

A Research on Ecological Aesthetics of Dance from the Ecological Perspective

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Abstract. Since 1990s, ecology has been integrated with many interdisciplines in our country, which includes the integration of ecology and disciplines such as economics, philosophy and dance, producing a series of innovative ideas and conclusions of research. This paper, mainly from the ecological perspective, talks about auditory ecology, cultural ecology and aesthetic ecology existing in musical dance aesthetics.

Keywords: The ecological perspective, dance, ecological aesthetics, research

1 Introduction

Musical dance aesthetics is not only about the demonstration of sound in the space, but also about the rich cultural concepts and elements. It reflects different musical dance aesthetics of different regions and nations. The integration of ecology and dance comes from professor Luo Xiaoping's article *Ecological Aesthetics—A New Perspective that Should be Concerned by the Circle of Musical dance Aesthetics* [9]. In this article, the relevance between ecology and musical dance aesthetics is illustrated. And from the perspective of ecological aesthetics of dance, it analyzes the cultural concepts and aesthetic ecology contained in musical dance works, showing the direction for the future development of musical dance aesthetics.

2 Analysis of Current Basic Theories on Ecological Aesthetics of Dance

Ecological aesthetics of dance defines the musical dance aesthetics from the ecological perspective. It's mainly based on theoretical philosophy of ecological existence, analyzing the relationship between human and nature [1-4]. It usually believes that human and the world is in the relationship between subject and object. Therefore, to conquer nature is the goal of human space activities. Nowadays, researches on ecological aesthetics of dance in western countries are done with ecological philosophy, theory of literature and art, ecological aesthetics as the theoretical basis. In the narration of ecological aesthetics of dance, ancient Greek philosophers mainly combined dance with all things in the universe. In *Theory of Harmony*, Plato pointed out that harmonious dance could demonstrate the origin of all things in the universe, while harmony between human souls and dance could reveal the cosmology of human spirit. This indicates that dance plays a positive role in the construction of the universe and human spirit. According to the book *History of Western Dance Culture in the 19th Century* by American musical dance historian P.H. Lang, romantic thoughts in dance should not only be formed through human feelings and imagination, but also be combined with the pastoral scenery of nature to lead human to explore the mystery of self-spirit and the natural universe, so as to eliminate the binary opposition between human and nature [5-8].

In the meantime, the discussion on ecological aesthetics of dance in Chinese traditional culture can be found mainly in religious books of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Confucianist theory that man is an integral part of nature, Taoist theory that the way of Tao follows nature, and Buddhist theory of integration of all things analyze the relevance between nature and human and dance from the perspective of philosophy. For instance, dance in China during pre-Qin dynasty had something to do with religion and philosophy. Though the sound made by instruments is monotonous but full of emotion. According to *Record of Dance*, a book on musical dance theory in pre-Qin dynasty, dance is the product of the harmony between human and nature, which can promote the stability and harmony of a whole country. Here, it emphasizes the close relationship between dance and society and all things in nature, and the ecological

concept that dance is integrated with human and the universe. All of this shows the culture respecting and conforming to nature and the ecological aesthetics of ancient people. [10-15]

3 How to Show the Concept of Ecological Aesthetics in Musical Dance Expression?

Both western classic dance and Chinese traditional dance illustrate and express thoughts on ecological aesthetics of dance through sound and content. In general, the expression of relevance between dance and ecological aesthetics is dominated by natural sounds or simulated natural sounds, showing the co-existence and co-prosperity between human and nature. Or people use natural lyric melody to describe their great love to natural scenery and praise the grandeur of the natural universe. Just like *The Best Nature Dance* by Taiwanese dance producer Xu Renxiu, it combines more than 100 kinds of natural sounds to make itself pure dance with creativity. With sounds of birds, frogs, cicadas, insects, macaques, polatouches and streams, this musical dance work reflects the interest and aesthetics of natural ecology. While in *Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68*, Beethoven integrated dance with nature. He recalled the memory when he lived in a quiet village and expressed how much he loved nature.

The implication of ecological aesthetics in dance is getting less and less while the general public eager for the harmony between human and nature more than ever before, especially at the time when modern pop dance gets rapid development. As a result, dance on environmental protection and praise represented by expressionism begins to appear, specifying the idea of co-existence between human and nature and the universe, such as the song on environmental protection *A True Story*. This song is based on a true story in which Xu Xiujuan, a girl college student, died for saving a red-crowned crane. This sad dance exactly shows the ecological aesthetics of dance. Other works like *Children of the Earth* and *Chorus of the Earth* praise philanthropism and grandeur of Nature from the perspective of Mother earth and the protection of the earth, in which the idea of ecological aesthetics and the connotation of ecological culture cause people's introspection and reflection.

4 The Direction for the Development of Ecological Aesthetics of Chinese Dance Based on the Ecological Perspective

Under the background of globalization, the integration of dance of different regions greatly impacts the traditional and national dance. And great changes have also taken place in musical dance ecology within a certain region. What's more, ecological aesthetics contained in different dance begins to demonstrate their own characteristics. Since western pop dance was introduced into China, it has become more difficult for Chinese traditional dance to survive and prosper. The ecological environment for classic dance and traditional dance is increasingly deteriorating. And the discourse power of ecological aesthetics of dance in mainstream dance is also increasingly undermined. Thus, from the ecological perspective, in order to develop the ecological aesthetics of dance, we have to abandon ideas of respecting traditional culture excessively and worshipping foreign culture. Instead, we should make innovations in ecological culture and aesthetic education of dance with the establishment of sound ecology of dance as the basis. Only in this way can the construction of harmony between dance and natural ecology be promoted.

The construction of ecological aesthetics in Chinese dance mainly depends on the form and content expression of the traditional dance. Just as Song Jin, professor of Central Conservatory of Dance says, from the perspective of ecological philosophy and ecological aesthetics, musical dance ecology is the demonstration of the integration of many things. And the essence of ecological aesthetics of dance lies in that the interaction and co-prosperity of many things make a dynamic balance in the natural world. Since the idea of integration of rites and dance was put forward in Zhou dynasty, China has combined rites with dance to govern society and standardize the public's behaviors. Later, Confucianist theory on musical dance education made dance as the highest state of emotional experience. It combined dance with benevolence and honesty to show the harmony between dance and society and nature. Therefore, on the basis of respecting the original ecological culture of dance, with the thinking of diversified existence and the musical dance content contained in ecological aesthetics, a harmonious and balanced system of

ecological aesthetics of dance will be established by innovating and adjusting the ecological environment and formal expression of dance.

5 Conclusion

As the main research direction in recent years, ecological aesthetics of dance should discuss and analyze the relevance between human, dance and nature on the basis of carrying on cultural concepts of Chinese traditional dance. Particularly, for the expression of object of single line in the modern dance, human's concept of values on musical dance creation and expression should be integrated with fundamental characteristics and development status of current natural things. In this way, dualistic subjects can be established between human and dance in musical dance creation. And the competition and opposition between human and nature in musical dance ecology can be eliminated. Eventually, ecological aesthetics of dance featured by co-existence, co-prosperity and harmonious development can be created.

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