CHINESE DANCE THEORY SERIES

中国舞蹈理论丛书

北京市教育委员会科研基地资助项目北京舞蹈学院科研创新能力提升计划资助项目

主编◎吕艺生 副主编◎梅雪 武艳

A HISTORY OF CHINESE DANCE (1949 - 2000)

新中国舞蹈史 (1949~2000)

(英译本)

77

冯双白◎著 毛锋◎译

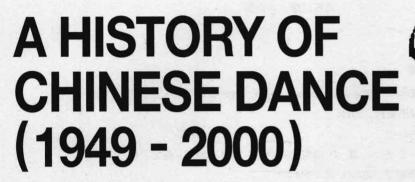


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新中国舞蹈史(1949~2000)

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内容提要

本书在大量史料的基础上,分析了1949~2000年中国舞蹈艺术的历史发展轨迹,以重大的舞蹈历史事件作为历史分期的依据,分六章梳理了中华人民共和国之舞蹈艺术在事业概貌、创作收获、舞种沿革、杰出人物、重大组织活动等方面的基本历史现象,并且以整个中国原始舞蹈和封建社会舞蹈的发展为参照坐标,提出了新中国舞蹈是对中国女乐舞蹈文化和民间自娱歌舞文化的革命性转变,其历史本质是建立一种真正意义上的创作艺术,其发展方向是建立21世纪的独立自主的艺术美学表现体系。

本书适合对舞蹈艺术感兴趣者及相关研究者阅读。

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《中国舞蹈理论丛书》 英文版序

百余年来,中国人在"西学东渐"潮流中,阅读、翻译了不少西方自然科学及哲学社会科学著作,汲取了许多知识与学术滋养,也包括舞蹈艺术理论和舞蹈人文知识。

多年来,许多被译成中文的英文舞蹈论著,在中国产生了很好的影响,诸如世界舞蹈史、芭蕾舞史、现代舞史、舞蹈文化史、西方舞蹈美学、舞蹈编导及身体训练等方面的著作,以及一些舞蹈家个人传记,如《邓肯自传》《巴兰钦传》《尼金斯基笔记》《皮娜·鲍什舞蹈剧场新美学》;等等。

相对而言,中文舞蹈史论著则很少被译成西文。我只知王克芬的《中国古代舞蹈史》前几年已被译成英文。这可能与中文舞蹈论著一向较少有关。

然而,近年来,中国舞蹈界确实产生一些舞蹈学术论著、史著和舞蹈教材等,其中不乏有价值的著述,也具有介绍性质。只是外国朋友懂中文的实在太少,有些朋友到北京看到那些中文书都是望而生畏,只挑了个别设计拉班舞谱的书籍。这使我们产生了自己进行舞蹈学论著中译英的设想,或许这会帮助他们了解中国。此想法受到学界的肯定,也得到某些教育机构的支持。这套丛书,虽然只包括三部著作,但在某种程度上代表了中国当代舞蹈理论方面的成果。

如果说王克芬女士的《中国古代舞蹈史》介绍了中国古代舞蹈发展的简要历史,我们此次翻译的冯双白先生的《新中国舞蹈史(1949~2000)》,则把近50年来中国舞蹈发展情况进行了介绍,也对其发展的情况作了某些分析,一古一今,展示了中国舞蹈史的全貌。

中国有 56 个民族,每个民族都有自己的民间舞蹈文化。这种民间舞蹈,既是过去宫庭雅乐舞的来源,也是近代中国舞蹈家学习创作的源泉。北京舞蹈学院教授罗雄岩先生采取文化与地区划分的方法,将各种民族、民间舞分成若干类,使读者对这种文化性质有所了解,也便于记忆。如果说舞蹈史是从纵向了解中国舞蹈,那么这部《中国民间舞蹈文化教程》则从横向概览了中国民间舞蹈文化。

我本人所著的《舞蹈学导论》,是以舞蹈本体论的视角,试图从理论上认识舞蹈及中国舞蹈艺术。虽然它免不了联系中国古代文论中的理论要义,但更多的是借助西方已经译成中文的舞蹈史论成果,可以说是当代中国舞蹈学界运用中西理论来认识舞蹈本质的一个理论侧面。



无疑,这仅是中国舞蹈理论成果很小的一部分,相信通过这种方式,今后还会有更多的中译英舞蹈学论著出版。如果能有助于中西舞蹈文化的对等交流,那正是我们由衷的愿望。

正如中国舞蹈界通过阅读西方舞蹈史论译作了解西方舞蹈文化一样,我希望西方舞蹈界朋友,也能以阅读译作的方式了解中国舞蹈情况。

真诚的朋友
——北京舞蹈学院教授
——艺生
2013年5月23日于北京

Chinese dance theory series Preface of English version

From last century on, in the trends of "the eastward transmission of western sciences", Chinese scholars read and translated a lot of western books on natural science, philosophy and social science, learned a lot of knowledge and academic nutriment, including dance art theories and related humanistic knowledge.

For years, many of the translated western dance books have a good effect in China, such as books on dance history of the world, ballet, modern dance history, cultural history, western dance aesthetic, choreographer and physical training. And there are also some dancers biography, such as *My life* (Isadora Duncan), *Balanchine: A Biography* (Bernard Taper), *Nijinski Cahier: le sentiment* (Vaslav Nijinski), *Tanzen gegen die Angst: Pina Bausch* (Jochen Schmidt) and so on.

In contrast, Chinese dance history works has rarely been translated and introduced to the West. I only know that Ms. Wang Kefen's *History of Chinese Ancient Dance* has been translated into English few years ago. This may be associated with the phenomenon that we have less books on history of Chinese dance all the time.

However, a batch of academic books and teaching materials on Chinese dance history have emerged in recent years. Some of these books are very valuable and introductory. But there are much less foreign friends can read Chinese and some friends visited Beijing say Chinese books are really daunting, so they could only selected individual Chinese book with Labanotation. This intrigued us on trying to translate those Chinese books into English. And we wish our efforts would help the world to know China more. This idea was affirmed by academic scholars and also supported by education agencies. Though the first series including only three books, but to some extent, they represent achievement of contemporary Chinese dance theory researches.

If Ms. Wang Kefen's *History of Chinese Ancient Dance* briefly introducing the history of ancient Chinese dance, we have translated Mr. Feng Shuangbai's *A History of Chinese Dance* (1949 - 2000). The book introduces and analyses the development of Chinese dance in last 50 years. These two books show the outline of Chinese dance history.

China has 56 ethnic groups with their own original and folk dance. These folk dance were sources of ancient court dance, and learning resources for modern China dancers as



well. Professor of Beijing Dance Academy, Mr. Luo Xiongyan classified Chinese folk dance into different varieties by their cultural backgrounds and physical geography, this method helps in understanding the nature of this culture and easier to remember. As we may read Chinese dance portrait by its history, Mr. Luo's *Course of China Folk Dance Culture* shows the landscape of Chinese folk dance culture.

My book *Introduction to Dance*, from ontological perspective, is trying to know dance and Chinese dance art in theory. Although it can't avoid the essence of Chinese ancient literary theory, but is more of Western dance history results being translated into Chinese. That is to say, the book reflects a theoretical aspect of studying the nature of dance with combined Chinese and Western theories.

There is no doubt that these three books are only a small part of Chinese dance theory achievement. I am very confident that there will be more English translation books of Chinese dance theory in the future. We sincerely hope to promote fair exchanges and communication between Chinese and Western dance culture by this way.

Just like Chinese dancers knowing Western dance through reading translated Western dance history books, I hope the world dance people to know Chinese dance by the same way.

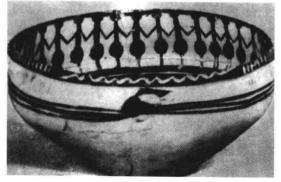
Yours truly, Lü Yisheng Professor of Beijing Dance Academy On May 23, 2013 in Beijing

Foreword

Feng Shuangbai

The history of dance in new China is the most creative part of the history of Chinese dance. Its myriad experience and copious harvests have endowed it with significance of great historical advancement. When one attempts to make a reflective summary of the second half of the last century, with numerous works and artists exhibiting themselves in the perspective, one is led to the deeper meaning of the inevitable ultimate goal of human culture and to the positivity of the orientation of human civilization. No matter what inertia was of the 50-year history of dance, or what twists and turns there were, the governing principle of the spiraling advancement of history has been elucidated in the evolutionary tendencies, artistic tastes, choreographic devices, and alternations of celebrities and events.

This book clarifies the historical sequence of dance in new China, focusing on the figures, works, and events that exerted great influence on the advancement of dance, paying considerable attention to the artists who made achievements. Since it is impossible for any book to reproduce the complete history as it happened in reality, omissions are unavoidable. Some of the figures and events are given detailed treatment, while some are mentioned in brief and some dropped out due to the frame of reference or the historical coordinate here of



Dancing scenes found on colorful pottery basins unearthed from the site of Zongri, Biangou village, Tongde County, Qinghai

the book. The history of contemporary Chinese dance is the continuation of the entire history of Cheese dance, and the succession of the great 20th century revolution in the domain of dance. I have noted in my book *An Outline History of Contemporary Chinese Dance* that our concern of the history of dance is "primarily a brief survey of the entire history of Chinese dancing art, in the hope that, by historical comparison, we can find something reg-



ular and something essential." The goal of the observation and study of history is "not to accomplish an all encompassing narration of that history, but to highlight the facts that have left inerasable imprints upon the advancement of dance in the past 100 years, and the changes that have engraved this part of dance history with special cultural bearings, for it is these facts and changes that have made the very soul of the dance progress in the past century".

1. Dance after 1949 is the logical continuation of traditiorial Chinese dance

We say that the history of dance after 1949 is the logical continuation of the entire history of the development of Chinese dance, because Chinese dance boasts a tradition as long as that of the Chinese civilization with diversified and brilliant dance genres, numerous famous dancers and dancing compositions. When it strode in its own track toward the 20th century, it had behind itself a massive tradition, or an enormous reservoir of productions. The system of Chinese dance was enormous and eternal, thus, its profound influence was inevitable.



to wine with dance Stone relief Image in Peng county, Sichuan Province

Dance advanced, in the Chinese history, through times of glory, and times of obscurity as well. In such times of glory and times of obscurity, Chinese dance acquired its unique tradition, which is spiritual and stylized into kinetic patterns as well. Ritual dances as expressions of social beliefs, ceremonial patterns in celebrations of great enterprises, and entertain-The music in the palace of Han dynasty: Invitation ments in imposing majestic palaces, all form parts of the totality of the dance traditions of China. Among folks, dance is an important

kinetic ritual to express gratitude to and pay homage to the gods, and meanwhile a part work. Such folk things were originally considered indecent, and are scarcely found in historical documents, which, in most cases, recorded but mixtures of dances, performances and important imperial events. However, due to the intimate relationship between the folk dance and mass psychology, the conviction that the folk dance mirrors manners, reflects social affairs, expresses popular complaints and diffuses civilization become the most interesting part of the Confucian thinking of music and dance to the rulers. Chinese rulers of each generation believed that "music and sounds can penetrate deep into the soul wherein

alterations are instantly found", and that "music clarifies the society, sharpens ears and eyes, smoothes breaths and blood-flows, transforms fashions and customs, and pacifies all the people under Heaven". For this reason the folk music and the folk dance were paid great attention to. Folk dances were not only used by the rulers to detect "folk climates" and "folk manners" so as to examine the political state of the government, but also "collected" into the imperial court, altered and polished with the elegance and refinement of the court, altered and polished with the elegance and refinement of the art slaves to study and perform, an turned into dance performances to please and cheer the rulers.

Here, one sees the map of the formation of the tradition of the Chinese court dance: the folk dance - "collected" to the court - altered and adopted - the slave female dance.

There was, of course, another important component of the court dance: the elegant court music system, which was originated in the Zhou Dynasty, consummated in the Han and the Tang periods, continued well into the Qing Dynasty times, and vanished all of a sudden at the beginning of the twentieth century with the collapse of the feudal monarchy in the flames of the Nationalist revolution. However, the dance performances in the ceremonies of worship to Confucius conducted in the Confucian temple in Qufu of Shangdong and in front of the Confucius statue beside the Imperial Academy, reserved some of the genres of the majestic ritual dance, and retained the grandeur and solemnity of the majestic ritual art. The ritual music system and the slave female dance system make the major parts of the court dance of China.

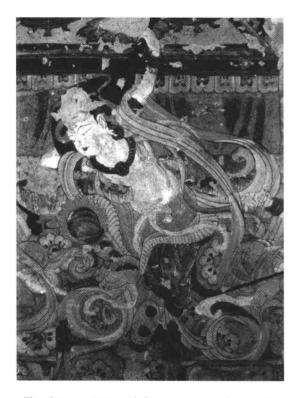
It seems that the dance of new China is not at all a derivation from the court tradition, but a rebellion against it. Yet, the influence of the court tradition upon the dancing art of China is profound. The "slave female dance" and the "ceremonial celebration", in particular, have perennially molded the Chinese concept of dance. It is impossible, therefore, that the court tradition exercised no effect upon the dancing art of China after 1949.

Apart from the court dance, there is another heritage of Chinese dance, that is, the folk dances of all Chinese nationalities, a resourceful vital flow of art. As previously noted, they were often collected "into the court", serving as an entertainment to the gentry. Yet far from being loitering in the court because of such courtly favor, folk dances of all Chinese nationalities continued to grow with vigorous characteristics in their own earth among the folks. As a matter of fact, the folk dances of various Chinese nationalities make the essence of Chinese dance. As far back as in the Han and the Wei Dynasties, they had

[•] Xun zi "Theory of music".

² Confucius "Filial Piety Classic · Guang Yao Dao".





The dance painting of flying Apsaras playing the Pipaby putting the instrument on her back on the east side of south wall, cave 112, Mogao grottoes, Dunhuang



White jade sculpture of a dancing girl unearthed from the warring states period

displayed their exuberance and tenacity. Following the large scale migration and intermingling of different nationalities during the South and the North Dynasties, after an intermixture of the folk dances of various nationalities, the Chinese dancing art, as a whole, reached its first peak in the Sui and the Tang Dynasties. In the Song Dynasty, the folk dances of various nationalities, especially that of the Han nationality, had already distinguished themselves by their basic styles and spiritual orientations. They were folk kinetic performances conducted around lunar New Year, to give thanks to gods of heaven and of earth, entertaining both the deities and the folks themselves. The folk dance, blended with particular national customs and practices, and melted with particular national traits and characteristics, gradually developed with their particular way of life, always forms the physical feature of the national culture. The folk dances, of any of the various nationalities of China, may exist in diverse appearances, but they share one thing in common, that is, they have a common artistic "character", which is eternal and unchanging throughout the history, regardless of the alternations of political powers, as has been typi-

cally illustrated in the pliable elegancy of the Dai dance, in the vehemence of the feet-stamping and body-shaking of the Mongolian dance, and in the demonstrativeness in restraint expressed by the dance of the Sinkiang Uygur nationality.

The dance of new China, inevitably, develops under the influence of the folk dance traditions. The history of the dance of new China is a derivation from the history of the dance traditions in whatever sense. The Chinese dance, of the past 50-odd years, to a great extent, developed in its own track, right under the enormous influence of the great traditions.

2. Dance after 1949 is the logical advancement of the twentieth century cultural renovativity

We hold that the history of dance is the succession of the revolution in the domain of dance in the 20th century. In what way is it thus?

Chinese dance enjoys a special place of importance in the totality of the dancing cultures of the world, because it made remarkable achievements, and added pages of glory to the history of civilization. Chinese dance well deserved the word glory, as the merchants and craftsmen entering China along the ancient Road of Silk cast the surprised eyes of theirs upon the dazzling civilization of the great Tang Dynasty, and as the dancers of the west lands set off to please the monarchs with gentle postures but ended in imprinting the swift-pivoting dancing shadows of theirs upon the walls of history. But, when forming a diachronical observation of the history of Chinese dance, we can find that, this tradition is one with highly developed system of the slave female dance of the court.

The earliest extant record of the slave female dance can be found in inscriptions on bones and tortoise shells, in which the Chi-



Dance figures with broken arm unearthed from TangCheng, Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province

nese characters for female and dance are put side by side. The sacrificial dance and slave



female dance are found to be the earliest and most frequently performed genres of the ancient Chinese dance in the extant written documents of China.

When demand for ancestors' blessing was fulfilled in sacrifice, and further blessing from ancestors were no longer necessary because more wealth was guaranteed by the advancement of social productivity, with the agglomeration of more riches and the spreading of hedonistic way of life, songs and dances turned from sheer dedications to the gods, to entertainments for both gods and the mortals, and then to entertainments exclusively for the mortals. It was to entertain first of all the monarch because he was "the son of the heaven", or the incarnation of the ancestry, and secondly the common people. It was in this historical condition that the "slave female dance" gained great impetus in the Chinese dance traditions.

The formation and development of the slave female dance, and its special function in the political life of ancient China made it an important phenomenon in the Chinese dance culture, and a special historical sight of the global context, for it was not only enjoyed by the royal families but also used, if necessary, as an invisible weapon in the struggles among countries for interests. Being the presentation of the achievement of the court dancing art, and the highest achievement of the ancient Chinese dance, the slave female dance has profoundly influenced the two-thousand-year history of the Chinese dance. In the times when the slave female dance was in its peak, the most skillful dancer could by luck achieve a high status, or even become the most popular and most favorable because of a marriage into the deep imperial palace, the most famous of whom were Lady Qi and Zhao Feiyan. Singers and dancers had long been treated as lesser beings due to their slavery and the inheritance of this status. The performance of the dancer was consequently not seriously taken, but, more often than not, turned out to be a disguised game of carnal pleasure. Therefore, despite its long history as shown by drawings carved with full admiration by ancestors on walls of cliffs and caves long before literature, painting, and music were able to be recorded, dance was unable to be ranked as genuine art form in the feudal times. Dance never had the chance to be presented as a decent creative art on the vast stage of Chinese arts. Knowledgeable elites could enjoy it and flirt with the female singers and dancers, and there could be such moving tragic love stories as that of Du Shiniang, but there was no serious participation of the intellectuals. Without the actual participation of the intellectual elites, the splendor of singing and dancing has survived in beautiful lines of poetry but never did the self-expressions of the inner worlds of the artists. The elites expressed in their poetry but never did the self-expressed in the inner worlds of the artists. The elites expressed in their poetry their unconscious longing for the dissolute way of life with these women, the gentry loved songs and dancers were long in low and humble positions, with neither freedom of life, nor independence, nor happiness. When the practice of burying the live with the dead was in vogue, they were in most cases the victims. Dance seemed to be all the time marginal, unable to have an equal footing with Chinese poetry, painting, sculpture, and even with the slowly esteemed novel. The same was true of the performer. "The dancers" in the history of ancient dance, never reached the noble social statues, as was reached by the artists in other domains of art, in the total structure of the Chinese culture. Works with distinct individuality were therefore sparse. Under such circumstances, how could dance develop into a genuine creative art?

It is necessary to point out that, as has been noted, the slave female dance represents the achievement of dance performance in the Chinese history. And due to such achievement, it was placed in the mainstream of the social culture, and as something recognized and recorded in the history, eventually turned to be a "tradition". Yet this is an agravic dance tradition, which I call "the agravic Chinese dance tradition".

By agravic, it is meant that the slave female dance had long been a mainstream of the dance performance during Chinese monarchies with the favor and the support of rulers. By agravic, it is also meant that it seldom touched the grave conflicts and contradictions in social and individual life, and seldom went deep enough to touch the grave conflicts and contradictions in social and individual life, and seldom went deep enough to the bottom of the social life and of the human soul. And by agravic it is meant that, though there were numerous performers and excellent craftsmen, there was hardly anyone with an independent personality of the dancing artist. Moreover, by agravic it is meant that there was seldom any creation of the artist during its long history of Chinese dance. There were dancing craftsmen who made works according to the order of their superior. Take Li Keji, a famous craftsman of the Tang Dynasty, for example. He was good at prosody, and one made an adaption of *Pusaman*, a folk dance from the west lands. And in order to cater for the emperor, he composed a grand dance *A Sighing of Life* in commemoration of the late princess. Such people, therefore, were not in the strict sense artists of dance compositions.

The twentieth century Chinese dance was a clean break from and a revolution to this agravic tradition.

In the May Forth New Culture Movement, at the call for science and democracy, and inspired by the idea of "education to save the nation", Li jinhui originated the history of modern juvenile dance. By popularizing the campus dance, he promoted the performance of juvenile dance of China into a flourishing period. His compositions, such as *Sparrows and The Child* and *The Little Drawer* were seldom juvenile dance performances in the real sense, except the court performances by children in the Tang and the Song Dynasties, which were composed to extol the achievements of the ruling class, as things far from the



reality of the life of children.

Wu Xiaobang, the pioneer of modern Chinese dance, went to Japan to find ways of economic prosperity by the persuasion of his father. but, urged by his nature and aided by dance, he turned to study the music and the dance. When he begun to teach "the new dancing art" in a silk shop on North Sichuan Road, Shanghai, he had the least idea of pioneering the road to the new dancing art of the twentieth century. He had his first "exhibition of dance compositions", a term borrowed from Japanese, totally strange to the Chinese at his time. Such an "exhibition" attracted great attention, for in this way, he was launching rebellion and challenge to the styles of the traditional Chinese dance performance.

When lecturing on the ballet in "Yucai School" founded by Tao Xingzhi, Dai Ailian saw such new Yangko performances from Yan'an as "Brother and Sister Opening up the Wasteland" and "Husband and Wife Learning to Read", and she discerned the sign of a great era of dance approaching. Immediately she returned to Qingmuguan of Chongqing, where her school was, and decided to suspend her ballet lessons there and to organize the students and some of the teachers participated in yangko performances instead. From then on, Dai Ailian, together with Ye Qianyu and others, began to collect, record and edit dance compositions of the minorities in such areas as Xikang, deep in Tibet. Thus the world-renown "Conference of Border Dances of China" was held in Chongqing, Sichuan, in 1946. This was the first time the dance cultures of the Chinese minorities had been formally presented in the theatre in the metropolis. The border dances, marginal to pubic state, had by now, become the symbols of democracy and equality in the movement of national liberation.

In the first half of the twentieth century, the dance culture of China underwent a great epoch-making revolution. Different from the entire history of ancient Chinese dance, the 50-odd years witnessed the appearance of the concepts like "compositions" an "publication", the instillation of "truth, kindness, and beauty" and there appeared the slogan of "dance for life's sake" and the sky-scraping banner of the "new dancing art". These are the great changes that we must term as "revolutions". They are world-shocking changes.

The new dancing art is not at all the elegant court dance, neither is it the slave female dance of the court. It contains inevitable borrowings from the folk dance, but it is nevertheless the origin of the contemporary theatric art, for it has depleted the functions of the folk tradition, that to show worship and sacrifice to the heaven and the earth, and that to entertain human beings themselves.

In the 50 years, with the relatively small band of dancers developed from the few precursors like Wu Xiaobang, the dance as an art and the dancer as an artist eventually succeeded in establishing themselves on the stage ofmodern China.

The history of dance of new China is the logical advancement of the aforementioned dance revolution and the historical advancement as well. Without the knowledge of the historical context where the dance of new China had originated, or failing to examine it in the entire evolution of Chinese dance, it is difficult to have an appropriate understand of the "newness" of new China.

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