

A Brief Analysis of Dance Art Form in Music and Dance of Qin and Han Dynasty

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Abstract: In the Qin and Han Dynasties, comprehensive factors such as national unity, ethnic integration and economic development promoted the development of dance and made it show diversified development. Music and dance in Qin and Han Dynasty were widely embraced and integrated with various techniques, thus forming its own unique style. The dance was rich in content and varied in form, including acrobatics, palace music and dance, religious dance and so on. Based on the historical background of Qin and Han Dynasty, the artistic and aesthetic characteristics of dance in Qin and Han Dynasty were analyzed in detail. The study of music and dance in Qin and Han Dynasty is conducive to the exploration of ancient culture and art and has a certain role in promoting the development of modern dance art.

1. Introduction

During the Qin Dynasty, Qin Shihuang unified the Six Kingdoms, established the centralization of authority and started the situation of "Great Unity". By the Han Dynasty, both the state and the culture had opened a "Great Unity" situation in a real sense. The Han Dynasty followed the political and economic system of the Qin Dynasty and strengthened exchanges with the border areas [1]. Because of the development of economy and politics and the strong admiration of the rulers, the dance of Qin and Han Dynasty developed to a new height and presented a new situation of richness and variety [2].

During the period of the great unification of Qin and Han Dynasty, due to the development of society, the change of social system and so on, the development of dance in Qin and Han Dynasty reached a new height, among which the dance content, types and styles were extremely rich and colorful. In this study, a large number of dance images, on-the-spot collections and historical documents were collected. Starting from dance images and combining with various disciplines, the characteristics of dance styles in the Qin and Han Dynasties were analyzed thoroughly and completely. The rich content, aesthetic style and cultural characteristics of dance play an important role in the development of Qin-Han dance and Chinese classical dance.

2. Factors Contributing to the Development of Dance in Qin and Han Dynasties

The emergence and existence of dance are closely related to its natural, political, economic and cultural environment. All these external factors affect the content, form and style, and the innovation and development of dance [3]. There were many theories in Qin and Han Dynasty, such as Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, the doctrines of which collided and influenced each other. After Qin Shihuang unified the Six Kingdoms, he moved back palace dancers and musical instruments from the Six Kingdoms to his palace, and thus the scale of female music increased greatly. Qin Shihuang was very fond of singing and dancing. According to records, during the Qin Dynasty, songs and dances continued every day in the imperial palace. The Han Dynasty followed the political and economic systems of the Qin Dynasty, while was more frequent than the Qin Dynasty in terms of communication with the border, so that more fresh cultures flooded into the Central Plains, which made various cultures blend and collide with each other. During the Han Dynasty, the country was peaceful, social economy was prosperous, and people lived and worked in peace and contentment. Liu Bang, the ruler, loved dancing very much, and there appeared such

dances as sleeve-tilting and waist-bending, playing a great role in the formation of the dance style as well as the development of the dance of the Han Dynasty. In Han Dynasty, many imperial concubines had high social status and excellent dancing skills, which was a very special and rare phenomenon in the development of dance in the Han Dynasty. During the period of Emperor Wudi of Han Dynasty, under the leadership of imperial dancers, dance was further developed.

3. Classification of Dance Art Form in Qin and Han Dynasties

3.1. Hundred operas

Hundred Operas originated in the Qin Dynasty. In the Qin Dynasty, this folk art was called "Jiao Di". Now, the appellation of actors "role", "supporting role" and "protagonist" are all derived from the word "Jiao Di". Jiao Di in Qin Dynasty was not very rich in content, mainly in martial arts, from which both sides competed in martial arts. In the previous historical books, it was mentioned that Second Emperor of the Qin Dynasty watched Jiao Di and Paiyou. It can be seen that Jiaodi and Paiyou performed together in Qin Dynasty. Paiyou was a kind of singing and dancing while beating drums, which was also the predecessor of the development of Hundred Operas in Han Dynasty [4]. In the Han Dynasty, with the development of economy and social productivity, people's material base became more and more stable, coupled with the strong national power and political stability, along with the implementation of the policy of recuperation and subsistence, people's wealth continued to accumulate and lives became more and more abundant. These favorable conditions provided a good guarantee for the development of Jiao Di as an art form, so the content of Jiao Di in the Han Dynasty was rich and colorful, with huge capacity, such as music and dance, acrobatics, martial arts, illusion, artificial dance and so on. Hundred Opera in Han Dynasty is the inheritance and development of Jiao Di in Qin Dynasty. The development of this art form reached a peak in Han Dynasty, playing a far-reaching and important role in the development of Chinese art.

3.2. Palace dance

Palace Dance, which appeared in Xia and Shang Dynasty, was a dance for the rulers, princes and ministers to watch and entertain. The dance performed in palace before Han Dynasty was called "Yale" which reached its peak in Sui and Tang Dynasty. It was a dance for the rulers, princes and ministers to enjoy entertainment and recreation, most of which were songs of praise for the emperor, showing the country's powerful power or with immortal color. The rulers of the Qin and Han Dynasties loved music and dance very much. After the unification of the six kingdoms, Qin Shihuang established the first authoritarian centralized feudal country in Chinese history, and moved the beautiful dancers and musical instruments of the back palace to his own palace, which greatly increased the scale of female music. Although the Qin Dynasty soon perished, it unified the six kingdoms and gathered the facts of the music and dance artists of all countries, thus laying the foundation for the development of Palace Dance in the Han Dynasty. In the Han Dynasty, the rulers carried out the policy of recuperation and subsistence, which was the rising period of the feudal society. The economy was prosperous and the national strength was strong, affecting the surrounding and the border areas, making them interact and blend with each other. And the dance art gradually develop to a new height [5]. The rulers of the Han Dynasty also loved music and dance very much. In this period, there were many martial artists in the Royal family, which not only led to the development of Palace Dance, but also affected the development of dance in the whole country.



Fig.1. Pottery dancing figurine in Qin and Han Dynasties

3.3. Religious dance

During the Qin and Han Dynasties, people highly respected witchcraft. At that time, the popular dance culture represented by Hundred Operas developed very well. But at that time, people's customs and beliefs also continued to develop and had strong vitality. Religious Dance originated from sacrificial dance. Taoist thought had a great influence on people's thoughts at that time. People buried heavily after death, hoping to become immortals. All of these originated from Taoist thought [6]. There were many images of feathered people and birds in Han Dynasty portraits. It was the goal of Han Dynasty people to ascend to heaven after death. People strove to achieve the goal of ascending to heaven, and fantasized that it can be realized by means of various means, and with the help of birds or the ability of birds. Among them, the silk dance was a kind of sacrificial dance. The dancers were dancing with colorful silk ribbons, and the dresses they wore were different from those of ordinary dancers because of the particularity of the sacrificial dance. The hems and cuffs of clothes were decorated with tassels, and the waistbands were also decorated, showing the seriousness and solemnity of sacrificial dance.

4. Aesthetic Characteristics of Dance in Qin and Han Dynasties

4.1. Inclusive and incorporate, harmony and innovation

Qin Shihuang not only unified the Six Kingdoms, but also brought together a large number of music and dance artists from various countries, thus which was also a fusion of dance. The short period of Qin Dynasty laid the foundation for the development of dance in Han Dynasty, and also provided a comfortable environment for the development of dance [7]. During the Han Dynasty, under the leadership of the rulers, the exchanges between the Central Plains and the border areas were strengthened, which strengthened the cultural exchanges with not only the surrounding ethnic minorities, but also with foreign countries. During the period of Emperor Wudi of Han Dynasty, Zhang Qian was sent to the Western Regions to open up a Silk Road, and envoys from many border countries often go to the Central Plains. Hundred Operas' performance venue moved from the folk to the palace of the hall of elegance, which was also a social affirmation of Hundred Operas' art. During the Han Dynasty, when the rulers entertained foreign envoys, Hundred Operas often appeared. When displaying the cultural, political, economic and national features of our country to foreign envoys, the rulers chose Hundred Operas as the way, which was undoubtedly a recognition and affirmation of Hundred Operas art. So far, Hundred Operas can be seen in many art performances, such as magic performances, acrobatics performances, opera performances, martial arts performances and so on. Hence, the emergence of Hundred Operas has a far-reaching and indispensable impact on the development of Chinese art.

4.2. Elegant and vulgar, clumsy and new

During the Han Dynasty, the peaceful state and strong economic strength, together with the implementation of the policies of recuperation, interest and tax exemption made people have free

time to do what they liked, thus creating a good environmental guarantee for people to like dance and study dance, and was very conducive to the development of folk dance. In addition, the rulers of all dynasties in the Han Dynasty liked music and dance very much. Folk music in the Han Dynasty developed rapidly in this quiet and peaceful environment. In the Han Dynasty, the rulers also set up Yuefu specially, sent special personnel to collect various kinds of music and dance, focused on sorting out and collecting folk music and dance, and brought these music and dance into the palace. The rulers of lower class origin used their own ways and understanding to weed out the old and bring forth the new, innovate the old and rebuild the new music and dance system. The central government also set up Paiyou specially to rehearse music and dance, and professional dancers have been trained to perform.

4.3. Inherited and absorbed, light and graceful

The dance style of the Han Dynasty inherited the Chu style of "Chu Dance". One of the most remarkable features of Chu dance was its elegance, for which the elegant props were the long sleeves in the dancers' hands. The second prominent feature of Chu dance was "gentle and beautiful", which mainly depended on the waist of the dancer, thus requiring the dancer's waist to be slender and flexible. The Chu people had realized the importance of the waist for dancing performance, for the waist was the pivot of human body's twisting, connecting the important parts of the upper body and lower body. Chu dance is a kind of dancing with slim waist and long sleeves as its beauty. The pursuit of Chu dance embodies the aesthetic characteristics of "three bends" of modern Dai dance. It can be seen that Chu dance has laid a solid foundation for the future development of dance and has a profound impact on the development of dance in later generations.

5. Conclusion

Dance is the language of the body. People used body languages to express themselves and to convey their feelings when the word "dance" did not appear in the ancient times. Dance in Qin and Han Dynasty developed to a new height, and the dance content and types of which were extremely rich, which played an important role in the development of Qin and Han dance and the development of Chinese classical dance. In this study, the collected dance images are divided into three categories: Hundred Operas Dance, Palace Dance and Religious Dance. The aesthetic features of dance are: incorporate, harmony and innovate, vulgar, clumsy and new, light and graceful. It can be seen that the dances of Qin and Han Dynasties are rich in content, diverse in form and obvious in style.

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