



# On the Inheritance and Development of She Nationality Dance

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## Abstract

The She nationality dance has a long history, condensed from the work and life of the She people, and embodies the sincere and simple spirit of the She people. However, in the later stage, it was severely impacted by the modern market economy and culture, and the development of She ethnic dance culture fell into an awkward situation and even was on the verge of extinction. At present, the expansion of ethnic culture is progressing steadily, and the inheritance and development of the She ethnic dance culture is also in urgent need of further implementation, so as to do a good job in the modern planning of traditional culture.

## Subject Areas

Art

## Keywords

She Dance, Inheritance, Development, Measures

## 1. Existing Types of She Dance

Dance evolved from people's daily behavior. She ethnic dance, on the other hand, has been formed by the ethnic minority She people for thousands of years through sacrificial activities and the artistic refinement of their daily lives. Therefore, the dance of the She ethnic group has the characteristics of being mysterious and intense, yet not lacking in clarity, novelty, and brightness. Due to historical migration and other reasons, She ethnic dance is mostly distributed in Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangxi and other regions.

### 1) Religious Dance

Due to the closed area of the She ethnic group in its early settlement, its sacrificial culture is mostly manifested as single totem worship. Due to the mixed

residence of the She ethnic group and the Han nationality in the northern migration, influenced by the Han culture, the belief of the She ethnic group gradually became secular. Therefore, since the Tang Dynasty, the people of the She ethnic group have had the custom of offering sacrifices to the popular god Panhu. She people either hold models of the red sun and white moon to celebrate the creation of Pangu, or hold dragon horns, bells, knives, and knives to sing and dance in unison. The dance style is flexible and varied while maintaining stability and solemnity. (Figure 1)

## 2) Folk Dance

The She ethnic group has lived in Fujian, Guangdong, and Zhejiang since the first and second centuries BC. People develop evolutionary labor during hunting and farming, and gradually use artistic creation to form dance steps. The most representative one is the hunting dance. Based on the lamenting and resenting, the pitching and stepping dance movements, with a conch hunting knife in hand, as well as running, jumping, transposing, and lunging forward, demonstrate the vitality of chasing wild animals and the simple and humorous life of the She people. In addition, the wedding dance, derived from the wedding ceremony of the She ethnic group in Xiapu, and the bell and knife dance, derived from the witch dance used to pray for rain and warding off evil spirits, have also made the She ethnic group dance more diverse. (Figure 2)

## 3) Sports Dance

The living environment of the She ethnic group is rich in bamboo forests, vegetation, and rugged terrain. Daily production activities require the She ethnic group to be physically strong. Therefore, people began to use local materials and labor tools for entertainment and fitness, combining entertainment and athletics, sports and dance. For example, holding a bamboo pole and firewood knife in hand to jump and turn over in the music, chasing around and throwing bamboo



**Figure 1.** Quoted from Fujian Expressway: Telling beautiful rural stories and taking the road to wealth in mountain areas.



**Figure 2.** Cited from the dance “She Ethnic Wedding” on Southeast Network.

strips in a circle to hit the size, pedaling on a wooden board to glide with action modeling of the racehorse, and children riding the lantern humming and dancing the front Qi lantern, and so on. (Figure 3)

#### 4) Art Dance

During the New China era, with the introduction of the policy of “letting a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend”, many literary and artistic workers have devoted themselves to the exploration of the dance art of the She ethnic group, organically combining the uniqueness of the She ethnic group’s living customs with the new spirit of the era, and creating a large number of excellent works. For example, a series of works such as “Harvest Joy”, which reflects the simple and pure love established by women and men of the She ethnic group through hard work, and “Morning Song”, “White Fungus Blossom”, which reflects the sincere emotions and beautiful life style of the She ethnic group, have once reached the peak of prosperity in She ethnic dance. (Figure 4)

## 2. The Current Situation of She Nationality Dance

### 1) Living Space Constrained

Based on the continuous advancement of social modernization, the She ethnic culture, which was already limited due to the turmoil of war, has been influenced by modern festival culture. Traditional festival folk activities have been reduced, and the She ethnic dance, which originated from customs, has been strongly impacted. The cultural and folk significance originally endowed with it has dissipated over time, and during the Cultural Revolution, it was even faced with disintegration. At the same time, the folk customs are weakening, because the Marxist historical materialism advocated by the new society of China emphasizes atheism, which is contrary to the sacrificial gods of the origin of the She dance,



**Figure 3.** Cited from the bamboo pole dance of the Civic Zongju.



**Figure 4.** Cited from the 2017 National Art Foundation funded project “Spring in She-shan” premiere and expert discussion held by Jinhua News.

the religious dance of the She nationality was once banned because of feudal superstition. Later, in the process of social development, many factors such as weak local support, small scale of national culture, and weak ability to spread influence have made the living space of She dance smaller and smaller.

## 2) Changes in Aesthetic Taste

The design of She ethnic dance movements originated from the production and daily labor of the people at that time, and with the promotion of urbanization at this stage, production labor has shifted from simple tool farming to me-

chanized operation, from single pursuit and hunting to high-precision breeding. The huge changes in methods and methods have first caused people to have difficulty understanding the emotions expressed by physical movements such as jumping and hunting in the mountains, The weakening of emotional resonance with ethnic culture and the attraction of foreign new media and online culture have led to a gradual decline in people's attention to She culture today. [1]

### **3) Loss of Folk Artists**

In the past, the performance, presentation, and training arrangements of She dance were spontaneously organized by the She people. With the continuous integration and differentiation of the ethnic groups, the number of inheritors of She dance with a high artistic level has decreased, and dancers in the new era are not interested in learning traditional She dance. Under the circumstances of the loss of original artists and the lack of subsequent new forces, there is almost no successor to the She nationality's dance heritage, and there is no successor to the development of the She nationality's dance. [2]

### **4) Degradation of Performance Quality**

The traditional folk dance performers of the She ethnic group are mostly farmers and amateur teams, with a small proportion of professional folk opera troupes performing. The increasing survival pressure associated with the evolution of modernization has forced more and more young people to choose to work outside the home. The She nationality dance team has encountered problems such as a large age gap in performing groups and a lack of core talents. At the same time, the value orientation of the market economy has led to the commercialization of She nationality performances, and dancers lack a deep understanding of them, only dancing for survival, leading to the shift of She nationality dances from pearls to fish eyes in the evolution of the times. This extinction of high-level art is gradually attracting attention from all parties and seeking solutions.

## **3. The Inheritance and Development Measures of She Nationality Dance**

### **1) Establishing a Protection Mechanism for Inheritors of Dance Culture**

As a non-material culture, the inheritance and development of dance mainly rely on living people. At a time of sharp decline in the number of She ethnic folk dance artists, the top priority is to protect the existing She ethnic dance inheritors. It is necessary for the national government to allocate funds to support cultural inheritors to explore their past exquisite skills and develop new dances in the future, as a strong backing for folk dancers to have a high passion and enjoyment for the dance performance of the She ethnic group.

### **2) Strengthening the Folk Dance Culture of She Nationality on Campus**

As the best means of communication, various departments should consider how to integrate ethnic culture with education. In today's "elegant art entering the campus" gradually hot, strengthening the She ethnic folk dance culture into the campus can be regarded as a good means of promotion. For example, works

such as “She Mountain Spring” and “She Niang” created by the School of Music of Zhejiang Normal University have won the Lotus Award, and their performances in universities have caused more and more students to pay attention to the dance culture of the She ethnic group, and have used them to radiate publicity to families and even larger social groups.

### **3) Increasing the Publicity and Dissemination of She Nationality Dance New Media**

Nowadays, with the rapid development of the internet and the endless emergence of new media, people are increasingly relying on Internet channels to obtain information. Although this development trend hinders the dissemination of traditional culture to some extent, it also provides new propaganda ideas. We can focus on amplifying the characteristics of She ethnic costumes and dances, shoot videos from small incisions, publish them to various new media platforms, and promote them in a form that is popular with the public.

### **4) Developing She Nationality Dance as a Service for Reality**

Dance art should not be limited to appreciation, it is closely related to local production, life, ideology, etc. Therefore, when studying and protecting the She dance culture, we need to explore more of the social service value that She dance can bring, and highlight the maximum value of intangible cultural heritage through tourism and service industries.

## **4. Conclusion**

She ethnic dance, due to its profound cultural and artistic value, retains its unique cultural charm even under the impact of time. Therefore, under the environmental call for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, local governments and folk teams have been making efforts to inherit and develop She ethnic dance. Under the continuous progress and development of society, this work should also keep up with the times. Therefore, this article innovatively proposes to combine with contemporary new media technology, leverage the power of campus education dissemination, and provide new ideas and contributions for the inheritance and development of She ethnic dance.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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