A New Vision of Korean Dance Through a Comparative Study of Korean Dance and Modern Dance History

Sun-Ah Kim

Lee

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Abstract
In this dissertation, I conduct a comparative study of Korean and Modern dance history while examining new ways to incorporate the traditional forms of Korean dance with a contemporary dance aesthetic. It is important to know the old in order to create the new contemporary Korean dance. Through this examination, I want to find a new voice for contemporary Korean choreographers. Koreans many kinds of dance's roots and backgrounds are from the religions in agriculture life. Korean dancing was the rule of prehistoric ancestors offered sacrifices to gods. Through Ko-Chosun, Three tribes, Three Kingdom, Koguroy, Chosun dynasty, Korea dance has breathed for 5000 years in Korea. Korea has a number of different traditional dances. Korean dance is divided into folk dance and shaman dance. Korea has tried to preserve the Korean traditional dance. Korean dance was started with religious beliefs. Korean dance was performed for heaven by worship for the country. There existed the reverence for gods and natures in the ancient society. Korean dance values the natures of the universe and their movements are also from them. Korean dance is a distinctive way of human movement. Korean dance developed their awareness of rhythm, joyful experience involving emotion and a body. Korean dance was a tradition, socialization and ethnic expression of communication. In the world, almost every country has its unique cultural dance. The techniques and themes of Korean dances were developed for religious dances: the Confucianism, the Shamanism and Buddhism. Korean dance was usually performed in the banquets being held at the royal court or
at a ceremony for a peaceful country and village. The Korean dance was performed on the street or at a house. Dancers and people danced together. They can be close to each other. They shared their feeling though dancing together. They could join and enjoy the ceremonies. They could have everlasting exhilaration with the beauty of dance. Korean folk dances were performed in numerous places. Korean folk dance existed with people. There are a lot more emotional and personal improvisations in Korean folk dance. Korean folk dances were also choreographed for people’s lives, villages, royal persons, prosperity for country and worship. Mask dance dramas originated from Buddhism and exorcism. They were performed by the common people. They always expressed the common people’s sarcasm against an aristocratic class. Korean dance could encounter and breathe with people. Korean dance didn’t have boundaries between performers and audiences. In these days, traditional Korean dance became a form of performance in the theatre. We had to watch dance in the darkness. Dance became a way of expressing human thought. After the liberation from Japan’s occupation, the elements of Korean folk dance in theatre were affected by western theatre forms. Korean dance was developed as a theatre art. The government of South Korea has officially preserved the Korean culture. It is called, ‘Important Intangible Cultural Properties’ (Jungyo Muhyeong Munhwajae in Korean) since 1964. There are 119 Important Intangible Cultural Properties: architectures, music, cotton cloth weavings, games, province songs, military march with play the music instruments, paintings, craft, shaman exorcism-Gut, Taekkyeon martial art, furniture, rites, quiltings, sculptures, ceramics, and dances. Dance includes Nong-Ak (farm dance), Saluri (shaman dance), Taepyung Mu (dances of Peace), Ganggang sullare, Kum-Mu (Jin-ju sword dance), Jung-jae (Confusian dance) and all kinds of mask dances. They have all been preserved. Korean dance uses more shoulder, arm, hands and heels with very little leg movements. Accordingly, they have significantly affected the historical development of Korean dance. Their efforts for the preservation of Korean dance have established their cultural inheritance.

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**First Advisor**
Predock-Linnell, Jennifer

**First Committee Member (Chair)**
Newhall, Mary Anne Santos

**Second Committee Member**
Reche, Vladimir Conde

**Third Committee Member**
Bedrick, Edward

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The nun’s dance, symbolizing the Korean traditional concept of harmony between heaven and earth, encompasses the full range of sentiments innate in human beings. Indeed, the study of dance history can help us see how movement both reflects and shapes important questions within many cultures about identity, the making of community, aesthetic beauty, the physical training of bodies, economic productivity, and the distribution of power within social groups. Moving History / Dancing Cultures. Twenty years into a critical rethinking of canons, dance historians and dance history teachers are still debating the political implications of what and how they teach.