

Humanistic Interpretation on the Impacts of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" on Music and Dance in Longnan

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Keywords: "the North Tea-Horse Ancient Road", music and dance, cultural routes, unity in diversity

Abstract: To a great extent, the dissemination, exchanging and development of the Chinese civilization and the world civilization are achieved on the basis of the "road". The "road" does not only have the function of transportation, but also provides the material basis of communication for residents live in different areas. The road enables people to communicate with each other about their spiritual worlds such as their thoughts, concepts and behaviors. Therefore, the "road" has specific vitality and historical functions.

1. Introduction

Like the "Silk Road", the "Tea-Horse Ancient Road" is a poetic and imaginative name given by six scholars in Yunnan Province in the early 1990s, after they investigated several trade routes in southwestern China. With the main purpose of "Tea-Horse Mutual Market", these routes have been opened since the Han Dynasty. In recent years, with the advancement of China's "the Belt and Road" initiative, the historical status and the practical significance of the "Tea-Horse Ancient Road" has become increasingly prominent. The geographical definition of the "Tea-Horse Ancient Road" has been extended from the original concept of "Southwest China" to "areas include Yunnan, Tibet and Sichuan, and further extend to Gansu, Qinghai and other provinces." In June 2010, the "Pu'er Consensus" was reached at the "Pu'er Forum on Cultural Heritage Protection: Heritage Protection of the Tea-Horse Ancient Road" co-sponsored by the National Cultural Heritage Administration and the People's Government of Yunnan Province. At present, academia generally believes that the complete "Tea-Horse Ancient Road" consists of three main routes: the Yunnan-Tibet Road, the Sichuan-Tibet Road, and the Sichuan-Shaanxi-Gansu-Qinghai-Tibet Road. The third road can also be called the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road", which is not strictly composed of one or several routes. It is actually a "network" composed of innumerable paths. The most important one is the path starts from Chengdu to Mianyang (Zizhou), then passes through Pingwu, Wenxian (Yinping), Wudu (Jiezhou), Tianshui, Lintao, Linxia, Xining and finally reaches the Tibetan region.

2. The Geographical Scope, the Historical Basis, the Ethnic Composition and the Cultural Characteristics of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" Longnan Section

2.1 The geographical scope and the historical basis of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" Longnan Section

Longnan is located in the southeast of Gansu Province; it is situated in the Qinling-Daba Mountains, and is one of the birthplaces of Qin culture. Geographically speaking, Longnan is situated in the triangle area bordering "Gansu, Sichuan and Shaanxi". It is the only way which must be passed from the Central Plains to Sichuan Province, and from the northeast of Sichuan Province to the Tibet. Wenxian County (formerly called as Yinping) and Kangxian County in this area are not only tea producing areas, but also main tea consuming areas in South China. In history, Longnan was close to or located in several areas controlled by minority regimes, such as the Tubo and Chouchi states. Therefore, ethnic exchanges here were frequent. There are two ancient tea-horse roads in Longnan. First is the path starts from Chengdu, then passes through Mianyang,

Pingwu, Wenxian County, Wudu and Zhouqu, and finally reaches the Tibetan Area. This line basically coincides with the "Yinping Route" of Shu (another name of Sichuan Province) Roads. The second path starts from Chengdu, then passes Hanzhong, Kangxian County, Wudu, Tianshui, Lanzhou and Qinghai, and finally reaches the Tibetan Region. Because of factors about the geographic location and ancient geopolitics, these two roads became the main "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" in Longnan section. In 2009, in the third National Archaeological Survey, antiquarians found a monument inscribed with words "Tea Horse Traffickers' Shortcut" on the site of Wangguan Tea Horse Road Relic in Kangxian County. According to the investigation of cultural relic experts, the broken monument was a "notice" written by the court after the ninth year of the Reign of Emperor Hongwu in the Ming Dynasty (1376 A.D.), informing tea and horse traders along the way that they should be inspected before being released. This is also the first time that we unearthed cultural relics named "Tea Horse" in China. Together with ancient documents, other surface cultural relics and unearthed cultural relics, it proved that Longnan area was an important node of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road".

2.2 The ethnic composition and cultural characteristics of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" Longnan Section

Historically, Longnan section of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" was the residence of ethnic minorities such as Qiang, Di and Tibet for generations. During the Eastern Jin Dynasty and the Southern and Northern Dynasties, five Hu Nationality regimes, namely Chouchi, Dangchang, Wudu, Wuxing and Yinping, were successively established in Longnan. They were historically known as the "Five States of Longnan". In its peak days, the "Chouchi State" established by the Di people controlled today's Tianshui, Longnan and most of the areas of southern Shaanxi. Now there are also some ethnic groups living in Longnan, such as Han, Hui and Tibet.

Because it is located in the triangle of Long, Qin and Shu, Longnan culture is characterized by pluralism and regionalism. In the north, Xihe, Lixian County and Chengxian County are close to Tianshui, the birthplace of Qinlong culture. (Lixian County is one of the sources of Qinlong culture). These areas are deeply influenced by the mixed farming and animal husbandry culture with the features of "steady and solid" as well as "forward-looking and open" in Qinlong culture. In the south, the Wenxian County, Kangxian County and other places are more influenced by the "beautiful and romantic" Bashu Culture. On the other hand, Longnan has been in the Qiang-Tibetan cultural circle for a long time; the influences of Tibetan culture and Qiang culture are also very obvious. In the northwest of Longnan, there is a vestige of Di and Qiang, while in Wudu and Dangchang, the Tibetan culture and Han culture have shown a high degree of "Merge and Adaptation".

3. Description of Main Music and Dance Cultures in Longnan and the Comparison of their Relations with Music and Dance Cultures in Peripheral Areas

3.1 Introduction to the classification principles and types of music and dance cultures in Longnan

Xi-fan Yang once divided music and dance into belief music and dance as well as folk music and dance according to their different functions; belief music and dance can be further divided into witchcraft music and dance as well as religious music and dance. According to the common characteristics of music and dance types, music and dance in Longnan can also be roughly divided into two categories: religious ritual function and folk activities. Due to the diversity of beliefs and the influences of population, economy and other factors, in Longnan, the only religious music and dance can only be carried out by folk religious personages (such as Duan Gong) in sacrifices and witchcraft activities outside monasteries. In addition, the "custom music and dance" is very common in Longnan folk activities. The "custom music and dance" is a kind of "music and dance closely related to the collective self-entertainment activities in daily life and festivals". It has the general characteristics of music and dance, and has the distinctive feature of the "unity of watching and performing". In the field, that scene can often be found: some audiences of the music and dance

participate in the performance at a certain time. A typical dance performance is the so called "round dance" of the Baima Tibetan people in Wenxian County. This kind of music and dance breaks the separation of "acting" and "watching" which is often used in modern performing arts, and increases the participation and equity in communication. Another type of music and dance, the "etiquette music and dance" is very common in remote towns of Longnan. "Etiquette music and dance" is the "music and dance related to specific etiquette ceremony and folk activities to a certain extent". Longnan "etiquette music and dance" evolved from the "religious music and dance", so it still retains some traces of the "witchcraft music and dance", which is very obvious in the "Zou Yin" ceremony before the opening of the "High Mountain Opera" in Wudu.

3.2 Comparison of music and dance in Longnan and in peripheral areas

Longnan is located in the triangle of Gansu, Shaanxi and Sichuan. The influences of Qinlong culture, Bashu culture and even some Qiang-Tibetan culture are very obvious in Longnan culture. From the perspective of cultural geography, Longnan is not only the northern end of the influence of Bashu culture, but also the south boundary of the influence of Qinlong culture. It is also the eastern part of the area influenced by Qiang-Tibet culture. If the influence scopes of these cultures are regarded as concentric circles, the intersection point of their outer layers will be Longnan culture. In the north of Longnan, the regions of Wudu, Chengxian County, Huixian County, as well as north and central parts of Kangxian County are near Tianshui and Hanzhong. The "Shehuo" is very popular in these places. "Shehuo" is a part of the traditional culture of the Han nationality which originates from sacrificial activities in ancient China. It is a traditional celebration Carnival celebrating the Spring Festival among the Han people. Shehuo is a large-scale performance of group participation, which integrates singing, dancing, speaking and juggling. Its hidden connotation of prayer, celebration and entertainment is very similar to the ancient acrobatics. Shehuo show in Longnan is rich in contents and diverse in forms. In addition to the "Shehuo" performed in the daytime, some countryside areas in Wudu, Kangxian County and Chengxian County also have the widely spread tradition of "lamp Shehuo" performed at night. The "lamp Shehuo" usually begins on the third or fourth day and ends in the sixteenth day of the first month of the lunar year. Compared with the entertaining "Shehuo" performed in the daytime, there is a set of strict etiquette to complete the "lamp Shehuo" procedure so as to show the respect for "gods". On the first night, villagers need to hold the "lamp out" ceremony in temples near the village and then perform in different villages. This "lamp Shehuo" performance is not common in the northern areas where "Shehuo" spread; it is even more difficult to see in Bashu. But the same form of performance can be found in Longdong, the center of Qinlong culture. That phenomenon reminds people of the hypothesis of "concentric circles" of Qinlong culture. On the other hand, in the south of Kangxian County, Yangba, Wenxian and Dangchang, which are close to Sichuan, Shehuo performances are not common, but music and dance with Qiang and Tibetan cultural factors are very popular. The national level intangible heritage project Nuo Dance in Wenxian County, the city-county level intangible heritage projects Gong, Drum and Grass as well as the Meiyuan God Dance in Kangxian, as well as the Qiang Nuo dance in Dangchang are all influenced by music and dance in Bashu and Tibetan. It is worth mentioning that, the popular sheepskin drum dance in above-mentioned areas is very similar to the popular sheepskin drum "performance" in Beichuan, Maoxian and other Qiang areas in terms of utensils, dance forms, costumes and even the sound manipulated by Duan Gong in the process of "performance".

4. The Impacts of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" on the Formation of Longnan Music and Dance Cultures

4.1 The migration of people and the frequent exchange of materials in the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" are the external factors for the emergence of regional music and dance cultures in Longnan

The "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" originated in the Han Dynasty, and gradually grew into a

large scale in Tang Dynasty. Then it reached maturity in the Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties. During this period, it has experienced thousands of years. The long-term process, the multi-ethnic personnel exchanges and the multi-dimensional and omni-directional cultural and trade exchanges have promoted the music and dance arts in all regions along the line as well as all nationalities live in these places to maintain regional features and keep common characteristics. These characteristics are embodied in the spirit of integration, inclusiveness and openness. According to John W. Berry's Acculturation Theory, individuals in cultural adaptation attach importance not only to maintaining the traditional culture, but also to daily communication with other groups. He calls the process as "merger and integration". The "road" is the condition for integration to happen. From a historical point of view, "road" is the most important factor in human cultural exchanges. It is the link that undertakes the relationship between the two sides and the material basis for the maintenance and interaction of the relationship between the two sides. One of the key reasons for the deep link between Longnan music and dance cultures and surrounding music and dance cultures is the existence of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road". Longnan section of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" guarantees the exchange and dissemination of materials, personnel, even ideas, customs and concepts among people living in Longnan and even more distant places like Yunnan, Guizhou, Qinghai, Tibet and Xinjiang. In fields, the author found the written "singing book" about music and dance culture which is popular in Longnan; it is closely related to the "singing book" in Zhaotong, Yunnan in terms of style and story content. Is it possible that the "singing book" in Longnan is a local variation of the "singing book" in Zhaotong or Yibin, Sichuan; the most possible route of its spread is the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road". Therefore, due to the existence of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road", it is possible for people of different nationalities and in different regions along the line to communicate with each other, thus enriching and developing the contents and forms of Longnan music and dance cultures.

4.2 The consciousness of sharing with different regions and nationalities along the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" is the internal motive force for the formation of music and dances in Longnan

Chinese culture has always been open, equal and sharing-oriented. The personality genes of Chinese culture, which are neither exclusive nor conservative, originate from the unique understanding and practice of "benevolence" and "the concept of equality." Mencius has the sentences of "benevolent people love others" and "everyone can be ancient sages Yao and Shun". The idea of "consistency of all things" contained in these ideas can guarantee us to develop towards the direction of the "harmony of the whole world" in the ultimate ideal society of Confucianism. The basic values of Buddhism, which was introduced into China hundreds of years after the Mencius, also reflect the concept of "equality of all living beings". "Confucianism" and "Buddhism" which influence the Chinese spiritual activities are highly compatible in the concept of "equality", thus creating the realm of "all rivers run into sea" in Chinese culture. This "equality" concept may come from the ancient philosophy of "animism". Even today, many nationalities of the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" still believe in the idea that "all things have spirits". For example, the "Twelve Phases of Nuo Dance" in Longnan Wenxian County is a kind of belief music and dance worships all things. With the concept of "equality" as the basic value judgment, the occurrence of sharing behaviors is the inevitable result of "a canal is formed when water comes". The material exchanges on the "North Tea-Horse Ancient Road" are not only driven by human desire. Like the "Shehuo" in many places of Longnan, in addition to performing locally, it is also performed in different villages, townships and even neighboring counties. This kind of behavior cannot be simply regarded as "boasting"; it is out of the deeper psychology or "subconscious" of sharing. Generally speaking, Longnan music and dance cannot be regarded as an independent form of music and dance. It is the product of the exchanges and integration of music and dance cultures around this area. It is the result of people's desire to share along this line. It begins with material exchanges, but its source is the social demand of people's spiritual pursuit for "sharing". The North Tea-Horse Ancient Road objectively provides opportunities for people from different regions to see, to appreciate, to

communicate and to learn from each other, which brings the "road" with colorful cultural meanings.

5. Conclusion

On the one hand, Weinan is adjacent to Sichuan, and the ancient Shudao Road is connected to the sales outlets of the teas in the south through the Jiange. On the other hand, the military horses and official horses of the Central Plains are from the western minority areas and the western regions. It was obtained through the Silk Road. This made the area of Minnan and Tianshui in the middle of the Silk Road and the northern end of Qinhuangdao become the center of tea and horse reciprocity before the Ming Dynasty. The Tea Horse Road has played a significant role in promoting the national and folk music of the North and South.

Acknowledgement

This paper is one of the outcomes of the research, Research on Music Cultural Relics along the Northern Route of the "Tea-Horse Ancient Road" (the Sichuan-Gansu Section), which is supported by the Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences Research Planning Projects of the Ministry of Education (General Projects) of 2016 (Project No.: 16YJA760041). It is also one of the achievements of the project, The Influence of Bashu Culture on the Aesthetic Characteristics of Sichuan Folk Songs (of Han Nationality), which is supported by the Foundation of the Research Center for Aesthetics and Aesthetic Education of Sichuan Province (Project No.:16Y00), and one of the fruits of the research, Study on the Inheritance Modes of Qiang and Tibetan Songs and Dances from the Perspective of "Double Musical Senses", which is supported by the Foundation for School-level Projects of Sichuan University of Culture and Arts (Project No.: CWYB201509).

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