Haitang's longing for her children and her inner grief. The left hand accompaniment is in column chords, matching with Haitang's lyrics “All have their own sons, all have their own daughters, send their own flesh and blood to the battlefield”, the five accent marks and the powerful melody emphasize the boldness of “blood to the battlefield”, reflecting Haitang's great pain after her child's sacrifice and the fact that the people of Yimeng Mountain died for the revolution (Kewei, 2019). Haitang's great pain after experiencing the sacrifice of her children and the determination of the people of Yimeng Mountain to die for the revolution, at this time, Haitang's emotion changes from longing to grief and determination.

The melody of the B section (bars 53 - 69) is mainly upward, more emotional, reflecting the firm determination of the people of Yimeng to dedicate themselves and their youth to the country. In this section, Haitang integrates her love for her hometown, her loyalty to the revolution, and her strength after experiencing many hardships, further sublimating her emotions.

In the coda part (bars 70 - 109), a magnificent chorus is added, “lofty Mengshan Mountain is high, kissing Yishui Water is long, we are all your children, you are the everlasting father and mother”, which closely connects Haitang's personal emotion with the collective emotion of the Yimeng people, so that the expression of the emo-

tion reaches the highest climax, and at this time Haitang is no longer just an individual but At this time, Haitang is no longer just an individual, but a representative of all the people of Yimeng, and her emotion has risen from a small personal love to a great love for her country (Kai, 2019).

(2) Lyrics Connotation and Haitang's Spiritual Presentation

The opening lines of the song, "All have their own fathers, all have their own mothers, saving the last ration for the sake of the front. All have their own sons, all have their own daughters, sending their own flesh and blood to the battlefield," succinctly and powerfully depicts the selflessness of the people of Yimeng Mountain in wartime, of which Haitang is a typical representative. She experienced the pain of losing her husband, children and uncles, but remained steadfast in her support for the revolution, and this spirit of sacrifice is deeply reflected in the lyrics.

"The tears behind the smile are still hot. The lyrics "We will not forget even if we get together, we will not forget even if we say goodbye, we will not forget even if we leave the splendor of the years to be engraved with glory" further show Begonia's rich inner world. She maintains an optimistic smile in the midst of hardship, but behind it are endless tears, a complex emotion that reflects her resilience. Whether it is the meeting or parting with her relatives, it has become an unforgettable memory in her life, and she has devoted her splendor to the revolutionary cause, and her spirit is thus engraved with glory, showing a noble spiritual realm .

The lyrics of the last chorus, "The lofty Mengshan Mountain is high, the kissing Yimeng Water is long, we are all your children, you are the everlasting father and mother", pushes Haitang's deep emotion to Yimeng land and her praise to the great dedication of Yimeng people to the extreme. Yimeng Mountain is not only Haitang's hometown, but also the spiritual support of all Yimeng people, Haitang grew up here, and also gave everything for the revolution here, she regarded Yimeng Mountain as her eternal father and mother, reflecting her deep attachment and respect to this land and people (Peng, 2020) .

3. The role of singing in shaping and sublimating the characterization of Haitang

(1) From Individual Suffering to Group Giving Spirit Representation

Before the singing, Haitang experienced many personal sufferings, such as the death of her relatives and the sacrifice of her children. However, in "Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents", she is no longer just an individual who suffers, but through her lyrics and singing, she ties her experience to the collective dedication of the people of Yimeng Mountain. She sings of the great spirit of the Yimeng Mountain people who sacrificed everything for the victory of the revolution, and becomes a representative of the selflessness of all Yimeng people. Haitang's image rises from that of a woman in a small village to that of a broadly representative group, and her character connotation is greatly enriched.

(2) Completing the transformation from ordinary village girl to revolutionary heroine

Through this section, Haitang has completed a complete transformation from an ordinary village girl to a revolutionary heroine. From the initial kindness and simplicity, to the strength and bravery after experiencing the trials and tribulations of the war, and then to the time when she integrates her personal love into her devotion to the love of her family and country, Haitang's spirituality has reached a new height. Her firm beliefs, selfless dedication and loyalty to the revolutionary cause shown in her singing demonstrated the qualities of a revolutionary heroine. At this time, Haitang is no longer the village girl who panicked during the war, but a hero with firm beliefs who dares to sacrifice everything for the revolution, and her image has been finalized and sublimated in the cantata.

(3) The figurative embodiment of the spirit of Yimeng

The core of the spirit of Yimeng is "blending of water and milk, living and dying together", and Haitang's performance in "Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents" is the embodiment of this spirit. She sacrificed her family and relatives for the cause of the revolution, but never complained and always firmly supported the Eighth Route Army. Her love for the land of Yimeng and her selfless help to her revolutionary comrades reflect the deep friendship between the people of Yimeng and their sons and daughters. The image of Haitang is like a carrier, showing the abstract spirit of Yimeng through the concrete experience and emotional expression of the characters, so that the audience can feel the great power of the spirit of Yimeng more intuitively and deeply.

Conclusion

As the core cantata of the opera "Yimeng Mountain", "Yimeng Mountain, My Eternal Parents" plays a crucial role in shaping and sublimating Haitang's character image. Through unique musical features and profound lyrics, the cantata transforms Haitang from an individual sufferer to a representative of group dedication, completing her transformation from an ordinary village girl to a revolutionary heroine, and becoming a vivid embodiment of the spirit of Yimeng. This section not only enriches the artistic charm of Haitang's character, but also makes the whole opera reach a new height in passing on the red culture and promoting the national spirit. The in-depth study of this cantata provides a valuable example for understanding how the national opera shapes the typical character image and conveys the spiritual connotation through music and drama elements, and also makes us more deeply realize the unique value of national opera in cultural inheritance and artistic expression.

References

- [1] Sun Dandan. Study on the integration of Haitang's characterization and revolutionary group stage presentation in "Yimeng Mountain"[J]. *Art Review*, 2024, (21): 171-176.
- [2] Li Yadong. Female role expression in China's national opera from the opera "Yimeng

-
- Mountain”[J]. Chinese Drama,2022,(12):49-50.
- [3] Cao Peng. Interpretation of musical connotation of national opera “Yimeng Mountain”[J]. Chinese Drama,2020,(09):39-41.
- [4] Wu Kewei. Grounded in tradition upholding innovation--An analysis of the creative features of the large-scale national opera “Yimeng Mountain”[J]. People's Music,2019,(05):50-54.
- [5] Luan Kai. Climbing the peak of art constantly pioneering and innovative - national opera “Yimeng Mountain” creation talk[J]. People's Music,2019,(05):15-17.