

A Brief Analysis on the Intensity Application of Sword Dance in Chinese Classical Dance

Yanchi Zhou¹

¹ School of Music and Performing Arts, Mianyang Teachers' College, Mianyang, Sichuan 621000, China

ABSTRACT

Sword dance in Chinese classical dance has a long history and is a unique cultural phenomenon and symbol in China. It has left the imprint of national culture and is deeply engraved in the long history of national culture, which cannot be erased. The dance form, rhythmic features, force application and comprehensive elements of Chinese sword dance constitute the structural features of Chinese classical dance. It integrates the essence of Chinese traditional martial arts, thus refining the dance art with aesthetic features and appreciation functions. Since its birth, after thousands of years of inheritance, evolution, exploration, and innovation, it has adopted a trend of embracing all kinds of rivers and adding rich elements and content, and has achieved unprecedented development in modern times, adding new fun to dance art in the new situation.

Keywords: *Classical dance, Sword dance, Intensity, Force, Foundation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Chinese sword culture has a long history, dating back thousands of years. As a weapon, the sword has played a glorious role in the long river of history. Through long-term practice, practicing martial arts and swordsmanship has become a custom deeply integrated into the culture of this nation. Throughout the process, with the development and dissemination of ancient sword dance, a myriad of sword techniques were forged. Swordsmen use sword dance as an art form to express their inner emotions and thoughts¹. The sword has forged the soul of martial arts and dance, and it is also the combination of the two that has become the highest form of Chinese civilization. With the development of the times, in contemporary times, the function of swords as weapons has been deconstructed and become the object of research in dance art. The fields of martial arts, dance, and opera continue to absorb and develop sword culture, and swords are applied to the field of dance. Sword dance, as an art form, has begun to shine brightly, giving rise to numerous schools and playing its unique functions. The

characteristics of sword dance are free and unrestrained, a combination of hardness and softness, and graceful and agile, leaving an aesthetic imprint on ancient Chinese art and culture.

2. THE INTENSITY APPLICATION IN CHINESE SWORD DANCE

2.1 *The Intensity Application in Sword Dance Through "Body Movement"*

The aesthetic purpose of traditional Chinese art is to pursue balance and unity. Aesthetic orientation, as a manifestation of aesthetic standards, is a cognitive activity tendency with a certain period of time². The body movement determines the direction of swordsmanship. Therefore, in the study of the connection between body movement and swordsmanship, swordsmanship and body movement are the prerequisites. Body movement plays a decisive role in sword dance, coordinating the body movements of the whole body and playing a core function throughout the entire sword dance process. The power point of the body technique in sword dance is at the waist, which is called the base;

1. Yue Ling, On the Characteristics and Functions of the Classical Dance Technique of "Jump Flip" [D]. Joint Comparison Database of College Students' Theses, 2017(06):5.

2. Tan Luping, Talking about the Characteristics of "Romantic Charm" in Classical Chinese Dance [D]. Joint Comparison Database of College Students' Theses, 2017(06): 3.

Hands and feet are the tips; The hips serve as the base of the legs. During the sword dance, the waist is used as the point of force for the sword, and the force from the waist is transmitted to the shoulders. The force from the shoulders reaches the wrist, and the combined force of these forces passes through the sword body and directly reaches the tip of the sword. This is the entire process of applying force in sword dance. Overall, force comes from waist, and is used on shoulder and wrist. This is the process of sword dance training: "generate force at the root, apply force at the tip". The force in sword dance runs through the whole body, extending the force emitted by every part of the body to the extreme, which conforms to the form of sword light, sword blade, and movement. The strength of body techniques in sword dance enriches the expressive power of dance movements, endowing sword dance with a continuous flow of power and making its forms rich and colorful.

2.2 The Intensity Application in Sword Dance Through "Swordsmanship"

Generally speaking, body movements are used to coordinate swordsmanship, and the power of body movements comes from footwork. The process of applying force in sword dance is to first master the method of holding the sword and basic movements such as grasping the sword. These movements are the basic factors for the accuracy of sword force application and the foundation for the correct use of sword force. The strength of swordsmanship in sword dance is mainly reflected in finger movements, wrists, and elbows. Therefore, the correct swordsmanship determines the accuracy of swordsmanship and the effective application of force.

Swordsmanship emphasizes the effectiveness, continuity, and completeness of force during sword dance. During the dance, dancers should grasp the feeling of holding a sword in their heart, and make the swordsmanship walk in a balance of hardness and softness, like flowing clouds and water. The sword is an infinite extension of the arm's power, so the use of force must reach its limit, and the body must be used to drive the swordsmanship, so as to practice the swordsmanship to a perfect level. The intensity of swordsmanship runs through the entire sword dance process and is related to the artistic and stage practical effects of swordsmanship. Therefore, in the process of swordsmanship, it is necessary to grasp the steps and processes of drawing, moving, and converging the sword,

strictly grasp the focus and strength of each process, and use the power of swordsmanship properly, which can achieve good artistic effects and effectively reflect the basic elements of rhythm, intonation, and balance of hardness and softness.

2.3 The Intensity Application in Sword Dance Through "Footwork"

The application of strength in Chinese sword dance is more reflected in factors such as body and sword techniques, as well as different footwork. The strength of footwork in sword dance is reflected in waist and leg skills, and like body techniques, the strength of footwork in dance performance is reflected in gentleness and strength.

Chinese classical dance is symbolized by the "circle", and its footwork always deviates from the trajectory of the "circle" and runs on this trajectory. The important reason for the smooth and graceful movements in Chinese sword dance is the footwork. In the sword dance that is like flowing clouds and water, the flowing footwork is called "round field". The perfect footwork is accompanied by the coordinated strength of the whole body, and it is necessary to follow the strength of the upper body to show the exquisite footwork. The footwork of Chinese classical dance conforms to the traditional aesthetic artistic realm of China, and the coordination and coordination of footwork and upper body form a beautiful artistic aesthetic form of "big circle covering small circle"³. In the process of the interplay and alternation of gait forces, a lingering artistic scene is formed. The sword dance footwork forms many "circular" characteristics in the aesthetic construction of force, namely arcs, circular lines, and circular arcs. These flowing movements leave a wonderful feeling of infinite imagination and give the concept of dance space, which plays an indispensable role in the conception and shaping of force.

2.4 The Intensity Application in Sword Dance Through "Wrist"

The wrist is one of the main parts of swordsmanship, and it is required to have a swinging wrist, a hooking wrist, and a cloud turning wrist. The hooking wrist is divided into an outer hook and an inner hook; Cloud wrist rotation includes outward rotation and inward rotation. The elbow should be loose and straight, tight and

3. Kong Lin, The Beauty of Artistic Conception in Tong Ruirui's Dance Works [J]. Modern Music, 2015(02): 23-25.

straight. Controlling the strength of the wrist to coordinate the movements of sword dance is a necessary step in successfully shaping sword dance, and mastering wrist control is an element that other dances do not possess.

The sword represents the extension of arm power, and the so-called "sword-body unity" is like that. The most important aspect of being able to flexibly and freely apply swordsmanship is the grasp and adjustment of the force on the wrist. The correctness of swordsmanship depends on the force on the wrist, and the force exerted during the extension and contraction of the entire arm is the prerequisite for the wrist to operate flexibly and freely. When gripping, attention should be paid to the combination of elasticity and tightness in the palm of the hand. If the grip is too tight, the action may appear stiff, while if it is too loose, the force may not effectively extend to the tip of the sword. Of course, in the process of sword dance, the application of wrist strength needs to be combined with body movements and footwork, coordinated and consistent, in order to fully unleash the skills and abilities of sword dance.

3. THE INTENSITY APPLICATION OF SWORD IN WORKS

3.1 The Intensity Application of the Combination of Rigidity and Flexibility in Works

The characteristic of sword dance is not masculine, but a state of blending hardness and softness to achieve a state of harmony. The beauty of sword dance lies in the alternation of rigidity and softness, which indicates that the transformation of swordsmanship presents various forms, easy to attack but difficult to defend. So in sword dance, it is necessary to balance strength and softness, and coordinate reasonably in order to showcase a wonderful and unparalleled sword dance⁴.

In the sword dance work "Yue Nv Ling Feng", the dancers follow the rhythm of the music, grasp the key points, and use their body movements to perfectly match the music. The rhythm is accurate, combining rigidity and softness, giving people a shocking feeling. Emphasis is placed on the linear flow of force from the inside out, in an orderly and harmonious manner, reflecting the trend of sword

dance's rhythm and sustained movements. The graceful charm and profound meaning are the highest forms of expression in Chinese sword dance. The focus of expressing meaning lies in the perfect presentation of strength, which is the lifeblood and soul of sword dance. Dancers express the profound and long-lasting classical spirit with concrete and perceptible aura and intensity, and embody the spiritual heritage of the Chinese nation through the human body image of turning stone into gold. This is the artistic expression of Chinese sword dance.

3.2 The Embodiment of the Intensity Application of Both Spirit and Form in Works

Sword dance is an artistic processing and transformation based on classical dance, fully reflecting the aesthetic concept of unity between man and nature, the combination of spirit and form, and the unity of man and sword. The exploration of the combination of spirit and form in sword dance is particularly important, as it reflects the cultural temperament and spiritual connotation of sword dance. The "form" mainly refers to the external manifestation of sword dance. The dance moves of sword dance are colorful and diverse, with various movements echoing each other and existing in diverse forms of exchange, unified in change. The external expression standard of sword dance is "form". "Spirit" is mainly the internal expression of sword dance and the soul of sword dance⁵. The use of both divine and physical strength can express the inner essence and spiritual style of sword dance.

The slow section of the work "Yue Nv Ling Feng" showcases the dancers' use of swordsmanship and the coordination of body movements and breathing, concentrating their energy and using swords to convey emotions, demonstrating the fluidity of sword dance. Outside, the body is the main body, and movement restrains the whole body; Internally, the emphasis is on meaning and substance, and the combination of meaning and substance forms. The manifestation of the "spirit" in Chinese classical dance is fully demonstrated in sword dance. The momentum of the sword, combined with the assistance of the sword's qi and momentum during the sword dance, is enough to showcase the aesthetic foundation of the vigorous spirit. The perfect unity of human

4. Guo Lu, A Brief Analysis of Modern Dance Elements in Chinese Classical Dance Vocabulary [J]. Modern Music, 2015(02): 9.

5. Gao Nixue, Analyzing the aesthetic characteristics of Chinese classical dance through the dance "Dian Jiang Chun" [D]. Joint Comparison Database of College Students' Theses, 2017(06): 6.

sword dance lies in the process of sword dance. In the works of sword dance, the expression of human spirit and expression, and the expression of the unity of sword and man momentum, and the expression and manifestation of charm in sword dance make Chinese sword dance emit a brilliant light. The phenomenon of conveying spirit through form reflects the relationship between spirit and form.

3.3 The Intensity Application of Hand, Eyes, Body, Movements and Steps in Works

Hand, eyes, body, movements, and steps are the five laws in sword dance. Hand refers to the hand movements during sword dance; Eyes refer to the expression and demeanor during sword dance; Body refers to the body route and body movements during sword dance; Movements refer to the regulations of the above-mentioned arts; Steps refer to various forms of marching in sword dance. The combination of the five forms of sword dance, namely "hand, eyes, body, movements, and steps", is called the "five laws" and is the basic art form of sword dance.

In the work "Yue Nv Ling Feng", the dancer uses the sword as an extension of the arm, achieving eye to hand movements and a smooth body throughout the entire dance. With their solid dance skills, they express the characteristics of sword dance, such as rich dance emotions and long-lasting meanings. During the process of using the sword, the continuous and smooth body movements and footwork form a whole, completing the entire sword dance form through the coordinated development of "hand eye body movements". Dancers express the sharpness of swordsmanship and the beauty of dance posture and form through a rhythm of urgency and orderliness.

3.4 The Intensity Application of Handsomeness, Softness, Robustness, and Straightforwardness in Works

In the process of sword dance, there is a basic rule of "dragon shape tiger steps, swimming dragon and playing phoenix", and dragon shape refers to body movements; Tiger steps refer to batch step method; swimming dragon refers to swordsmanship; playing phoenix refers to the wrist. The characteristics of sword dance are: handsomeness, softness, robustness, and straightforwardness. Through the strength of handsomeness, softness,

robustness, and straightforwardness, the coordination and consistency of hand, eyes, body, movements and steps are demonstrated. This is how the artistic conception of sword dance is formed, laying the foundation for its aesthetic features. In the fast-paced part of the work "Yue Nv Ling Feng", the dancers use various sword flowers and dance movements to coordinate their movements. When wielding the sword, they move quickly and accurately, cleanly and without dragging their feet. Combined with the softness of their body rhythm, the combination of "handsome and soft, robust and straightforward" is consistent. The awe inspiring power and captivating stance embodied in Chinese sword dance are different from other sequences. The intensity of sword dance can be vividly displayed, perfectly reflecting the awe inspiring stance and artistic effect of sword dance.

The perfect unity of human sword dance lies in the process of sword dance. In the works of sword dance, the expression of human spirit and expression, and the expression of the unity of sword and man momentum, and the expression and manifestation of charm in sword dance make Chinese sword dance shine brightly.

4. CONCLUSION

Chinese sword dance has a long history and cultural origins, and is a symbol of national culture. Its cultural connotation and ideological foundation are profound, vast and boundless, emitting a brilliant light. The swordsmanship of rigidity, flexibility, relaxation, and ease constitute the unique rhythm of sword dance, with both stillness and movement. There is rhythm in movement, momentum in stillness, and a combination of internal and external elements, achieving a state of unity of form and spirit. Chinese classical dance, in modern times, is not confined to tradition and is based on traditional cultural heritage, constantly innovating. This is also the need for the development of the times and aesthetic development. The exploration of sword dance intensity is a symbol of inheriting ancient Chinese civilization and has significant meaning and value. Chinese sword dance is based on traditional culture and constantly innovates, adding new content along the path of innovation, changing different colors, injecting new vitality, keeping pace with the needs of the times, and also catering to the development needs of sword dance art. While studying traditional cultural arts, sword dance is a sequence that is the main thread of traditional culture and a

necessary research topic for the sustainable development of Chinese classical dance.

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