

Discussion on the Form and Implication of Gan Nuo from the Perspective of Dance Ecology

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ABSTRACT

Gan Nuo is a dance with Gan local ethnic characteristics of regional Nuo culture. Its production and development are restricted by local natural, social and cultural conditions, thus forming unique customs. As a discipline specialized in the study of the relationship between dance and ecology, the creation of dance ecology has raised people's cognition and description of dance from the perceptual level to the scientific level, providing new ideas and scientific methods for human research on dance cultural phenomena. Starting from the perspective of dance ecology and taking Gan Nuo as the base point, the article analyzes the dance form of Gan Nuo, further analyzes the ecological environmental factors that affect Gan Nuo, and explores the meaning of Gan Nuo dance, so as to improve the overall study of Gan Nuo dance at the micro level, hoping to contribute to the protection, inheritance and dissemination of Gan Nuo dance.

Keywords: *Dance ecology, Gan Nuo, Form, Ecological factors, Implication.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Dance ecology is a new dance discipline. It focuses on dance and explores its role and influence in the environment from the interaction between society and natural environment. Different environments will produce different dance styles, and under the influence of the environment, the origin, form and meaning of dance species will be restricted by the environment. This is the restriction of dance and environment. The specific ecological environment conditions affect the origin, form and meaning of dance. On the basis of studying the theory of dance ecology, it will be of great theoretical and practical significance to be able to realize that this discipline will have great theoretical and practical significance in the development of dance ontology. Therefore, from the perspective of dance ecology, the study of Gan Nuo dance has both theoretical and practical significance.

2. ECOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF GAN NUO DANCE

2.1 Gan Nuo

In China, exorcising is a primitive and ancient folk culture, an ancient custom of welcoming the gods and driving away ghosts and epidemics. Gan Nuo culture is the integration of Nuo culture in Jiangxi and local folk customs, and is an indispensable part of Chinese Nuo culture. Jiangxi Nuo, abbreviated as Gan Nuo, has a profound history, simple form, rich national cultural heritage, and a complete system, and has a certain kinship with some Chinese domestic Nuo dance, Nuo opera, etc. Jiangxi Province of China is a major province of Nuo cultural relics, covering more than 20 counties (cities, districts) in seven provinces and cities, including Pingxiang, Yichun, Fuzhou, Shangrao, Ganzhou, Ji'an and Jiujiang. The main branches of Gan Nuo are: Nanfeng Nuo and Le'an Nuo in Fuzhou; Wuning Nuo and Xiushui Nuo in Jiujiang; Wanzai Nuo and Gao'an Nuo in Yichun; Luxi Nuo and Xiangdong Nuo in Pingxiang; Yongfeng Nuo in Ji'an; Wuyuan Nuo in Shangrao and Ningdu Nuo in Ganzhou. In the 1990s, the research on the history and culture of Gan Nuo has

just begun, but in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage lists published by the State Council of China in 2006, Jiangxi Province was included in the Nanfeng Nuo dance, Wuyuan Nuo dance, Le'an Nuo dance and Pingxiang Xiangdong Nuo mask. Since then, the number of Gan Nuo scientific research has risen sharply.

2.2 The Origin and Evolution of Gan Nuo

For the study of the origin of Gan Nuo, according to the archaeological research results in Jiangxi Province, the academic community generally believes that the mask unearthed in the Shang Dynasty tomb in Dayang state, Xingan County, is the proof of the first existence of witch Nuo in Ganpo. It is speculated that the origin of Gan Nuo can be traced back to the Yin and Shang Dynasties in the 11th century BC, and gradually developed into a ritual culture, which is mainly used for religious sacrificial activities such as exorcising ghosts and epidemics, praying for blessings and avoiding disasters. At that time, Jiangxi Province was located between the State of Wu and the State of Chu, and was greatly affected by the cultural development of the State of Chu, so exorcising dance culture emerged. From the current repertoire of local exorcise troupes, it can be found that the folk exorcise activities were no later than the Tang Dynasty, and from the written records, it can also be found that the exorcise activities in Jiangxi Province had begun to appear since the Han Dynasty. In the Han Dynasty, the Nuo dance culture appeared in Jiangxi folk, and prevailed in the Tang and Song dynasties, and spread again in the Yuan and Ming dynasties. For example, it can be found from the genealogy of Shiyou Village in Nanfeng that the local Nuo culture was created by the ancestors in Chaozhou Prefecture. With the evolution of time, in the Ming and Qing dynasties, there were more and more records about Nuo culture in various regions of China, and the information was also more and more abundant. A large number of records about Nuo culture could be found in the local county annals.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Jiangxi Nuo Culture has been sorted out and studied to a great extent, and has been widely concerned by scholars in China and foreign areas. These achievements cannot be separated from the support of the Party and the government and the efforts of relevant dancers. In 1953, Nanfeng Nuo dance caused a sensation in the "First National Folk Art Exhibition", which made Jiangxi Nuo dance

famous abroad and participated in cultural and artistic exchange activities in China and foreign areas for many times. At present, Gan Nuo culture is mainly concentrated in Fuzhou, Shangrao, Pingxiang, Ji'an, Jiujiang, Pingxiang and other places, and its Nuo cultural form is also relatively complete. The local people are also carrying out activities related to Nuo culture in their lives, and have established a folk culture group of Gan Nuo in Jiangxi. Discussing the differences between Nuo culture in different places in Jiangxi Province and other provinces and cities outside Jiangxi Province can play a positive role in the protection of Gan Nuo culture in Jiangxi Province. The development of Gan Nuo can not be separated from the soil of Jiangxi folk culture. The analysis of the form and meaning of Gan Nuo will help to understand Gan Nuo deeply and feel the charm of Jiangxi Nuo culture.

3. AN ANALYSIS OF THE DANCE FORM OF GAN NUO

What is dance form? Academician Zihuayun explained this in his book "Dance Ecology": "The dance form is the external form presented by the body movement itself. It is intuitive, dynamic, visual and can be used for scientific analysis."¹ When people want to understand the characteristics of a certain type of dance, it is necessary first analyze it from the perspective of dance form. Among Gan Nuo, Nanfeng Nuo dance and Wuyuan Nuo dance are more famous. In order to strengthen the scientific analysis process, the authors take Wuyuan Nuo dance as an example to analyze the dance form of Gan Nuo from five aspects: rhythm type, breathing, pace, significant movement parts and processes, and dance characteristics.

3.1 Rhythmic Type

The formation of dance rhythm type occurs when there is a law of identity between different parts of the body in the process of dancing. The accompaniment music of dance is usually used as the basis, including drums, to analyze the characteristics of dance. In the Wuyuan Nuo instrument, the main accompaniment music is usually the big gong and the big drum in the percussion music. The music part of the percussion music includes the ordinary percussion rhythm form and the special percussion rhythm form. From

1. Zi Huayun, *Choreocology* [M]. Beijing: Culture and Art Publishing House, 2012.

the beginning of inviting the gods to the end of sending them off, the sound of firecrackers, gongs, bamboo flute and other sounds are always accompanied. According to the Nuo instrument record of Mr. Cheng Changqing, the drummer, he would constantly communicate with the people around him who were playing gongs and cymbals during the process of drumming, urging the accurate alignment of rhythm, which shows from the side that the conductor of the Nuo dance performance is the sound of the drum. In the process of Nuo dance performance, the music rhythm will be adjusted according to different characters' emotional conditions, and will also change with the development of the dance plot. For example, in "Meng Jiangnv Sends Cold Clothes", the gongs and drums music score of [adding flute and beat] is combined with the dance movements. When the melody of the music is smooth, the dance posture is gentle and elegant, and the drums are sometimes light and sometimes heavy, which vividly sets off the typical personality of an ancient Chinese woman who is gentle and kind and the typical environment that is difficult and dangerous.²

3.2 Breathing

Breathing, as a component of dance, not only determines the dancer's mastery of dance steps, but also has a certain impact on the audience's appreciation and visual perception. (See "Table 1").

3.3 Pace

The pace is the movement formed by the feet driving the lower limbs, which is synchronized with the rhythm. Its characteristics are often confirmed from two aspects, namely, the immediate area and the airspace. (See "Table 2").

Table 1. The breathing of the main characters in the Nuo dance "Prime Minister Training Military"

Characters	Dance equipment	Respiratory characteristics	Main steps
Yasha	Yecha mask, triangular yellow dragon flag	Smooth and coherent	Measured steps
Six Marquises	Six marquis masks and wooden sticks	Smooth and coherent	Military step, one request, middle word frame, lower word frame, one hit on the ground, one clap on the hand, one hit on the foot, clockwise turn, closing flower
Meng Tian	Meng Tian mask, sword	Smooth and coherent	Measured steps
Li Si	Li Si mask, chair	Smooth and coherent	Measured steps

2. Edited by the Editorial Department of China National and Folk Dance Integration. China National and Folk Dance Integration · Jiangxi Volume [M]. Beijing: China ISBN Center, 1992.06.

Table 2. The main pace in the Nuo dance "Prime Minister Training Military"

Military step	Foot	Time domain	The time for the left foot to step up and the right heel to leave the ground is one beat, the time for the right foot to step up and the left heel to leave the ground is one beat, the time for the left heel to land is one beat, the time for forming the "right imaginary point step" is one beat, the center of gravity moves forward the right foot, and the time for the left heel to leave the ground is one beat
	A lower leg	Airspace	Folding type
	Thigh	Airspace	Folding type
Hit the foot for a photo	Foot	Time domain	When the left foot is kicked aside, the time for the right foot to take a small jump is one beat. When the right foot is kicked aside, the time for the left foot to take a small jump is one beat. The time for the right foot to take a step forward to the left is one beat. The time for the left foot to jump left for half a circle is one beat
	A lower leg	Airspace	Folding type
	Thigh	Airspace	Folding type
Measured steps	Foot	Time domain	The time for the left foot to lift up and move forward is one beat, and the time for the right foot to do the left foot symmetrical action is one beat
	A lower leg	Airspace	Folding type
	Thigh	Airspace	Folding type
Clockwise turn	Foot	Time domain	The time for "forward squat" of both legs is one beat, and the time for turning right quarter of a circle to make the left leg hook the foot and suck in front is one beat, and the time for the left foot to land, and the time for turning left quarter of a circle to hook the right foot and suck in front is one beat
	A lower leg	Airspace	Folding type
	Thigh	Airspace	Folding type, rotating type

3.4 Significant Action Parts and Processes

The significant movement parts and processes are the parts with the largest movement during the dance process, which are very different from the movements in daily life, so they will inevitably attract the visual attention of the audience. (See "Table 3").

Table 3. The prominent parts and movement process of the characters in the Nuo dance "Prime Minister Training Military"

Role name	Prominent parts and movement flow	
Li Si Meng Tian	Torso (co-moving part)	The body is upright, and the torso controls the hands to do double flicking sleeves
	Upper limbs (prominent parts of action)	Bend the arms at your elbows, raise the hands to the chest, and flick the sleeves down the sides
	Lower limbs (prominent parts of action)	Walk the "square step" alternately with the legs, turn around and face 5 o'clock
Six Marquises	Torso (co-moving part)	The upper body leans forward slightly, and the torso controls the change of the center of gravity of the feet
	Upper limbs (prominent parts of action)	Raise the arms to the side of the elbows, and alternately draw a small circle forward with the left and right hands
	Lower limbs (prominent parts of action)	Do "maneuvering steps" and walk around to return to the original position
Yasha	Torso (co-moving part)	The body is upright, and the torso controls the arms to fling the flag
	Upper limbs (prominent parts of action)	Hold the flag (pole) in both hands and swing it once to the right and left
	Lower limbs (prominent parts of action)	Stand with the flag raised, walk alternately with your legs "square steps" twice and turn around to face 3 o'clock prominent

3.5 Dance Characteristics

The performance art of Gan Nuo dance still maintains the characteristics of primitive, rough, concise, exaggerated, and vivid, and the dance posture is also varied due to its typical role. Its dancing features are mainly reflected in: clockwise turn, bending knees, sinking, chest holding, belly straightening, deep and unremitting, stem but not stiff, with a unique artistic style. For example, in "Creating the Earth and the Sky", Pangu, holding a giant axe to open the mountain, expressed a role in a typical environment in a slow and firm manner. The basic move of "Kuixing Diandou" is that the elbows and shoulders shake in a very fast rhythm, and the two legs are in a "stake step", which is heavy and durable. With the shaking of the head, the coordination is very tacit, humorous, and distinctive. Its unique style features make Gan Nuo a unique cultural pearl in folk dance.

4. ANALYSIS OF FACTORS AFFECTING GAN NUO FORM

4.1 Natural Environment

The formation of Gan Nuo dance is closely related to the local ecological environment. Jiangxi is located in the middle and lower reaches of the

Yangtze River. It was called "Wu Tou Chu Wei, Yue Hu Min Ting" in ancient times. The terrain is dominated by hills and basins; There are many rivers and lakes in the territory, with warm and humid climate, abundant precipitation, short frost period and four distinct seasons. Because of its unique geographical location, traditional cultures such as Hui culture, Wuyue culture and porcelain culture have been influencing the Jiangxi national culture from ancient times to present, making the folk activities in Jiangxi Province have a broad mass base, which is conducive to the further spread and development of Gan Nuo culture, and harmonizing these cultures as an important supplement to Jiangxi's cultural heritage. In this cultural atmosphere and natural environment, Gan Nuo dance has given full play to the nutrients and essence of various traditional cultures, and provided unique geographical environment and conditions for the inheritance and development of its own excellent cultural traditions. [9] Therefore, the local ecological environment is one of the main factors affecting the form of Gan Nuo dance.

4.2 Folk Culture

Since ancient times, Gan Nuo dance has been carried out with folk cultural life and has a strong local custom style. Nuo dance is an indispensable

part of folk life. With the development of the times, its performance style has been changing with the needs of folk life. Similarly, folk life will affect the formation of dance style.

Jiangxi folk culture and entertainment are active. In order to enrich daily life, the people have held rich Nuo dance activities, which have been incorporated into traditional festival activities, and gradually formed a unique and "entertaining" folk dance form. At important traditional festivals every year, such as the Spring Festival Nuo Festival and the Lantern Festival, local Nuo troupes are invited to perform to meet the villagers' wishes of praying for blessings and eliminating disasters through dancing. Now it has become an indispensable part of folk activities.

A large number of folk cultural and recreational activities have created a broad development space for the development and dissemination of Nuo dance, and have played an important role in promoting the development of Jiangxi Nuo dance. However, with the increasing enrichment of folk culture, the demand for ornamental dance is also increasing, which makes the Nuo dance further enriched on its basis and the skills further improved, thus producing a variety of Nuo dance forms.

5. THE MEANING OF GAN NUO FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF DANCE ECOLOGY

Nuo dance has always been a favorite way of etiquette for emperors, generals and ministers. Its role is to sing praises, spread teachings, and exchange friendship. With the change of social concepts, they gradually became the objects of entertainment for the gentry, and formed a unique aesthetic and spiritual pursuit in art. As a unique dance type, Gan Nuo is a cultural product formed by the people of Jiangxi in the long-term development and precipitation.

The basic movement characteristics of Gan Nuo dance are "smooth, sink, stem, and quiver", while movement and stillness are its overall manifestations. The "military step" in "Prime Minister's Military Exercise" is to draw a small circle on the ground with a rope in his left hand and a stick in his right hand. His legs and knees move forward with a slight tremor. The requirements for body movements are that the upper body lean forward slightly, lower the head, and slightly pout the hips. This unique and subtle movement features form a strong contrast with its rugged, heroic and

wide-ranging movement features. The combination of the two forms a complete Nuo dance, which is its uniqueness. The characteristics of "Prime Minister's Military Exercise" are similar to the ancient "martial dance", emphasizing the majestic and majestic momentum. It can be seen that the movement, stillness, rigidity and softness of Nuo dance are not immutable. In terms of the strength, range and coordination of various parts of the body, the aesthetic idea of "harmony" is embodied by the use of "combination of motion and static, and combination of hardness and softness".

6. CONCLUSION

Gan Nuo has a rich variety and profound cultural connotation. It plays an important role in Jiangxi dance and has distinctive characteristics of Gan folk customs. It is precisely because of the rich content of Gan Nuo, which has been inherited, maintained its vitality and always adapted to the times in the long history of social development. Gan Nuo culture originates from the natural environment on which it relies for survival, and cannot be separated from its geographical environment, human history and the development of the times. Based on the analysis of Gan Nuo dance phenomenon, and from the perspective of dance ecology, people can not only analyze the dance form of Gan Nuo, but also find the habitat characteristics associated with it. This is of great significance for us to understand and study the original ecological dance cultural symbols, explore its historical origin, form and implication, and develop and protect the excellent cultural heritage of all ethnic groups in China.

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