

Research on Tujia Sayerhe Dance

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Abstract. The paper, using the research methods such as literature, field investigation method, logic reasoning method and so, researched Tujia people's Sayerhe dance. The research results shows: This text USES the method of documents and materials The methods of the study of Tujia in the universe and the ho The results showed that Tujia people's Sayerhe Dance has long been known as dancing-funeral, or "drum-beating funeral", is solemn sacrificial ceremony of Tujia mourning the dead in the folk. Sayerhe dance is the affirmation of the value of life, is the cohesion to maintain the national spirit and is the carrier of Tujia culture inheritance. It expresses Tujia's view of life and death and cosmology. It reserves the living frames, accumulates the remains of totem worship and ancestor worship. Therefore, it has a very high cultural value and academic value.

Introduction

Tujia people's Sayerhe Dance has long been known as dancing-funeral, or "drum-beating funeral", is solemn sacrificial ceremony of Tujia mourning the dead in the folk. Sayerhe Dance as Tujia funeral custom in Qingjiang river basin, its strange characteristics is to regard the funeral as the happy event. Especially the old man died, the festive atmosphere is stronger. The object of "Sayerhe Dance" must be the old man with normal death. "Sayerhe Dance" can't be held for the death of a teenage or the death of people with an unnatural death in an unfortunate accident can't be held. Tujia people say: "One people dies, everyone mourns for him. Beating drums for him and do other thing as help." Whenever an old man dies, the neighbors nearby will gather in the room of funeral family. In front of the deceased's coffin, people dance and dance all day and all night accompanying the beating of the drums. The atmosphere is warm and happy.

The Style of Sayehe Dance

The style of Sayerhe dance is that one people beats drum and leads a chorus, other people chorus. The man beating drum is a prestigious old man, who is good at singing and dancing. He directs dance with his drumbeat and changes Qupai with his drumbeat. According to historical records: "One man dies in a family, his neighbors will pay a condolence call. Don't leave throughout the night and accompany the dead all day. "The sacrificial songs and dances are inherited by the descendants of the ancient people of in Tujia areas.

The Characteristics of Sayehe Dance Drumbeat and Its Movements

The drumbeat and its movements of Sayerhe dance are a little different because of the different regions. The contents of Sayerhe dance are very rich. The contents are a little different because of the different regions too. Its postures include "bending at the knee", "trembling", "swing", "leaning", "turning" and so on. Its basic routines include "Running in the field" and "Four big steps" and so on. In addition, other dynamic characters include imitating the animals and birds, fishes, worms, ghost and people and so on. According to the structure, Sayerhe is divided into 20 styles. Such as "Sidabu", "Molianhe", "Yaosang", "Dasang" and so on. According to the imitation images, it can be divided into: "The Phoenix Spreads The Wings", "Rhinoceros looks at moon", "A fierce tiger sprang down from the top of the mountain", "Tiger's hands lace behind head", "The monkey climbing rocks", "Dogs pees",

“The swallow carries mud” and so on. Sayerhe is a kind of folk dance. Whether its music, dance, or its lyrics rarely has the feeling of mournfulness. Its music sonorous are bright, strong and its dance steps are handsome and martial. The lyrics content is very extensive, such as recalling the ethnic origin, telling the folk story, narrating the love and care received from childhood, the dead’s life story; the historical legends of Former Tang dynasty and Houhan dynasty, the sincere love story, the daily life funs and so on. The dancers sings what he see and what he thinks of. The folksongs have a long history and rich in content. The tune is simple and charming, bringing yon far away. After finished singing a song, the mass chorus together finally “Dance Sayerhe dance”, or “Dispel our sorrow”. The ruggedly songs and lively tunes sweep off the sad atmosphere in the home, which dispel the sorrow for the dead family too. So, the process of dancing Sayerhe dance is full of lively atmosphere, which diffuses out a simple and harmonious natural breath.

The Connotation of Sayerhe Dance

The connotation of Tujia Sayerhe dance is very rich, which reflects the following values of Tujia people.

Firstly, the universe view of belief in immortal spirit. Person's life and death is humanity's common natural phenomenon. Sayerhe dance reflects the universe view of belief in immortal spirit. The lyrics in Sayerhe dance mentions that: “Saw the dead was alive yesterday, but he was in the coffin today. Ate the food in the world at the end of the third days, climb up the terrace in hell from which the dead can see their homes at the fourth day.” The purpose of dancing Sayerhe dance is to accompany the dead. This is because that the person’s soul still exists. That Tujia people dance and sing for the dead embodies the immortal values of the soul.

Secondly, the ethics of the ancestor worship. Tujia tiger totem worship is not for the tiger, but because the tiger is created by the soul of Tujia ancestor Lin jun. The essence of the worship is to offer sacrifices to their ancestors Lin jun, not for tiger. Later, it evolved into the Tujia’s customs, such as: redeeming a rentou wish, Xianggong wish, ox-head wish and so on, which reflects the ancestor’s worship strongly. The lyrics in the worship of the king of Xiang Wang in Qingjiang river basin say that: “The ancestor is in the paradise, the happy land is below. Xiangwang opens his soil. His subjects defend the land, till and plant on it.” It also shows people's worship for the ancestries and Xiang wang. The ethics of ancestors worship is the theme of the faith of Sayerhe dance.

Thirdly, the optimistic vision of death. The death is generally regarded as a tragic terror for ancient and modern people. Tujia people regard the death as a natural thing, which means to the survive in another world. Being alive is congratulated, and the death is congratulated too, which is called “The alive congratulates the dead, and the dead congratulates the alive.” When Tujia people dance Sayerhe dance, it is as lively as possible. This is the embodiment of the open-minded view and also is unique of Sayerhe dance.

Fourthly, the positive life attitude. Tujia people think that it is happy after death, and is a kind of psychological comfort and balance for the living. The alive and death are both the process and way in this life. Tujia people’s optimistic attitude to the death is not to escape life, but also a positive attitude to life.

The Geographical Distribution of Sayerhe Dance

One proverb is popular in Tujia area: “Baishou dance in the south, mourning dance in the north.” The south means the southern part that Tujia people distribution, mainly refers to the west of Hunan province. The “north” refers to the northern part of the distribution of the tujia people, that is the qingjiang river area of the western part of Hubei province. Of cause, because of the different culture in the region, Sayerhe dances are different in different area, especially between the central area taking Yangliuci and qiangtaiping as the core and the peripheral area.

The Historical Origins of Sayerhe Dance

When it comes to the historical origins of “Sayerhe dance”, there are no a unified opinions so far. Sayerhe dance we see today on the local field of Tujia is the reproduction after the vicissitudes of Tujia original Sayerhe dance. Sayerhe dacne itself is the production influenced by its national history and the foreign culture. So here the paper analyzes the historical origin of Sayerhe dance mainly from the original traditional Sayerhe dance and Sayerhe dance after the cultural integration.

The Most Primitive Sayerhe Was Associated with the Totem Worship of Western Hubei Tujia.

In China as early as in 18000 the cavemen had graveyard. The archaeologist found a young women, a middle-aged woman and an old man's skeleton, who wears the ornaments, the production tools sitting besides them. The skeletons are surrounded into a circle by red hematite powders, which reflect that in those days there had been a burial ceremony. Because of people's and worship and fear for the ghosts and gods, they believe that the dead can harm them and can bless them, which is the beginning of the funeral custom. The funeral custom comes from the soul immortal idea, is the product of ghost worship. The early humans were convinced that ghosts have superhuman ability, can the positive and negative effect on the people except for the dead. Such as blessing the living people's safety, or secretly harm the living people. So, the people at that time feared the ghosts, and then evolved into a ghost worship. In order to please the ghosts, and avoid the disaster and gain the happy life, according to their perception and experience of real life, they cherished illusions that the ghosts were able to live in another world. Then, they properly buried the bodies of the dead, and had the corresponding funeral ceremony. So, the funereal came into being. Primitive humans, in the case of low productivity, treated the nature with human. They believed that all things had spirit, and worshiped them. Because of their different living environment, their objects of worship also were different. The funeral of all ethnic groups originated from primitive totem belief. Tujia people's Sayerhe dance has no exception, which is bound up with Tujia Baren's totem faith. Through a lot of historical data, we can find out that Tujia has different totem worship, such as eagle worship, white tiger worship and so on. But, as one kind of funeral, Sayerhe dance mainly exists in the middle and downstream area of Qingjiang river basin. Many scholars agree that tujia people in the western Hubei worship a white tiger.

There are a large number of symbols about tiger in some historical sites. Throughout the movements of Sayerhe dance, they mainly imitate the tigers and the birds and other animals, which undoubtedly repeat and reappear Tujia ancestors' hunting. So to speak, the original form of funeral dance is hunting dance. After the ancient Baren regarded the white tiger as a sacrifice clan totem, hunting dance gradually became the totem dance after Tujia people died. By mourning the memorial activities, the whole clan congratulate the dead like their ancestors, who becomes a white tiger and flies into the sky. Now the postures of Sayerhe dance keeps bending, arching one's back, pumping one's legs, vibrating hips down, step character, hands swinging in front of the chest, especially, almost a squat, etc. From those, we can find out some tiger's action. Especially, the pace of the dancers is done in according to the beat of drums. Each step is made by full foot pawing the ground, is just like imitating a tiger. There is no doubt that Tujia Sayerhe dance originated from Tujia's white tiger worship. Its original form was about tiger dance and series of ritual dance about white tiger.

Sayerhe Dance in Cultural Integration. Sayerhe has been affected by Chu, Xia, Han and so on in the historical vicissitude. First of all, Let's explore Sayerhe dance from the interaction between Ba and Chu. The history of Sayerhe dance is at least 3000 years old. According to historical data, its original form is the singing and dancing for soldiers. In Shang and Zhou Dynasties, Ba people's martial arts dance and funeral dance were intimately tied up with. In order to affirm the value of life of soldiers who were killed in action, the officers and soldiers of Ba people sang and danced for the dead soldiers during the funeral, which was the origin of funeral. At that time, the funeral song funeral dance was only performed by men. The Tujia's proverb in Qingjiang river basin says: The men dance funeral dance, they dance more, their llivelihood is better. The women dance funeral dance, their families are broken up. The women can only cry on the funeral, which doesn't represent they look up to men and

down on women. In the spring and autumn period and the warring period, Ba people had a close cultural links with Chu people. As far as Sayerhe dance was concerned, Sayerhe dance was affected mostly deeply by Zhuangzhou, also under the influence of Qu yuan. According to legend of Tujia in Qingjiang river basin: Sayerhe dance was to learn from Zhuangzhou who played basin and sang after his wife died. People developed from nothing, and from being into nonbeing again, which is just like the changes of seasons. The concept of life and death on the funeral is such. No wonder Tujia people take Zhuangzhou as their confidant. However, Zhuang Zhou's concept of life and death makes the realm of Ba people's funeral dance up into the unparalleled height. The indirect influence is very important. Tujia people sing < national martyr > in Sayerhe dance in Badong and Changyang, even the local illiterate farmers can sing it. Thus it can be seen that Sayerhe dance is influenced deeply by Qu Yuan. Next, Let's explore Sayerhe dance from its relationship between Man and Xia. The earliest records about Tujia pioneer's funeral are recorded in < Sui book. Geography >. The records in the book as the following: "Neighborhood youth sing and dance around the dead body with bows and arrows, following the raps of arrow beating the bow." The description is very similar with the contents and form of Sayerhe. A long time ago, when Tujia people danced Sayerhe dance in west Hubei province, they once took bow and arrow, which was possibly affected by Man and Zuo. Finally, lets explore Sayerhe from the view of Tujia's contacts with Han nationality. < Zhuzhi-Ci > that sprang up in Tang dynasty was Ba people's folk songs with Chinese dialect in Xiajiang area. Because the poet Liu Xiyu's replication was very popular at that time. The lyrics that Tujia people sang in the funeral in Tang dynasty had been used by Chinese dialect. Moreover, with Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism was introduced into Tujia area, the lyrics of Sayerhe dance also received certain effect accordingly. So, the lyrics of funeral dance is a product with other ethnic cultural fusion, but it has its wonderful characteristic, it can make the audience feel that the lyrics are both knowledgeable and interesting.

Summary

Sayerhe dance is the affirmation of the value of life, is the cohesion to maintain the national spirit and is the carrier of Tujia culture inheritance. It expresses Tujia's view of life and death and cosmology. It reserves the living frames, accumulates the remains of totem worship and ancestor worship. Therefore, it has a very high cultural value and academic value.

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