

An Analysis of the Cultural Connotation of Tibetan Fire Circle Dance in Baima, Gansu Province

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Abstract: The fire circle dance is the white horse person leisure and celebrates the festival the most common dance, is the white horse person combat product and the crystallization. Nowadays, the folk culture of the white horse people is even more mysterious. As the research on the white horse people goes deeper and deeper, more secrets about the origin and development of the white horse people are gradually solved, which plays a promoting role for the protection and inheritance of the fire circle dance. This paper starts from the status quo of primitive Tibetan music and dance in baima county, gansu province, takes its unique music and sacrificial dance content as the research object, and studies the artistic form of “fire circle dance” of baima Tibetan with the knowledge related to dance science, and systematically describes and explains the dance code domain and music cultural phenomenon.

Keywords: White horse Tibetan; Primitive music and dance; Fire circle dance; Cultural connotation

1. The White Horse Tibetan People and the Origin of the Fire Ring Dance

1.1 Baima Tibetan

1.1.1 Introduction to Baima Tibetans in Wenxian County

Wenxian is located in the central and southern regions of my country. Due to the intersection of the Minshan Mountains and the West Qinling Mountains, the ups and downs of the terrain have been promoted. Longnan Baima people live in the Baima River and Minbaogou River basins. Currently, there are about 9,000 people living in this area, accounting for 40 percent of the entire White Horse people. In the study of ethnic history, most scholars believe that in ancient China, the Di and Baima Tibetans had a similar relationship. The Di people are one of the ancient ethnic groups in the northwest of China. During the Wei and Jin Dynasties, they were frequently active in the northwest region of my country. In the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period, the Di people were scattered in the Shaanxi, Gansu and Sichuan regions. During the period of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty, it expanded to Guanghan, Chengdu, Jiuquan, and even reached the Guanzhong area. In the “Three Kingdoms”, it is said that “it may be called Bai Di or Gu Di, there are princes in the district, and they are worshipped by China.” And so on. It can be seen that the “white horse” of “White Horse Di” should not be a place name, nor a totem, but a name for clothing or other features.

1.1.2 The name of the white horse

The Baima Tibetans in Wenxian County, Gansu Province call themselves “peY”, which means “fan people”. Among the Baima Tibetans, it is believed that the word refers to all ethnic minorities. (White Horse) Tibetans are a Tibetan army during the war between the Tang Dynasty and Tubo after the war. These people are called pey ma ni by the locals. Later, the Han people continued to use these names. The Tibetan soldiers and local natives called their “white horse” (Tibetan army) “Daga”. This is why in the long history of history, the Tibetan people of Baima call their place of residence “Daga”, while the Han people call themselves “White Horse”. This is the origin of the word “White Horse”.¹

1.2 The origin of fire ring dance

In the white horse people’s homes, there are fire pits. In the tradition, the fire in the pond is not extinguished all year round, which represents the symbol of “home” and is the habitat of the god of fire. Whenever there is a festival, the white horse people will dance around the fire. This is the fire ring dance. The Fire Circle Dance is also called “Circle Dance”, and in the Baima language, it is called

“Stupid Boat”. This dance is a group dance that can be participated by men, women and children of all ages.

2. The performance of Baima Tibetan Fire Circle Dance

2.1 Action form

In general, sometimes it jumps, sometimes it jumps backwards. The dance steps are very light and indirect. Everyone around the fire repeatedly danced back and forth from left to right, walking three steps, then one step, and kicking once; leaning over and looking up, these movements are different according to the tune, and the movements are also different. Nowadays, there are still sung songs in “Fire Ring Dance”, including “Xiao Mi Dao”, “Oh Nao Nao Yi”, “Mimi Yo Changed” and so on. These songs are combined with dance moves, which are divided into song and dance moves and siege moves. The singing and dancing movements are simple back-and-forth walking, three steps, one step and one kick. Usually it is slower to turn in one direction after a lyric. The siege dance moves are usually carried out at night. When the dance climaxes, it is mostly performed by young people. Young people holding hands, symbolizing the city wall. These dances fully demonstrate the cohesion of this tribe or nation, and it is a sense of defending and guarding against foreign aggression.

2.2 Formation Structure

The formation structure of the fire circle dance is relatively simple. The formation changes are simple and mainly in the form of a circle. The entire process is performed on the circle. When entering the stage, an elderly person takes the lead. The formation of the Fire Circle Dance is neat, the steps are consistent, and the movements are agile, a relaxed state of the upper body. First, the clockwise direction steps in, holding the torch in a circle and places the torch in the middle. Second, start dancing around the ring of fire. After that, the middle part of the song will be a circle into two circles, the movement from start to finish has been kept neat, formation changes are relatively new, and finally become a circle to end.

In this, the elders take the lead in the dance, singing and dancing at the beginning. The “Ring of fire dance” often doesn’t end until the wee hours of the morning. But the older ones would not dance for long because of their health, but they would sit by the campfire, drinking “Bar shots” and watching the young men dance. The women in the village would toast the best wine in their house to the elderly. Through this dance to bring people closer to each other. Of course, young people often dance all night long, which is also a good opportunity to show their love for their loved ones. The best function of “Ring of Fire Dance” is to close the distance between people and make great contribution to the maintenance of the peaceful and stable relations of the nation, which is the great promotion of the White Horse People’s spirit of unity and cooperation.

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2.3 Finery

In the Baima Tibetan people, the Fez with chicken feather is one of the characteristics of the Baima People’s dance costumes, and it is also a symbol which distinguishes the Baima people from the Tibetan people. Baima Tibetan clothing pattern design style unique modeling, clothing design and its abstract, it is a point, line, face comprehensive composition of clothing characteristics, created Baima Tibetan profound cultural heritage. According to the Emperor Qing Dynasty tribute map, it is said that the white horse people in Wen County, Gansu were “Crowned with the chicken feather by a man’s hat.” “Wen county annals” also has “Wear felt hat, such as cover, with the chicken feather inserted...” this kind of hat’s scientific name is called “Sand Ghat”, Sand Ghat is the white horse Tibetan clothing culture essence, Sand ghat unique design shows the white horse Tibetan charm. The SHAGA HAT is made of the wool of the white sheep. The Brim of the hat is wavy and smooth. The shape of the hat is like a disc, with a white chicken feather inserted at one side. This reflects the unique customs of the Baima Tibetan people. Baima Tibetan women’s clothing structure is more complex and diverse, there are hats, skirts, belts, badges, headdresses, jewelry, and so on. White Horse Tibetan men’s structure is simple and simple, the main belt, hat, gown, pants and so on. In the ring of Fire Dance, the white horse people will wear these costumes to perform. The dance of the twelve phase mask is the Baima Tibetan primitive sacrificial interaction with a lot of costumes. In addition to the Dragon, tiger, lion, ox, Phoenix and other animals, there are female ghosts, male ghosts and other various clothing, each has its meaning. No matter what the festival, all continue to maintain, as the Baima Tibetan ethnic dance unique.

3. The Cultural Connotation of Baima Tibetan Fire Circle Dance

3.1 The remains of the circle culture

“Circle Dance” is the primitive presentation of the early dance in human society. Therefore, it has become an important historical factor of carrying forward and inheriting the “Circle Dance” culture. This always rich and important carrier of national culture information. The important inducement of this dance form germination is the primitive, simple and equal special social structure and “Worship consciousness” under the concept of “All things have spirit”. [] in this kind of belief, the worship consciousness and the sacrificial activity are quite frequent, therefore causes a kind of collective consciousness projection and the concentration, focuses on one kind of core worship above, here, has the “Circle Center” the objective existence, so that they can gather around this “Center” and tell the spirits of their wishes, gratitude, awe, sadness and other emotional release. This can not help but gather and focus, together with the same slogan, step singing and dancing, thus promoting the emergence of this form.

3.2 Worship of Fire Culture

Fire, in the long history of human development, has been playing a huge role. Just as water gives birth to life, so fire gives birth to man. In ancient times, primitive societies had low productivity and limited ability to conquer nature, leading to some worship of supernatural. fire is one of them. People regard fire as a kind of powerful deity, and hold the corresponding sacrificial ceremony, then there is fire worship. Morgan, an American ethnologist, wrote the book “Ancient Society” after visiting the tribal tribes of Native Americans. The book argues that in childhood, the ability to use fish as food and to master fire power led to a rapid increase in social development. Friedrich Engels once said, “Man’s first dominion over nature was the friction of fire, which distinguishes him from the animals.” Without fire, man would not survive the icy winter; There would be no flat teeth, no talented brain, no dexterous hands.

4. Conclusion

Taking the Fire Circle Dance of the Baima Tibetan people in Wen County, Gansu as an example, this paper explores, describes and interprets the characteristics, costumes and movement structure of the dance, and combined with the current environment for cultural and artistic analysis and interpretation, understand the Baima Tibetan primitive music and dance in the cultural color and cultural customs more aware of the cultural heritage and embodiment of dance. This is a dance culture phenomenon worthy of further study, and it is also hoped that the study of culturology and artistic dance in this respect can have some reference significance, and to the author in-depth Study of the essence of dance culture to provide more points of interest and direction.

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