Bai Shou wu Dance Tujiazu Ethnic : Development of Ethnic Dance in Context Modern China

Chen Cheng[1] and Thanyalak Mooosuwan[2*]

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[1]Faculty of Fine-Applied Arts and Cultural Science, Mahasarakham University, Maha Sarakham, Thailand
[1](E-mail: ChenCheng65012453006@gmail.com)
[*2]Faculty of Fine-Applied Arts and Cultural Science, Mahasarakham University, Maha Sarakham, Thailand
[2](E-mail: thanyalak.moo@msu.ac.th)
[*]Corresponding author

Abstract

This article qualitatively explores the development of Tujia waving dance in the context of modern Chinese culture. The article explores the origin, transmission, changes, and development of hand waving dance vertically, and studies the artistic form and dance characteristics of hand waving dance horizontally. Research shows that hand waving dance embodies the religious worship, production and life of the Tujia people, with diverse forms of expression and rich cultural connotations. As the first batch of intangible cultural heritage in China, it is a cultural treasure of the Tujia people and even the entire Chinese nation.

Key words: hand waving dance, tujia family, Chinese modern context

Introduction

The researchers mainly studied the historical origin and current development status of Tujia hand waving dance, as well as analyzed the form and status of Tujia hand waving dance in the context of modern China. Taking the Tujia ethnic group in Xiangxi, Hunan as the main research area, researchers visited the inheritors of Xiangxi Tujia's hand waving dance and the people who participated in hand waving dance performances. Based on their professional knowledge and level of participation in hand waving dance, 20 participants were purposefully selected as the sample. So as to understand the historical development status and formal status of the hand waving dance of the Tujia ethnic group in western Hunan.

As a multi-ethnic country with an ancient civilization, the development of Chinese performing arts has a long history. China is a multi-ethnic country composed of 56 ethnic groups, each with their own unique and diverse cultures. In the long process of historical development, China's ethnic minorities have formed their own unique ways of life, beliefs, character traits, etiquette and customs, local customs, festivals and celebrations, which constitute different cultural patterns and characteristics of each ethnic group. (Feng, Shuang, 2013)

As one of the ethnic minorities in China, the Tujia ethnic group has always lived on Chinese soil, experiencing thousands of years of ups and downs and changes from the period of Bazi Kingdom to the period of land reform and migration, from ancient times to modern society. The Tujia ethnic group believes in multiple gods and admires nature, totems, ancestors, and earth kings. The Tujia ethnic group is an ancient ethnic group that is skilled in singing and dancing. Dance is indispensable in the social life of the Tujia people, including ancestor worship and festival celebrations; Love, courtship, and marriage require dancing; Dancing is also necessary for welcoming and seeing off relatives and friends, as well as for gatherings and banquets. It can be said that dance is an important collective behavior in the social life of the Tujia ethnic group. They use dance to convey rich humanistic emotions and life experiences, express the complex relationships between people and nature, people and people, and people and society, and express their

inner emotional appeals. Its content is extremely rich and colorful, and its forms are also diverse. Among them, the waving dance is a typical example, which has distinct artistic characteristics of Tujia ethnic dance.

T The Tujia people refer to "hand waving dance" as "sheba ri", which is translated as "respectful dance". In the Han ethnic group, it is called "dancing hand waving". It is a long-standing ethnic culture of the Tujia people. The Tujia people in Xiangxi, Hunan are the main transmission area of hand waving dance, forming the cultural circle of the Tujia ethnic group basin. It is a cultural activity art that integrates leisure, entertainment, performance, and fitness functions. It is a "living cultural heritage" and one of the core elements of Tujia culture. (Wang Jing, 2014)

Objectives

1. To study the history and development of Bai Chua Wu Khatiphan Tu Jia dance.

2. To study and analyze the form and status of the dance of Bai, Chua, Wu, and the Tujia ethnic group. In the modern Chinese context

Due to the fact that the Tujia ethnic group has no written language, there is still no fixed conclusion on the origin and evolution of hand waving dance. There are currently four representative viewpoints: first, the theory of shamanic dance in primitive worship; second, the theory of military warfare; third, the theory of the fusion

of Ba and Shu cultures; fourth, the theory of the labor and life of the Tujia ancestors. The waving dance originated in primitive society and is a native ethnic dance. There are differences in opinions about the origin of hand waving dance, but both have certain value. Regardless of the origin, it indicates that hand waving dance has a long history of transmission. The research objective of this stage is to first understand the historical origin of the Tujia ethnic group's hand waving dance.

With the continuous development of human society, hand waving dance has added more content that reflects the life of the Tujia people, and its style and form have also diversified and extended. At this stage, research further understands the evolution and current situation of Tujia hand waving dance in the development process of fishing and hunting economy era, agricultural economy era, etc.

The Tujia ethnic group's hand waving dance has graceful and rough movements, and is a representative traditional dance activity of the Tujia ethnic group. It has a history of more than 1200 years and has been listed as the first batch of intangible cultural heritage in China. This study will continuously explore the performance forms and artistic characteristics of Tujia ethnic hand waving dance, further understand the new vitality presented by this ancient ethnic culture, and become a typical case in the study of traditional dance culture.

Methodology

1. Population and sample

The study focuses on the inheritors and performers of the hand waving dance of the Tujia ethnic group in western Hunan. We purposefully selected 20 swing dance experts and participants as samples. Intended to provide diverse insights into the historical development of the hand waving dance of the Tujia ethnic group in western Hunan

2. Research tools

The tool used in this study is a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews to collect in-depth feedback from participants; Use observation checklists during performances to document key aspects of dance and live audience; Using original archival research tools, examine historical documents and previous studies related to hand waving dance.

3. Data collection

The data was collected through two main methods: 1. Literature review method and 2. Field investigation method. By utilizing various online channels, a large number of references were collected to comprehensively and deeply understand the cultural connotation of Tujia waving dance. Researchers have conducted field investigations multiple times in the Tujia ethnic region of western Hunan, observing the daily lives of Tujia people, watching performances, experiencing and learning hand waving dance, and examining the current status of hand waving dance development.

Integrating literature collection and on-site visits to ensure a more comprehensive understanding of dance forms and their cultural meanings.

4. Data analysis

By collecting relevant data on the hand waving dance of the Tujia ethnic group in western Hunan, this study focuses on extracting historical background, evolution and development, and cultural significance related content for collection, organization and analysis. Using methods such as induction, deduction, and comprehensive analysis, this study explores the historical evolution and development status of hand waving dance.

Literature review

Study the ecological civilization development of tujia, tujia as a member of our national family, has been living in the Chinese land, from the period to return period, from ancient times to modern society, has experienced thousands of years of turbulence and changes, for the colorful Chinese culture history filled with a brush. Tujia people believe in many gods, which are manifested as nature worship, totem worship, ancestor worship, Tuking worship, etc., and witchcraft and customs are especially fierce. The introduction of Taoism, Buddhism and Christianity also has a certain influence on the belief of Tujia people. Rao yijia (2022)

It mainly studies the artistic characteristics and performance forms of tujia hand-waving dance and the basic situation of Tujia people. The hand swing is the main content of the sacrificial

activities, which is interspersed in most of the activities. In terms of scale, sacrificial object and development time, the big hand waving dance is a series of ritual activities for tujia people to worship their ancestors. Between villages, generally held is a small-scale large-scale hand swing dance, large-scale hand swing dance needs to be jointly held by the county or even the city. Tian shasha (2023)

Mainly studied the tujia family performance knowledge. Tujia people is an ancient people capable at singing and dancing. In the social life of Tujia people, dance, festivals and dancing, courtship, marriage and relatives, gathering and banquets. It can be said that dance is an important collective behavior in the social life of Tujia people. They use dance to convey rich humanistic emotions and life experience, express the complicated relationship between man and nature, man and man, and man and society, and express their inner emotional demands. Wang jing (2014)

This paper explores and analyzes the historical origin of the Tujia waving dance in western Hunan. The Tujia waving dance is a traditional sacrificial dance, which is mainly reflected in the "ancestor worship" of the Tujia gods and ancestors and the daily work and life of the Tujia people. The "ancestors" worshipped by the Tujia people are not their own ancestors, but the common ancestor of the Tujia people. He jiaying (2020)

Results

1. The History of Tujia Hand Dance

The Xiangxi Tujia ethnic group is a minority with a long history and relatively developed culture. The history of hand waving dance is closely related to the life of the Tujia ethnic group. The Tujia ethnic group does not have a religion, but they have their own beliefs and beliefs. Researchers have conducted a comprehensive exploration and analysis of the historical origins of the hand waving dance of the Tujia ethnic group in western Hunan. It has been found that there are different claims about its early origins, but it mainly revolves around the traditional sacrificial dance of the Tujia ethnic group. The dance movements mainly reflect the worship of Tujia gods and ancestors. In Tujia villages, the "Washou Hall" (Figure 1) is the core landmark building of Tujia villages. The Washou Hall not only enshrines Tujia ancestors, but also builds a Tuwang ancestral hall to worship Tuwang gods. The waving hall is usually a circular square, which is the place where the Tujia people learn and perform waving dance. (He Jiaying, (2020)



Figure 1 Waving Hands Hall
Source: Researcher2023



Figure 2 Traditional waving dance
Source: BaiduBaike

2. The Development, Transmission, and Changes of Tujia Hand waving Dance

Thousands of years have passed, and hand waving dance has evolved from a single form to various forms such as war, migration, agriculture, production, and daily life. With the rapid

development of the economy in the 21st century, the primitive forms of folk art have moved from tradition to modernity. Under various cultural influences, the characteristics of the primitive forms of hand waving dance are undergoing changes. According to investigation, there are currently four forms of hand waving dance: one is the spontaneous dance of the masses, led by dancers who love hand waving, leading local villagers to form their own groups. The second is to rely on sacrificial ceremonies and perform hand waving dances during local temple worship activities. The third is the artist teaching style, which uses activities as a carrier to teach hand waving dance by old artists. The fourth is the group collaboration style, where a group of dancers who enjoy waving their hands form a small performance team. The first two are the traditional forms of transmission of hand waving dance, which are important ways for the preservation of hand waving dance. The latter two are new forms of transmission that have emerged after changes in social life. It is precisely because of the changes in transmission forms that the artistic form of hand waving dance has undergone new changes. (Liu Nannan, 2006)



Figure 3 Modern Hand Dance
Source: BaiduBaike

3. The Status of Tujia Hand waving Dance Form

3.1 Characteristics of Hand waving Dance Style

By studying the characteristics of hand waving dance movements, including smooth turns, bent knees, tremors, and sinking, the performance style is vigorous, powerful, and free spirited. In the Tujia ethnic group's hand waving dance, "swing" is its unique rhythm, with a focus on the same hands and feet, bending knees and squatting, and sinking the body. Its style is powerful, free and heroic. Shaking hands and walking feet on the same side are also the main characteristics that distinguish Tujia hand waving dance from other dances. Due to the special geographical conditions and living environment, Tujia people in western Hunan mostly live in hilly areas with narrow and slippery mountain roads. If they walk swaggeringly, it is easy to fall off the cliff. Therefore, Tujia people

can only choose to walk horizontally. When walking, they often lean sideways, bend their knees and squat forward, forming this unique style of hand waving dance. (Xiao,Yuling.Xu,Xianfeng. Ling,Xueli, 2023)

The swing dance moves are generous and rough. According to the scale and form of the swing dance, the Tujia people divide it into two categories: small swing (Figure 4) and large swing (Figure 5). The scale of small hand waving is relatively small, organized by a village or a village, with a participation of as few as tens or even hundreds of people. Generally, most performances are mainly dedicated to worshipping ancestors of the same surname; The scale of the big swing is enormous, with over a thousand dancers and over ten thousand spectators. Mainly to worship the ancestors of the ethnic group; There are obvious differences between the big and small hands in terms of scale, sacrificial objects, timing, activity procedures, and activity content. In terms of performance form, the hand waving dance is accompanied by gongs and drums, as well as hand waving songs. The gongs and drums are placed in the center or on the side of the dance team, and the "leader" leads the way before the line. There are "demonstration performers" between the lines, and "follower performers" behind the line.



Figure 4: The author visited the Tujia area of western Hunan to shoot the small swing dance
Source: Researcher2023



Figure 5 The author visited the Tujia area of western Hunan to shoot the hand waving dance Source: Researcher 2023

3.2 Types of Hand waving Dance Actions

The majority of the movements in the hand waving dance

are based on ancestor worship and daily production labor, with a small portion inherited from the war and hunting content of the ancestors in the Maogusi dance. During my field research, I observed that whether it is a "big hand waving" or a "small hand waving", the main characteristics of the movements are: aligning with the edge, bending knees, squatting halfway, and bending over. In layman's terms, "following the edge" refers to the movement of the same hand and foot. "Bending the knee" refers to keeping the knees of the legs slightly bent during the dance process. "Half squatting" requires keeping the leg muscles tense and the knees relaxed, trembling, and sinking. "Bending over" refers to the state of the upper body not being too stiff, but rather relaxing the shoulders and slightly bending the back. The technique of swing dance is flexible, and "swing" requires the coordination of the large and small limbs of the body, which is the foundation and soul of swing dance.
(Xiao, Yuling. Xu, Xianfeng. Ling, Xueli, 2023)



Figure 6 The author learns hand-waving dance from local teachers in the Tujia nationality area of Xiangxi, Hunan Province
Source: Researcher2023

3.3 The Status of Hand Dance

Hand waving dance has a history of more than 1200 years. In order to better protect this national "treasure", the Tujia ethnic region has launched a joint application for World Heritage status. In 2006, it was listed as the first batch of intangible cultural heritage in China and used this as an opportunity to carry out practical activities such as national fitness, application for Guinness Records for 10000 people dancing together, competitions, festival performances, etc. Reasonably utilizing digital technology, combining cultural and tourism industries to create a Tujia ethnic brand culture, utilizing the dissemination effect of multimedia traffic, and bringing the intangible cultural heritage of Tujia waving dance into the public eye

Conclusion

The historical development and formal status of the Tujia ethnic group's hand waving dance performance in the context of modern China. Based on this research objective, the researchers have drawn the following conclusions.

In this study, researchers found that any research on performing arts is the result of inheritance and development. The Tujia ethnic group is a non written ethnic group, so there are different opinions about the origin time and location of the hand waving dance, and no fixed conclusion has been formed yet. Researchers have found through investigation that although there are differences in opinions, multiple surveys have shown that hand waving dance is mainly related to the ritual of traditional witchcraft activities. The Tujia people revere their ancestors and dance hand waving dance to worship and pray for blessings. The Tujia people hold sacrificial, heavenly, and ancestral ceremonies to pray for good weather and peace throughout the country. Researchers feel that the hand waving dance embodies the historical accumulation of the Tujia people's way of life.

With the continuous development of human society, hand waving dance gradually took shape in the historical process, and its formation time was around the Zhou Dynasty. The Tujia ethnic group's hand waving dance has gradually extended from a sacrificial dance to a form of production and daily labor. Through this survey and research, it was found that hand waving dance gradually added

more content reflecting the lives of the Tujia people in the era of fishing and hunting economy and agricultural economy, inheriting and developing more elements of "life and labor" in historical origins, and once again reflecting the truth that art comes from life. Up to now, there have been many changes in the transmission of hand waving dance. Dance is not only familiar to the older generation of artists in Tujia ethnic areas, but also has been created as a square dance for national fitness by the folk. With competitions as the driving force and school teaching as the carrier, more young people have the opportunity to learn, and the development of hand waving dance will have a more profound impact. As a treasure of intangible cultural heritage, the hand waving dance of the Tujia ethnic group in western Hunan occupies an important position in Chinese folk dance due to its unique ethnic artistic style, showcasing generous and rough dance forms.

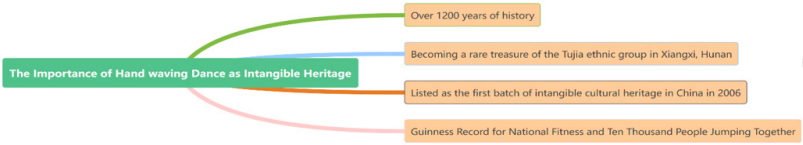


Figure 7 The Importance Framework Chart of Hand waving Dance as Intangible Cultural Heritage
Source: Researcher

Discussion

In this study, researchers found that hand waving dance is an important means for Tujia people to express emotions, convey information, and entertain themselves. They have distinct ethnic styles and local characteristics.

1. The belief and origin of Tujia waving dance

The results of this survey are consistent with previous research on the evolution of ethnic dance hand waving dance in the social context. The academic community has different opinions on the origin of hand waving dance, with one believing it originated from the theory of primitive worship and prayer; The second theory is that it originated from military warfare; Thirdly, it originated from the theory of Bayu dance; The fourth theory originated from the daily life and labor of the Tujia ancestors. Although there are different theories about the origin of the original ecological hand waving dance culture, there is a common thread that can be traced. Researchers have learned from the research subjects that the origin and development of hand waving dance culture revolve around "sacrifice" and have spread, thus forming a traditional cultural symbol of the Tujia ethnic group.

From the perspective of the four origins of ritual, military, Bayu dance, and daily labor, it is ultimately recognized as the "ritual" theory, mainly because the Tujia ethnic group is a natural religious belief based on "all things have spirits", characterized by natural worship, deity worship, and ancestor worship. Throughout

history, no matter how hand waving dance has evolved and changed, it has never been separated from the influence of primitive religious culture and has gradually become a carrier of Tujia ethnic religious beliefs and culture. The Tujia ethnic group's hand waving dance embodies people's worship of gods, which is reflected in the art of dance through various elements. In Tujia language, the meaning of "sheba" is translated as "worshiping gods and dancing", reflecting the Tujia people's belief in gods. In the minds of the Tujia people, besides heaven and earth, ancestors are the most powerful and capable deities. Therefore, the Tujia people have a very devout belief in their ancestors. In the dance movements of hand waving dance, there is a content of primitive religious beliefs.(Wang Jing , 2014)

2. The Development of Tujia Hand waving Dance

With the continuous development of human society, the swing hand dance is undergoing diversified development ideas. I will analyze and discuss it from traditional and modern development methods. The reason why the Tujia swing hand dance was initially able to be inherited and preserved is because it used traditional development methods. Most Tujia people live together and start worshiping their ancestors from the third day of the first lunar month every year after the New Year. Dancing the swing hand dance has become an activity for them to pray for blessings and eliminate disasters. It is precisely because of the specific time of worship and ancestor worship that the hand waving dance has been able to develop and preserve for more than half a century, and the Tujia

hand waving dance culture has developed in this traditional way. In modern development, square "hand waving dance" is a dance that people actively participate in physical exercise in response to the call for national fitness in the new century, and has become a popular dance among square masses. Through this method, hand waving dance continues to innovate and change the types of dance movements, adapting from traditional hand waving dance to simple and easy to learn square "hand waving dance". Hand waving dance has also developed in this way. With the implementation of national policies and the strengthening of national cultural responsibility, hand waving dance has also shone on the stage of tourism exhibitions, becoming an indispensable part of most tourist attractions in Xiangxi region.

3. The Current Status of Tujia Hand Dance

The inheritance of hand waving dance has gone through the stages of primitive ecology, adaptation, and protection and promotion, constantly integrating the cultural connotations of the times in different stages, and ultimately forming the iconic cultural form of the Tujia ethnic group. In the process of transmission, there have been many changes in the geography and form of the hand waving dance. With the continuous passage of time, the continuous improvement of people's lives, and the mutual exchange with surrounding cultures, the hand waving dance in folk activities has also gained new life. From the "traditional hand waving dance" of sacrificial labor to the "modern primitive hand waving dance" in

celebration festivals, the "stage performance hand waving dance" in tourism development (Figure 8), the "square hand waving dance" in national fitness (Figure 9), and the "operationalized hand waving dance" in education and learning (Figure 10), these are all signs of the evolution of hand waving dance to today's status quo. The Tujia ethnic group's hand waving dance is no longer just a traditional folk ritual performance. Today, the Tujia ethnic group's hand waving dance has entered a new stage of development.



Figure 8 The author performed the "Stage Exhibition Hand Dance" with local performers in the Tujia ethnic area of Xiangxi, Hunan Province

Source: Researcher 2023



Figure 9 "Square waving dance" in the Tujia ethnic area of Xiangxi, Hunan Province
Source: Researcher 2023



Figure 10 "Cao Hua Waving Hand Dance" in the Tujia Ethnic Area of Xiangxi, Hunan Province
Source: Researcher 2023

4. Hand waving dance as the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage in China

Hand waving dance is the most distinctive dance of the

Tujia ethnic group and best reflects the traditional customs of the Tujia ethnic group. On May 20, 2006, the Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture in Xiangxi, Hunan Province applied for the Tujia Hand Dance, which was approved by the State Council as one of the first national intangible cultural heritages and protected. As the first batch of intangible cultural heritage in China, the Xiangxi Tujia ethnic group's hand waving dance embodies that it is an important spiritual treasure of China. Through the study of the inheritance and protection of hand waving dance, researchers have gained more insights. By raising awareness of the protection of intangible cultural heritage, utilizing digital technology, combining cultural and tourism industries to create a Tujia ethnic brand culture, utilizing the dissemination effect of multimedia traffic, and bringing the intangible cultural heritage of Tujia hand waving dance into the public eye, the Xiangxi Tujia hand waving dance has not only been reduced to thin text and images but has also become an exhibition product. The creative generation after generation continues to continue and inherit it. (He Jiaying, 2020)

Suggestions

After qualitative analysis, the researchers proposed the following suggestions to promote the adaptation of Tujia hand waving dance to the development needs of the new era:

1. Strengthen the government management mechanism: The government should formulate special policies for the inheritance

and protection of Tujia waving dance culture, clarify the goals, tasks, and measures of cultural inheritance, encourage all sectors of society to actively participate in waving dance inheritance, and provide necessary policy support and financial guarantees.

2. Establish a sound mechanism for protecting inheritors: Inheritors are the link between maintaining and inheriting the hand waving dance. Whether it is the old artists of the village's inheritance system, the narrators of folk hand waving dance legends, the dance teachers of cultural center training classes, or the staff responsible for photography during hand waving activities, they are all inheritors of hand waving dance. Culture and skills are spread through them. Establish a guarantee mechanism for inheritors and standardize personnel management. At the same time, encourage inheritors to carry out inheritance activities, cultivate more inheritors, and improve and better protect the mechanism for inheritors of hand waving dance.

3. Promote the popularization and promotion of leading figures in hand waving dance: Systematic training courses on hand waving dance can be held in schools, communities, and other places to allow more people to understand and learn about this folk art. At the same time, media and online platforms can be used to promote the cultural connotations and artistic characteristics of Tujia waving dance, enhancing its social visibility and influence.

4. Strengthen the development of ethnic cultural industries: As a unique cultural resource, hand waving dance performers have

enormous potential for growth. The government should guide and support enterprises or individuals to develop the cultural industry of Tujia hand waving dance, such as developing related cultural and creative products, transforming the cultural value of hand waving dance into economic benefits, and promoting local development.

Informed Consent

The authors have obtained informed consent from all participants.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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