

The Dissemination and Inheritance of Chama Dance in Inner Mongolia

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Abstracts

Since the introduction of Tibetan Buddhism into Mongolian areas, its religious dance "Qiangmu" has gradually spread to the monasteries in Mongolian areas, and integrated with Mongolian culture, after hundreds of years of inheritance and development, the formation of a distinctive Mongolian characteristics of the "Chama" dance. This research aims to study the spread of "Chama" dance and analyze the changes and development of "Chama" dance inheritance. From the perspective of cultural anthropology, this paper sorts out and analyzes the origin and transmission forms of Chama dance in Mongolian areas, and further explains the development and evolution of Chama dance in the process of inheritance. The research methodology was qualitative research which adopt the field work research method to collected the data.

The research findings were through the study, it was found that (1) the inclusiveness of the Chama Dance enabled it to spread widely in Inner Mongolia. (2) The support of successive governments has provided objective conditions for the spread of the Chama Dance. (3) Under the change of time and society, the inheritance of contemporary Chama is being re-tuned and reconstructed.

Keywords: The Dissemination and Inheritance; Chama Dance; Inner Mongolia

Introduction

"Chama" is the Mongolian phonetic translation of the Tibetan Buddhist dance "Qiangmu", the original meaning of "Qiangmu" in Tibetan language is "dance", which in the later period refers to the temple "King Kong exorcism god dance", "King Kong God dance" and "Dharma protection God dance", etc. Its religious purpose is to promote the Dharma and doctrine, and to deter all internal and external evil obstacles to achieve the purpose of praying for the elimination of disasters and universal beings. In the 8th century, Master Padmasambhava created the Tibetan Buddhist dance "Chama" based on the Indian Mahayana Tantra "Vajra dance" as a model, and absorbed the animal-like mask dance and folk inspiration of the Tibetan Bon religion. Its characteristics are first to exorcise ghosts and reward God, auspicious religious celebration ceremony and dance; Second, monks dressed as gods and wearing various masks danced with the accompaniment of instruments such as gongs, drums and cymbals (Deloge, 1998).

Since then, with the development of Tibetan Buddhism, it has spread to Inner Mongolia, Beijing, Shanxi and other places. "Chama" dance in Inner Mongolia is formed on the basis of "Qiangmu" which gradually absorbs and integrates the traditional sacrificial dances and folk music and dances of the Mongolian nationality. It has the characteristics of Mongolian culture

¹Received: November 11 2023; Revised: November 29 2023; Accepted: November 30 2023

and is a Tibetan Buddhist dance that integrates the religious arts and cultures of the Mongolian and Tibetan nationalities (Song, 1976).

Research Objectives

1. Study the spread of "Chama" dance.
2. Analyze the changes and development of "Chama" dance inheritance.

Research Methodology

Population and Sample

This paper mainly studies the formation, development and inheritance of "Chama" dance in Inner Mongolia. The investigators of this article need to know the history of "Chama" dance, people directly involved in the "Chama" heritage. Therefore, this paper will use the interview method to investigate the "Chama" inheritors, officials of the government cultural department, and lamas in temples. Details are as follows:

Jia Shangqin, national "Chama" inheritor. In 1985, he began to learn "Chama" dance, and carried out the sorting and research of "Chama" dance, collecting and sorting out a large number of first-hand materials of "Chama" dance. From 2005 to 2022, he participated in the "Chama" Dance inheritance work organized by the cultural department of the government for 17 years.

Chang Weihua, deputy director of the Alxa Left Banner Cultural Center and head of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section. It has organized and held many "Chama" performances, "Chama" inheritance training courses, intangible cultural heritage and tourism integration activities.

Awang Sejje, Lama, Ordos Skunger temple the person in charge, He began to learn "Chama" at the age of 16, and participated in the Junghar calling "Chama" dance ritual performance every year. And taught the "Chama" dance in Junghar. He is very knowledgeable about the ritual flow of the "Chama" dance and the meaning of the role.

Research tools

The three participants used a semi-structured interview format of 1 to 1. The main contents of the interview are: History of "Chama" dance; Manifestations of "Chama" dance; The performance content of "Chama" dance; The way "Chama" dance is passed down in the modern era.

On July 7, 2022, the author conducted an interview with Mr. Jia Shangqin, the national Chama inheritor. The main contents of the interview include: the history of Chama dance, the development of Chama dance in Inner Mongolia, and the way of inheritance of Chama dance in the intangible heritage field.

On July 9, 2022, the author conducted an interview with Chang Weihua, deputy director of Alxa Cultural Center. The main contents of the interview include: the form of Chama inheritance carried out by the cultural department of the government; The inheritance of Chama in cultural tourism.

On September 20, 2022, the author conducted an interview with Lama Awang Sejje, the head of the Junghar Call, about the holding time of the Chama dance, the form and content of the Chama dance, and the way in which the Chama dance is passed down in the temple field.

Research Conceptual Framework

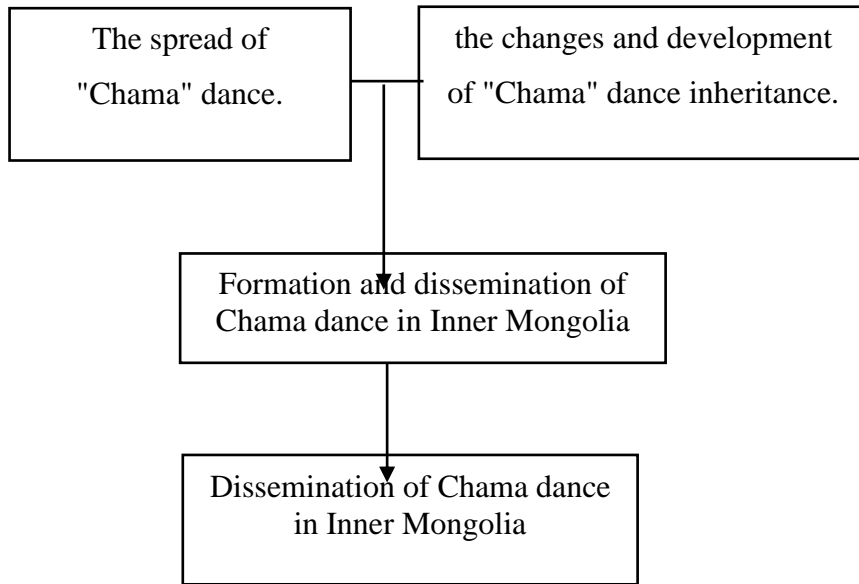


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Research Findings

Formation and dissemination of Chama dance in Inner Mongolia

The formation of Chama dance in Inner Mongolia can be traced back to the 13th century, and it flourished during the Qing Dynasty. Almost all the influential temples in Inner Mongolia have Chama dance performances. Chama dance is integrated with Mongolian culture and has its own characteristics, becoming part of Mongolian culture.

Formation of Chama dance in Inner Mongolia

In the middle and late 13th century, with the strong support of Kublai Khan, Tibetan Buddhism began to spread into Mongolia, and "Qiangmu" then spread to monasteries in Mongolia. In 1260 AD, after Kublai Khan was appointed as the Great Khan of Mongolia, he conferred the title of "National Master" on Yu Yin, the fifth generation patriarch of Sayingpai in Tibet, and appointed him as the general governor of Buddhism affairs in the world. In 1267, Kublai Khan officially moved the capital of Dadu (today's Beijing) to Inner Mongolia and Daxing Buddhist Temples in Beijing, and held a grand Dharma conference, which enabled the rapid spread of Tibetan Buddhism in Inner Mongolia. According to the Yuan History · Rites and Music Records, During the Yuan Dynasty, there was a "saying team" dance, "Saying" means explaining the principles and methods of chanting sutras. Among the dancers were monks with hats and robes, At the same time, "Ensemble Golden character Sephan Sutra", In the dance team, there are statues of Hachivajra Bodhisattvas, Manjusri Buddha statue, Universal Bodhisattva image and The Buddha statue, People danced and marched (Lian, 1967). This is probably the earliest spread of Chama in the temples of Inner Mongolia. The above

records indicate that Qiangmu should have spread to the Mongolian monasteries in Beijing, Inner Mongolia and other places in the 13th century.

During the Qing Dynasty (1636-1912), The rulers strongly encouraged and advocated Tibetan Buddhism, and Chama was able to prosper and develop, precisely because the Qing Dynasty emperors and Tibetan Buddhist monks attached great importance to and vigorously cultivated. Translated Manchu Archives of Lama Temple as mentioned in Qianlong specially selected monks from Tibet who were proficient in dancing chama and had profound knowledge, and used them to vigorously train talents of Han, Mongolian and Tibetan Buddhism, so that they could learn Chama (Zhao, 2016). When these Mongolian lamas learned the Dharma and Chama dances in the Lama Temple, they returned to their respective monasteries to teach and promote the Dharma.

At the same time, the Mongolian lamas had gone to Tibet, Qinghai and other Tibetan Buddhist Gelug monasteries to learn Chama dance, and thus played a certain role in promoting the development of Chama dance in Mongolian Buddhist temples. In an interview with Mr. Jia Shangqin, the national Chama intangible cultural heritage inheritor, the author talked about the development of Chama in Mongolia. He said, "Chama in Bayannur [a city in western Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region]. For this reason, the Living Buddha of Thambazasen went to Tibet to observe, and the venue of the Tibetan monastery Chama performance was blocked by a slow curtain. The living Buddha Thambazasen saw the Chama steps only in the gaps, so he incorporated some upper body movements from Mongolian folk dances into the Chama and created his own regional Chama. "The living Buddha of Alxa, Luo Sang Thu Teng Gacso, went to Tibet and Beijing to study for three years, and after coming back, he combined the Mongolian dance of Alxa to create the Chama performance form that the people of Alxa can accept and love". Mongolian lamas played an important role in the development of Chama in Mongolia. Recorded in the Annals of Chinese Dance · Inner Mongolia Volume "Alxa Guangzong Temple I Gegen Awang Dorji, During the ten years from 1764 to 1778, he took advantage of the opportunity to go to Tibet, Qinghai, Beijing, Xi 'an, and Wutai Mountain to seek scripture and study the Fa, and devoted himself to the study of the artistic forms in various Buddhist ceremonies. After returning, on the basis of learning from others and absorbing the nutrients of Mongolian song and dance art, he began to carefully prepare and repeatedly practice the Chama of the temple. After years of hard work, this religious art with regional characteristics finally came out in 1778. Later, through the enrichment and improvement of the generation of lama artists in the inheritance, it has become a well-known ritual form integrating faith and entertainment, which is preserved and handed down." Subsequently, other monasteries in Alxa also learned from and imitated the Chama dance of Guangzong Temple to improve the content and form of the monastery ritual. It is not difficult for us to find that Chama in Inner Mongolia is not simply directly copying and transplanting Tibetan Qiangmu, but integrating it with the dance art of the Mongolian people to produce a religious dance with Mongolian characteristics.

Dissemination of Chama dance in Inner Mongolia

The wide spread of Chama in Inner Mongolia could not be separated from the strong support of the Qing government at that time. The Qing government formulated a series of preferential policies to encourage Mongolian nobles and civilians to become lamas, and the Qing Court conferred the titles of "National Master", "Zen Master" and living Buddha on the upper lamas, who were all appointed by Tibetans and Mongols and enjoyed the same political and economic privileges as Mongolian princes . All lamas are exempt from military service,

taxes, etc., and can lead a good life without taking part in labor; These preferential policies attracted many Mongolian teenagers to become lamas, and as long as there were two brothers in a family, one would become a monk and escape the exploitation and oppression of the princes and nobles. In addition, the Qing government began to build a large number of monasteries, including Wudang Temple, Kundurun Temple, Wuta Temple, Xiao Temple, Usu Tu Temple, Lamas Cave Temple and so on. In the Ordos area built Junge Temple, Yike Temple and so on. Eventually developed into (today's Hohhot City) with "seven calls, eight small calls, seventy-two exempted from the name of the temple" called city, the temple is magnificent, comparable to the Buddhist country. According to the History of Lamaism in Inner Mongolia, there were more than 1,800 temples in Inner Mongolia in the middle of the Qing Dynasty (Qianlong and Jiaqing years), and more than 1,600 temples in the late Qing Dynasty. More than 150,000 lamas (Deloge,1998).

From the number of these temples and monks, it is not difficult to see the Qing government's support for Tibetan Buddhism at that time, and the prosperity of Tibetan Buddhism created beneficial objective conditions for the spread and development of Chama dance.

In addition, numerous temple activities also provide space for the spread of Chama. According to records: "In the Qianlong, Jiaqing and Daoguang dynasties of the Qing Dynasty, from Beijing to Kulun in Outer Mongolia, all lama temples performed Chama dance. At that time, there were two popular sayings in Beijing: "For 360 days a year, ghosts are fought every day." "In the first half of the year, from the Central throne Hall to Kullen, and in the second half, from Kullen to the Central Throne Hall" (Wei, 1985). In the first half of the year, from the Chinese New Year in Beijing after jumping Chama, along Beijing through the eastern part of Inner Mongolia, to outer Mongolia Kulun, there will be a place to jump "Chama" every day, to the lunar June 30, the second half of the year from Kulun to outer Mongolia, through Inner Mongolia, and then from Zhangjiakou along the way to Beijing, To Chinese New Year's Day in the Imperial Palace to dance chama. That is to say, 365 days a year, there must be a place where the "chama" is being danced. With more than 1,800 temples in Inner Mongolia, plus Buddhist temples in Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu, Beijing, Chengde, Wutai Mountain, and Northeast China, one can imagine the prosperity of the Qing Dynasty.

Inheritance and development of Chama dance

If Chama is a combination of religious ritual and art, Chama is more religious and ceremonial before the 1980s, but since the country's first census of ethnic and folk dance art in the 1980s, this ancient religious ritual has been explicitly defined as "ethnic and folk art".

Inheritance and development of Chama dance in temple field

As an important ritual part of Tibetan Buddhist ritual activities, Chama dance has been attached great importance by various monasteries. Each temple will hold a Chama performance of different sizes according to its own situation. With the development of The Times, the aging of lamas, the shortage of young lamas, and the shortage of funds have forced many temples to stop the Chama performance, but the Chama dance in some temples has become an important local folk culture activity. For example, Chama of Dazhao Temple in Hohhot and Chama of Junge Temple are very famous.

The Chama dance of Hohhot Dazhao is held on the fifteenth day of the first month of the Chinese lunar calendar. Chama dance in front of the main hall on the square performance, the whole process is divided into sunning Buddha, around the temple, Chama performance, sending Ba Ling four parts. According to the lama, the Chama dance is a dance to praise Buddha and pray for blessings, and there are many believers and tourists who come to pray for blessings and offer incense on the day of drying Buddha, which can also make the Chama dance seen by more people and pass it on.

The Chama dance is performed at the annual cultural tourism festival in the city. The Chama dance will be performed for two days, the first day of the performance is in the square, the second day of the performance is divided into the palace of the Chama, the square of the Chama, the Ba Ling three parts. In Inner Mongolia, only some of the temples in the Ordos area still inherit and retain the Chama dance in the hall, while other temples do not perform the Chama dance in the hall. There are 40-50 lamas participating in the Chama dance of Jungge temple, and due to the shortage of lamas in the temple, lamas from other nearby temples will be invited to perform together. According to Lama Awang Shejer, there are too few young lamas nowadays, and many lamas who can do Chama are too old to do it.

Many factors, such as The Times and social development, make the inheritance and development of Chama dance face uncertainties. If there are few old monks in the temple who fully master the Chama dance, or there is a lack of full-time research, teaching and rehearsal personnel, the inheritance and development of the temple Chama dance face challenges.

Inheritance and development of Chama dance under intangible cultural heritage

With the development of the protection of China's intangible cultural heritage, Chama dance has been defined as a "national folk art", and there is a good trend of re-excavation, protection and inheritance.

The Guangzong Temple in Alashan Left Banner, Inner Mongolia, held a large-scale Chama dance from 1778 to 1960. With the development of The Times, the lamas are aging year by year, the number of young lamas is decreasing, the monasteries are limited in financial resources and many other factors, the original Chama dance is facing the situation of loss. Therefore, in order to inherit and protect this traditional religious art, Alxa Left Banner Cultural Center, Alxa Left Banner Wulan Shepherd ride Art worker A large number of relevant materials were collected and sorted out, costumes, masks and Musical Instruments were made, and Wulan Shepherd ride dancers were organized to learn Chama dance systematically from Chama inheritors, and to show Chama dance to the masses through traditional festivals and stages. Since 2005, Alxa Left Banner government departments, cultural center, Wulan Shepherd ride actively applied for the "intangible cultural heritage" project. Alxa Left Banner Wulan Shepherd ride invited old lamas in Alxa who are familiar with the process of Chama ceremony, the order of Chama roles, Chama dance movements, costumes, accessories, masks, music and other aspects to participate in the recording of the complete Chama dance ceremony. He published a book called Alashan Chama. "We brought in the old lamas from the Quang Zong Temple and the Miao Hua Temple to sit together and discuss and study, and came up with a consensus on the whole process of the ceremony, the number of Chama appearances, the order of the gods' appearances, the musical arrangements, the costumes and accessories, and the mask making, and then as a standardized and standardized procedure, so that the Chama can retain its original appearance." In 2006, Chama became an intangible cultural heritage of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, and in 2008, Alashan Chama became a national

intangible cultural heritage. In 2012, Dalji (who has passed away) of Alashan Left Banner was named the national Chama Inheritor, and in 2018, Jia Shangqin of Alashan Left Banner was named the national Chama inheritor.

In addition, Alashan Left Banner has established the Chama Museum and the Chama Heritage Base centered on the protection and development of Chama. On April 20, 2018, the Religious Affairs Bureau of Azuoqi and the Cultural Center of Azuoqi jointly held the "First Chama Inheritance Training Class in Alashan", which was taught by Jia Shangqin, a national Chama inheritor, and Tao Yilin Puqin, a lama from Guangdzong Temple. The teaching content included the religious connotation of Chama, the steps of Chama, and dance movements. The trainees were 36 lamas from 9 monasteries in Alxa, and the training period was 20 days. The purpose of this workshop is to gather young lamas from various temples in Alxa to systematically learn Chama dance, so that Alxa Chama dance can continue to be inherited and developed. According to the deputy director of the Alxa Cultural Center, this form of training has been held four times so far. This also shows the interaction and mutual assistance between the local government, the people and the monasteries in the inheritance and protection of "Chama".

Discussion

Culture is a world of ideographic symbols, which are very easy to spread in different systems. From the perspective of cultural change, any culture is experiencing the process of occurrence, development, decline and regeneration to varying degrees, which is a universal phenomenon. Chama dance, from its emergence to its final formation as a religious dance art with Mongolian cultural characteristics, has been widely accepted by people after hundreds of years (Zhao, 2016). The main reasons are as follows: The first is its inclusiveness. After Chama dance was spread to Inner Mongolia, it continuously absorbed Mongolian culture, enriched its own cultural connotation, and deeply rooted in the soil of local culture. Secondly, in the process of dissemination, it actively integrates with the Mongolian and Han cultures and conforms to the psychological needs of other nationalities. In addition, it has been widely recognized by the rulers of various dynasties, and constantly strives for opportunities for its own dissemination and development, creating favorable objective conditions (Chang, 2022).

In the development of society, the inheritance and development of Chama dance has undergone great changes and development, such as from being danced and taught only by lamas to being performed and taught by laity in non-religious fields. The inheritance of Chama dance in temples faces many difficulties, but from the perspective of culture and tourism, (Jia, 2022). Chama dance can attract more tourists to appreciate and understand Mongolian culture and Mongolian temple culture. Looking at the inheritance and development of Chama from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage, the power of the government, inheritors and temples has re-adapted and reconstructed the traditional Chama dance, making the ancient Chama dance develop into a cultural performance with local cultural characteristics and national artistic characteristics, reflecting the inheritance and protection in line with The Times. In the changing social environment, the inheritance of Chama is jointly controlled and completed by different government cultural departments, dance choreographers, different performers, different local cultural elites and different viewers. These visible and invisible hands form a huge force and constantly reconstruct it.

Recommendation

1. Practical Recommendations

The suggestion for practical research were conduct surveys and interviews to gain a deeper understanding of audience perceptions and preferences regarding Lei Theatre. Analyze demographic trends, cultural influences, and the impact of education on shaping audience attitudes towards traditional performing arts. Assess the long-term impact of preservation efforts initiated by Lei Theatre troupes, such as script documentation, training programs, and cultural exchange initiatives. Measure the success of these endeavors in ensuring the transmission of Lei Theatre to future generations. Investigate the impact of digital technology on Lei Theatre, exploring how the use of virtual platforms, social media, and online streaming influences audience reach and engagement. Assess the effectiveness of digital initiatives in attracting younger audiences and preserving Lei Theatre's relevance in the digital age.

2. Recommendation for future research

The future research might investigate regional variations within Lei Theatre by conducting comparative studies across different areas where this traditional art form is practiced. Explore how local influences, dialects, and cultural nuances shape the distinct expressions of Lei Theatre, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of its diversity. Explore the dynamics of knowledge transmission within Lei Theatre, focusing on the intergenerational transfer of skills, stories, and performance techniques. Investigate the effectiveness of traditional apprenticeships and mentorship programs, as well as the challenges faced in passing down Lei Theatre expertise to younger generations. Examine how globalization influences the operations and identity of Lei Theatre troupes. Investigate the impact of international collaborations, exposure to global audiences, and the incorporation of global themes into Lei Theatre performances. Assess how these interactions contribute to the evolution or preservation of Lei Theatre's traditional elements.

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