

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF DAZU STONE CARVING DANCE

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Abstract

This article aims to characterize of Dazu stone carving dance. The method of documentary research was adopted. Research results: 1) Dazu stone carving of the Tang Dynasty dance image characteristics, clothing emphasizes the artistic modeling of the line sense and visual effects, the form is fat for beauty, adopt the whole body of the red artistic image of the dance image, texture carving techniques emphasize the complex into simple. The characteristics of the dance, the large-foot “thousand-hand Guanyin” from the arm, wrist, back of the hand to the fingertips are mostly streamlined, the bend of the arm, the wrist and other joints are small, the arm is slender and soft, and the fingers are extended upward, this kind of small hand dance gestures like bending and not bending, want to be straight and curved, and the whole image gives a dignified and heavy form a sharp contrast. 2) Dazu stone carving of the five dynasties dance image characteristics, the overall shape of the dress is slightly inflexible, the form tends to use the way of hair display, the color selected black and turquoise as the main tone, the texture is small and delicate, showing the transitional characteristics of the Tang and Song dynasties. The characteristics of the dance, highlighting the expression of late eyebrows bright eyes, cherry lips, barefoot flight in a half-naked posture. Showcasing innovative design in flying form. 3) Dazu stone carving of the Song Dynasty dance image characteristics, clothing through holding flowers, playing music and other shapes to show the difference in artistic form, the shape of the graceful line to show the proportion of symmetrical body and healthy body. Colors create a spatial environment through brilliant colors and a peaceful and calm atmosphere. The texture is more complicated and fluent, with distinct national characteristics. The characteristics of the dance, from the flute woman’s body shape and expression, such as shoulders slightly buckle, chest sitting waist, center of gravity tilt, etc., you can feel the Song Dynasty court music and dance presented the style of

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“implicit and restrained, indifferent and delicate, simple and unadorned”. The characteristics of Dazu stone carving dance are not only exquisite carving skills, but also a strong sense of formal beauty and rhythm in the aspects of dance shape, posture and dress. These dance images not only provide rich material for dance creation, but also provide intuitive experience and feeling for modern people to understand the development of ancient dance art.

Keywords: Dazu stone carving; dance image; characteristics of dazu stone carving dance

1. INTRODUCTION

Dazu Stone carvings is the general name of cliff statues in Dazu District, Chongqing, China. The “five mountains” grottoes, such as Baodingshan, Beishan, Nanshan, Shimen Mountain and Shizhuan Mountain, are representative works of late Chinese grottoes art. Dazu stone carving began in the first year of Tang Yonghui (AD 650), through the late Tang Dynasty, the five Dynasties, the Northern Song, flourished in the Southern Song, continued to Ming and Qing (Guo Xiangying, 2000) It is rooted in Bashu culture, mainly with Buddhist themes, and the statue area includes many areas such as five mountains, with a large scale; after many dynasties, the integration of a variety of carving techniques, carved beautifully. After consulting the research materials of Dazu stone carving dance art, it is found that the research of Dazu stone carving dance in China started late, and the number of researchers in Dazu stone carving dance is very small. By studying the characteristics of Dazu stone dance, we can deeply understand the expression forms and characteristics of the dance in the stone carvings, and further explore and inherit the Chinese dance culture, which has important academic and artistic value. In this paper, Dazu stone carving dance statues as the research object, from the late Tang Dynasty, the five dynasties, the Song Dynasty three historical periods, respectively from the costume, shape, color, texture of four aspects of the dance characteristics.

2. OBJECTIVE

This paper analyzes the characteristics of Dazu stone carving dance

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper uses the method of literature research to analyze the dance characteristics of Dazu stone carving in the Tang Dynasty, the Five Dynasties and the Song Dynasty

1. Literature research method: This paper involves a lot of literature search, reading and combing. The contents and scope of literature collection and collation mainly focus on aesthetics, dance theory, dance history, sculpture, culture, history and so on.

2. Investigation and research method: Field investigation and data collection were carried out in the concentrated area of Dazu stone carving. Through field investigation to understand the stone carving body,

master the first-hand information, we can objectively analyze the image characteristics of Dazu stone carving dance statues.

3. Image analysis. Through the analysis of the image form reflected in the dance art symbol of Dazu stone carving, the image description and interpretation are carried out. Extract the important symbol information and analyze the image characteristics of Dazu stone carving by classifying and comparing this symbol information.

4. RESULT

This paper takes the characteristics of Dazu stone carving dance as the research object, from the late Tang Dynasty, the five dynasties, the Song Dynasty three historical periods, respectively, from the costume, shape, color, texture of four aspects of the dance image characteristics

1. Dazu stone carving of the late Tang dance image characteristics

1.1 Clothing

In the late Tang Dynasty, social aesthetics tended to be more simple and elegant clothing, emphasizing the sense of line and visual effects of artistic modeling. In the costume gestures of art works of this period, most of the shapes were hand-held flower plates or winding plasters, which conveyed the religious beliefs of the social culture at that time through such detailed gestures, and combined with the scattered flowers and the Qiang flute and Buddha's sound, showed the scene of common sorrow between heaven and man (Li Fangyin, 2006,)

1.2 Form

The artistic image of the flying sky in the late Tang Dynasty was based on the change of Nirvana sutra, strengthened the bodhi connotation, and showed the real form of social life through thin and peaceful figures. Through the head held high in the flying shape, the real confidence in people's life is expressed, and the image of holding a necklace and flower tray shows people's expectations for a better social life. The legs in the flying shape are lifted back, which can show the flying spirit and convey the sense of free and elegant, and the gravitas in the expression can also conform to the social aesthetic and custom of the late Tang Dynasty to a certain extent.

1.3 Color

Most of the artistic statues adopt the artistic image of the whole body gilding red, so that the concept of foreign gods and Buddhas contains the beauty of human nature, showing a certain central color, which is in line with the diversified development trend of society, religion and humanities and art in the late Tang Dynasty.

1.4 Texture

In the artistic stone statues in the area, it can be found that most of the stone sculpture techniques emphasize the simplification of complexity, highlighting the fluent texture of artistic modeling, so that the garment folds of the lower body of the statue are gently hung in front of the table, which is very characteristic of the late Tang Dynasty (Zhu Xianchen, 2019).

2. Dazu stone carved dance image characteristics of the five dynasties

2.1 Clothing

When comparing the stone statues of the Five Dynasties with those of the Tang Dynasty, it is found that the former is relatively low in vividness, although it has abundant exterior decoration, but the overall shape is slightly stiff. In Dazu stone carvings in the late Tang Dynasty, the flying sky plays the harp and the flying sky plays the Konghou, both of which have relatively full dress performance, the body with the necklace and bracelet, wearing a long dress, every move of the posture is extremely elegant.

2.2 Form

Most of the two-body flying shapes tend to be displayed in the way of hair, highlighting the late eyebrows and bright eyes, cherry lips, and flying barefoot in a semi-shirtless posture. The statues of the five dynasties will show the feet in the shape of the flying sky, showing the innovative design in the flying sky form.

2.3 Color

Most stone sculptures choose black and turquoise as the main colors, combined with a certain amount of white, yellow and red to provide humanized auxiliary colors.

2.4 Texture

The texture of clothing in the artistic statues tends to be prosperous and gorgeous, while the overall statues are small and delicate, showing the transitional characteristics of the Tang and Song dynasties (Duan Xumei, 2004,)

3. Dazu stone carving Song Dynasty dance image characteristics

3.1 Clothing

There are flying statues on the top of most of the grottoes of the Song Dynasty, which show the differences of artistic forms through holding flowers and playing music. The two flying statues on the north side of the east slope of Dazu Stone Carving are more perfect, showing delicacy and full spirit in the shape of a beaded crown. The upper body is naked and wears a necklace and a treasure bracelet. One flying goddess holds a flower dish and the other plays the Konghou (Chen Yancheng, 2014,)

3.2 Form

In the early years of the Song Dynasty, many artists began to pay attention to the sense of line, through beautiful lines to show a symmetrical body proportion and healthy body. Compared with the flying image in the Tang Dynasty, the overall momentum of the artistic statues in the Song Dynasty was relatively weakened, and the flying posture was vivid and realistic, which reflected the social life at that time through the modeling of real life (Li Fangyin, 2006)

3.3 Color

Due to the differences in the theme expressed in the stone carvings, the grottoes dominated by Buddhas and bodhisattvas shaped the main body in a gilt way, combined with the five main colors to assist, and created a space environment through brilliant colors and a peaceful and calm atmosphere.

3.4 Texture

The texture of stone carving is more complicated and fluent, with distinct national characteristics (Wang Tian-xiang, 2009)

4. Comparative analysis

Table 1

Comparison of the Characteristics of Different Periods in the Dance of Dazu Stone Carvings

	clothes	patterns	colors	textures
Late Tang dynasty	Plain and elegant clothing stresses the sense of lines of artistic profiling and visual effect.	The image of flying apsaras is based on Nirvana Jingbian to enhance the implication of Bodhi. The thin and plain character image is used to show the real condition of social life. Heads being held high in the pattern of flying apsaras is used to express the realness and self-confidence of common people in daily life.	Adopt the art image with gilding redness of the whole body.	Turn the complex into simplicity to highlight the fluent quality of the art forms.
The Five Dynasties	Have enriched explicit decoration, but the whole profiling has a little sense of stiffness.	Most of double-body flying apsaras is manifested by using the form of headband, highlighting eyebrows and bright eyes, cherry-style coccinea and flying with bare feet in the form of half-naked upper body. The manifestation of the feet is innovative.	The colors, including black and turquoise, are used as the main hues, combing certain colors, such as white, yellow and red to be the supplementary colors of humanization.	The textures of the clothes tend to be bustling and gorgeous. The whole profiling is exquisite and miniature in order to manifest the transitional color from Tang to Song dynasty.

Song Dynasty	The image of flying apsaras shows the differences of art forms through bridal bouquet and playing music.	The beautiful lines are used to show well-balanced physical proportion and healthy build.	The gilding manner is used to shape the main body, supplemented by five pure colors to create a space environment through glorious and brilliant and peaceful and quiet atmosphere.	The texture of rock carvings is multifarious and fluent with highlighted national flavor.
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Source: Author

A comparative examination of the dancing images from the late Tang Dynasty, the Five Dynasties, and the Song Dynasty reveals a gradual departure from religious themes in the selection of subjects, stylistic renderings, thematic demonstrations, and more. These images, increasingly intertwined with quotidian elements, provide a comprehensive reflection of the evolving status of women, living conditions, and the development of dance across these periods, illuminating the aesthetic sensibilities of the era. Moreover, the distinctive characteristics of the period, including women’s physical forms, postural changes, and clothing attributes, bear significant markers of secular aesthetics. Originating from divine representations, the dancing figures of the Dazu Rock Carvings evolve to encompass all aspects of human life, presenting a detailed tableau of existence. From the ethical code to attire and adornment, body language and expression, these images embody the fusion of Confucianism with Buddhism, the transformation of original Buddhist concepts, and the integration of China’s distinctive cultural heritage. This synthesis profoundly manifests humanistic ethics, legal and ceremonial constraints, and other intellectual traditions, nurturing an elevated sense of thought and sentiment and a harmonious aesthetic perspective.

5. DISCUSSIONS

This paper studies the characteristics of Dazu stone carving dance. Combined with the current situation of Dazu stone carving dance, four suggestions are put forward for the future innovation of Dazu stone carving dance from four dimensions of vision, hearing, theme expression and value connotation:

(1) Attention should be paid to the visual form of dance. The flying sky images in Dazu stone carvings contain vitality and break through the Buddhist images of God of heaven and God of Heaven and song in vision. It should be regarded as a dance language with unique meanings and flexibly applied to the creation of dance works in Dazu stone carvings to add visual effects to the stage (Chen Yafang, 2020,).

(2) Attention should be paid to the auditory form of dance. In addition to the basic performance and singing, the soundtrack related to Dazu stone carving dance works should also add the “speaking” part, and can also incorporate air singing instruments, string instruments and percussion instruments, so as to enhance the

narrative of the overall stage performance and enhance the hierarchy and richness of the works (Wang Haitao, Wang Jing & Gao Yidan, 2013,).

(3) Attention should be paid to the theme of the dance and the narrative of the text. Dazu stone carvings, especially those in BaodingDafowan, have strong logic, integrity and narrative. When designing related dance art works, innovative ideas can be constantly developed, and the image of flying dance can be set as a separate aesthetic unit or integrated into a grand story.

(4) Attention should be paid to the cultural implication of dance. Dazu stone carving art relies on the carrier form of Buddhist grotto temples to present a variety of realistic and fairyland imagined scenes, which not only reflects the social and political power struggles in different periods, but also shows the social pursuit and worship of religious belief in the Tang and Song Dynasties. These elements can be fully applied in the creation and editing of Dazu stone carving dance art works. It shows the remarkable characteristics of “deification of human figure” in Chinese stone carvings and the far-reaching image of Buddhist culture (Chen Y F., 2020)

6. RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implication of the Study

1. Various figures in Dazu stone carvings provide rich materials for dance creation. By imitating the movements of different characters and combining dance techniques and rhythms, the dancers present the images in the stone carvings in the form of dance, making the audience feel the harmonious coexistence of man and nature.

2. The colors and lines of Dazu stone carvings also provide inspiration for the stage design. With the stone carving as the background, the dancers used different costumes and props, combined with the design of stage lighting, and integrated the color and line of the stone carving into the dance, making the dance more artistic and ornamental.

2. Recommendations for Future Research

1. Based on maintaining the traditional characteristics of Dazu stone carving dance, we can try to combine modern elements for innovation. Through the combination of tradition and modernity, Dazu stone carving dance can maintain the original charm and at the same time have more contemporary sense and modern aesthetic value.

2. Dazu Stone Carving dance is unique in its rich movements and techniques. Future research should focus on the analysis of its movement characteristics, dance structure and expression techniques, sum up its unique artistic style and skills, and provide guidance for the inheritance and development of dance.

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