

THAI STANDARD CIRCLE DANCE SONG FOR TEACHING CHINESE STUDENTS

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Abstract

Dance means the art of body gesture performance which is something that humans have created with exquisite beauty entertain. This kind of art requires instrumental music and vocals. Dance is part of the fine arts which consists of painting, architecture, literature, music, and dramatic arts. It is also a source of art and performances of many forms together of human beings who create, preserve, and pass on to new generations. The dances in each region have different styles and names based on the climate, topography, beliefs, religions, languages, habits, and lifestyles of the people of each region. This article presented a Thai standard circle dance song for teaching Chinese students which can teach Thai traditional music and dance to foreigners and spread the culture worldwide.

Keywords: Aesthetic; Thai circle dance songs; Chinese students; Taishan University

Introduction

Dance means the art of body gesture performance which is something that humans have created with exquisite beauty entertain. This kind of art requires instrumental music and the vocal. Dance is part of the fine arts which consists of painting, architecture, literature, music and dramatic arts. It is also a source of art and performances of many forms together of human beings to create,

preserve and pass on to new generation. The dances in each region have different styles and names bases on the climate, topography, beliefs, religions, languages, habits, lifestyles of people of each region.

The central region of Thailand is the place of the capital center, center of power and the place that having the royal palace for the royal family to live. The central Thai terrain is lowland; many rivers suitable for agriculture, farming, gardening, and people have a comfortable life and it is origin of emphasis of Thai life “happy and fun”.

Thai artists have plenty of time to create all kind of arts that can be seen in architectural art, painting, costume, housing, music and dance especially in the court, in the monastery and in all festivals and ceremonies. According to music and dances, there are two main types of them, the court music and dance and the music and dance for ordinary people. The Thai classical music and dances such as mahori music, lakhawn-nai and khon are originated in court, but the lakhawn-nawk, nohra, and regional folk songs, folk plays and musics including the local dances were created by ordinary people.

One famous of central Thai local dance is a ram-wong (circle dance) that was developed out of ram-thon (a thon dance) and lately has developed for a standard circle dance (ramwong –matrathan) including a set of 10 dances. The Thai standard circle dance was favorite in the past and well known in present time.

Even the Standard Thai circle dance is very popular, well known among Thai, and being part of Thai educational curriculum of many levels, but Chinese students lack of knowledge on this matter. So that, the researcher willing to study the Thai ramwong matrathan - circle dance songs for teaching the Chinese students.

General Information of Dances

Origin of dance: People express their feeling by making noise such as shouting, laughing, or making sound such as humming, singing and sometime act or dance along with sound and rhythm. Music and dance are a kind of performance for people to express their emotion and feeling of good mood, happy, even when they feel insecure, un-satisfaction and want to pray for help

from superstitious whatever Goth or God. It can be said that music and dance have two main functions, one is for entertainment, and another is for ritual. Dance is one way of communication and just like a verbal language it can share the stories and ancient legends from history through the accompanying traditional music and song, meaningful movements and even the costumes and dress. As ancient as time itself, these mesmerizing art forms communicate to the audience from across the ages without the need to understand a single word of their language (Roongruang, 2019).

History of dance: The earliest dance records shown that the origins of dance are cave paintings in India dating to about 8000 BCE: Egyptian tomb paintings also depict dance in about 3300 BCE. These early dances were religious in nature, and by the era of ancient Greece, people were incorporating dance into celebrations of the wine god Dionysus (later the Roman god Bacchus) and into ritual dances at the ancient Greek Olympic Games. In addition, early people danced for enjoyment, seduction, and entertainment.

Throughout Asia has a rich history found in India and China: Hindu dancing in India has a rich performance history going back millennia, in the late 1700s, dance was restricted by British colonists, who considered the dances immoral. Once India gained its freedom from Great Britain, the country revived its classical dance traditions. Chinese dance dates back at least 3,000 years, with ceremonial dances and dances of folk people adapted for performance at court. For today celebrations still include traditional dances such as the dragon dance, lion dance, etc.

In Europe, a social dancing in most parts of the world grew out of folk dances, many of which were simple and repetitive. The folk dances of the Middle Ages by ordinary people in kind of secular dance turned into social ballroom dance of today. These dances moved into royal courts beginning in the Renaissance period, becoming popular as dancing masters taught upper classes the specific proper steps for court dances. As women's clothing allowed more freedom of movement in the nineteenth century, social dancing became lively. The waltz, swept around the world as a major dance craze in the mid-nineteenth century, and social dances began to focus on couple of man and woman dancing in the early twentieth century.

Ballet dance created by choreographers and composers to be performed as professional entertainment today has its roots dated back to the Renaissance. Ballet dance became an art in the eighteenth century, when ballet companies sprang up around the world, telling entire stories through the emotional movements of the ballet dancers. As shoes and costumes changed, dancers gained greater expressive freedom and some ballet dancers found the rules of classical ballet restrictively. In the twentieth century, modern dance created by the choreographers

Many people carry on the customs of their homelands through folk dancing and traditionally accompany these dances with the music of their culture, sometimes, folk-type dancers also perform for audiences, as is the case with belly dancing, which originated in Egypt, and Polynesian dancing in Hawaiian hula, Tahitian Otea, and Maori Haka. Popular dances have exploded into new styles over the last decades. While the jitterbugging of the 1950s and disco of the 1970s draw their roots from earlier ballroom dance crazes, rock and electronic music has brought new types of dances, often non-partnered, to parties and dance floors. House dance incorporates Latin and soul influences, while dances at raves are energetic and freestyle. Hip hop dancing drawing on Black American dance styles has exploded around the world in the last fifty years, along with its related styles of break dance, pop dance, and rock dance. (History of dance: Universal elements and types of dances, 2021).

In Asia, the diverse cultures, religions, and traditions of the different countries of Asia are reflected not only in their lifestyles but also in their art forms. This mystic with its rich oriental essence and aesthetic fervor, is a treasure trove of distinct cultural varieties that are so beautifully reflected in the performing arts. These arts forms, including music, drama, and dance, are clearly representative of their regions and cultures of origin. The mythical stories, the tribal and religious rituals from everyday life are the inspirations for many of Asia's dances. Each country in Asia is populated by indigenous and once nomadic ethnic groups and all these groups have their own unique identities and traditions, which are also visible in their dances.

For examples: In India, kathakali's magnificence has won great admiration for the state of Kerala. Kathakali originated on Kerala's shores over 300 years ago. The dance combines devotion, drama, music, colorful costumes,

and make-up into a divine experience for all who get to view it. Kathakali retells ancient stories from Hindu legends, the Indian epics, that leave one spellbound at the depth and intricacy of the performance. Every single quiver of the lips, flicker of the eyes or movement of the hands has great significance. The dance synthesizes music and voice with delicate and dramatic choreography that uses whole body movement and facial gestures to retell the India's ancient stories and legends. The detail within the performance and the accuracy required in executing the movements and gestures takes a lifetime to perfect. Kathakali artists will tell you that they are learning and perfecting this artform almost from the cradle to the grave.

In Indonesia, Bali's cultures and traditions have been firmly tied to the natural world and the environment. The many religious rituals are delivered both in honor, and as gifts, to the ancestors, nature, and the spirit world with beautiful offerings and eye-catching cultural performances. Many of Bali's artistry and art forms were born out of the need for ever more creative offerings to gods and the spirits of the ancestors.

With nearly 90% of ethnic Balinese being practicing Hindus, it is no surprise that many of the dance forms are inspired by classical Indian dance where the intricacy of hand gestures and facial expressions are such an important part of the art form and the Margapati dance is one such form created in the early 20th century by a locally famous classical dancer.

The dance is usually performed by female dancers and tells the story of a lion, the king of the jungle no less with the name of the dance derived from Mrga meaning beast and Pati meaning king, prowling its domain hunting down prey. The costume for the dancer symbolizes masculinity with their body and legs wrapped in a traditional Balinese Batik gilt fabric known as Prada where the cloth achieves a bright and truly golden color from the gold leaf or gold dust that decorates this most regal of fabrics, a Badong necklace and Udeng headpiece, which are designs all typically worn by male dancers.

Thai Manora dance: Some Thai scholar believes that the Manohra Dance is originated in Phatthalung province, Southern Thailand, towards the end of Ayutthaya Period (1351–1767). More a ceremony and ritual than simply a dance, the Manohra Dance is a form of dance-drama inspired by a story from the Jataka, a collection of stories about former lives of the Buddha. The dance tells

the story of Prince Suthorn and the Kinnaree, Manohra, who fall in love and like all great stories includes a love affair, jealousy, scheming, a rescue and a happy ending – and not a car chase in sight. A Kinnaree is a mythical and magical creature, half bird and half human. The dance often forms a key part of a ceremony used to repay a promise to the spirit world – a common practice in Southeast Asia where spiritual help is invoked on the promise of repayment in the form of offerings or special performances (Healey, 1990).

A variation on the Manohra, locally known by its shortened form 'Nora' can last 3 days and involve mediumship and spirit possession to benefit from wisdom and advice from the other side as well as repay a promise to the spirit world. The ceremony takes 2 days and 3 nights, with the performance area ringed by strings of hanging bananas and sprinkled holy water to ward off evil and trouble-making spirits. The dance and performance are supported by enthusiastic and loud music played on traditional instruments. The whole performance includes a lengthy spiritual invocation, the dance, and finally a fun play. The Manohra, or Nora, dance involves 12 positions with 17 precise and intricate gestures that mimic the movement of birds and beautifully colourful costumes to represent the rich plumage of this magical bird-like creature. The expressive hand movements are exaggerated and beautified by the apparently long fake nails or talons that are in fact long and curved shiny metallic finger extensions (Kosinanont, 1998).

Unique and inimitable, the Manohra Dance, and Nora Ceremony, are an incredible window into the minds and beliefs of an ancient culture, still respected and practiced today in communities in Thailand, and parts of Malaysia, where heritage and tradition are still very much a part of the everyday experience (Bree, 2023).

The Thai Circle Dance-Ramwong

Ramwong was patronized by Prime Minister Plaek Phibunsongkhram during the hard times of Thailand in World War II. In order to help people to forget their penury, the military dictator encouraged Thai women and men to enjoy themselves by dancing ramwong. Also, as part of the policy of Thai political policy during his tenure, Phibunsongkhram aimed to stem the popularity of non-Thai dances such as the foxtrot or waltz through the

promotion of Ramwong. Even government officials were given half a day during the work week to dance ramwong together at their offices. After the end of World War II Ramwong was largely replaced by Lukthung and cha-cha-cha although its influence survived in Thai society.

History of Circle Standard Dance

The Thai standard dance has evolved from ram-thon (a dance accompanied by thon-a single face goblet drum) which was a traditional play of Thailand. Later, Lady La-iod Phibunsongkhram (Thanpuying La-iod Phibunsongkhram) composed the song text in lyrical form and devoted it to the Fine Arts Department to create the dance gesture as a standard dance. The song contains polite lyrical text, simply word and simply melody aims at presenting the Thai culture. The performers comprise of not fewer than five pairs of male and female dancers.

Dance style: There are three choreographers namely Suphalak Pattanawik, Mallee Kongraphat and Lamul Yamakup who design the 14 principal dance for 10 dances, each dance has a particular song. The 10 dances are ngam saeng doen, chao Thai, ramsi maram, koen doen ngai, duang chan wan pen, gokmai khawng chat, ying Thai jai ngam, duang chan khwan fa, yawd chai jai han, and bucha nakrob.

Song text: There are four song text composed by Jamoen manitnaret (Chalerm Sawetanan), the head of the Music Division, Fine Arts Department those are ngam saeng doen, chao Thai, ram si maram, and khuen doenn ngai. Other six song tests were composed by Lady La-iod Phibunsongkhram namely: duang chan wan phen, dok mai khawng chat, ying Thai chai ngam, duang chan khwan fa, yod chai jai han and bucha nakrob

Melody: Montri Tramote, Thai national artist whom worked with Fine Arts Department has composed six melodies of six songs namely: ngam saeng doen, chao Thai, ramsi maram, koen doen ngai, duang chan wan phen and dawk mai khawng chat. Others were composed by Eua Soonthornsanan (the head of the Public Relations Department) those are ying Thai jai ngam, duang jan khwan fa, yod chai jai han and bucha nakrob.

Musical instruments: Originally, the ram-thon was accompanied by a pair of ching (finger cymbals), chab (cymbals), krab (a pair of stick) and thon (drum). Since the dance was developed for national social dance the music accompaniment has changed to western music such as the big band or orchestra.

The dress: The dress does not specifically specify that one must wear for example Thai clothes for sure but it could be dressed in many styles, such as Thai chakri dress, a traditional Thai dress in the reign of Rama VI, a traditional Thai robe. The requirement is to be polite both for male and female dress and the international suit is good for this circle social dance too.

Ram Thon: Rum-thon is one of the Thai traditional folk plays of the central region. Popularly played in the local area, some provinces, the term ram tone is assumed to be called after the imitation of sounds of drum which the main stroke of drum sounds like thon thon in a full rhythmic pattern pa – thon – pa – thon – pa –thon –thon. The songs for ram-thon are such as chaw-mali, yuan yalay, ta-momg-ta, law-jing-na-dara, etc.

The dancers come in a pair of man and woman to perform free style local dance according to the rhythm provided by the thon-drum. The dancers dance around the object normally the upside-down pounding rice with the lamp on top and put it at the center of the circle The song text reflects the people daily life culture, normally begins with greeting to the teacher, making complement to each other, teasing, and finally farewell song. Ram thon found here and their all-over central Thailand and still existed in some places.

During the government of Field Marshal Plaek Phibunsongkhram in 1935, he had the objective of glorify the art of ram thon dance and derived it for standard of Thai local dance, so he demands the Find Art Department to develop new four songs with the new melody and song texts including invented the new choreograph based on standard Thai classical gestures such as sawdsoi-mala, chak paeng phad na, etc. The four new songs were ngam-saeng-doen (beautiful moon), chao thai (Thai people), masi maram (comes for dancing), and khuen doen ngai (full moon night) and have the dancers dance in circle so that this kind of new invention was called ram-wong instead of ram-thon.

It can be said that the origin of ram-wong is ram-thon and later ram-thon had derived for ram-wong-matathan (standard circle dance).

Standard Circle Dances

The standard circle dance comprises of ten songs and dances; the first four ones were composed by artist of Fine Arts Department and the last six ones compose by Lady La-iod Phibunsongkhram

The standard circle dance was choreographed by Lamun Yamakupta, Manlee Khongprapat and Suphalux Phatrananawin and the footsteps for duang jan khwan fa created by Jitra Thongthaem na Ayuthaya.

Each Dance Requires Different Gesture as Follow:

sod soi mala	for ngam-saeng-doen
chak paeng phadna	for chao Thai
ram-sai	for ramsi maram,
sod soi mala plaeng	for khuen doen ngai,
khaek khao rang and phala pheang lai	for duang jan wan phen.
ram yua	for dokmai khong chat,
phrom sina and young fon hang	for ying Thai jai ngam,
chang prasan nga and jan song klod-plaeng	for duang jan khwan fa,
chanee raimai and jaw phleng kan	for yod chai jai han,
khad jangnang and (female) law kiao	
and (male) jan song krod and khaw kiao	for bucha nak rob.

Function of standard circle dance: The standard dance is popularly played in various entertainment events and is also used as a substitute for social dancing especially at the end of entertainment events both nationally and international.

Thai Standard circle dance set includes ten songs with lyrical song text; the first four songs compose by Mr.Chaloem Sawetanan (Jamoen Manitnaret), head of music division, Fine Arts Department and music by Montri Tramote (national artist); the song text of the last six songs composed by Lady La-iod Phibunsongkhram and the music by Eua Sunthornsanan (Swangviboonpong, 1965).

Song Text and Meaning

Ngam Saeng Duan (beautiful moon): Meaning of the song text; when the moonlight shines on the earth, it makes the world look beautiful. People come to dance when the moonlight shines beautifully. We dance for fun to abandon all sufferings; the face looks beauty in a dance circle, we play together for fun destroying suffering, please dance for harmoniously.

Chao Thai (Thai people): Meaning of the song text is; Thai people must do their duty; we having fun and get rid of suffering because our nation is free as an independent country. We should support our nation, strengthen and prosperous for the happiness of all Thai people.

Ram ma si ma ram (come to enjoy dancing): meaning of the song text is; comes to joy dance for entertainment, for work we keep working hardly and enjoy dance in leisure time for destroying the un-satisfaction. Following the cultural rules when we play, and playing with beautiful manner, so please comes and enjoy our Thai dancing.

Khuen doen ngai (Full moon night): meaning of the song text is; in the full moon night, wind chills nicely. The cool air or any cool feeling cannot compare with a cool mind of friendship, but the best cool feeling is to stay under the shade of Thai flag that fell as like as getting spray of holy water.

Duang jan wan phen (The full moon): meaning of the song text is; full moon floating on the sky with radiation shining but not as beautiful as your face. You are the most beautiful Thai lady which having nice manner, nice, sweet talking so you are the flower of Thai nation.

Dokmai khong chat (national flower): meaning of the song text is; the spirit of national flower performs nice dance gestures, a pretty shape of dancer reflecting Thai civilization. Good at all jobs, helping men do the duty, following the policy and working hardly.

Ying Thai jai ngam (the beautiful heart Thai lady): meaning of the song text is; the moon at starlit night sky, the moon shines over the stars, your face is as beautiful as the moon but your goodness makes you more beautiful. Spirit of

Thai lady reflecting the highly spirit of Thai nation, not just her beautifulness but the brave heart, that lady is more beautiful than the moon and shining stars.

Duang jan khwan fa (the moon a spirit of the sky): meaning of the song text is; The moon is a spirit of the sky but you are a spirit of mine, moon is for the night but you are for my heart. On top of my head is Thai nation, attached with my heart is you, my dear.

Yod chai jai haan (best man brave heart): meaning of the song text is; Oh! my best man with a brave heart may I be friend with you, being same spirit of you for our duty to the nation. Even facing difficulty and hard work, I still walking with you and trying my best for our nation.

Bucha nak rop (cherish the fighter): meaning of the song text is; I love and cherish you as a brave heart and strong fighter, patient, work hard and being recognized. I love and cherish you because you did good jobs, scarify yourself for Thai nation (Latartara, 2010).

Aesthetic in Music: Musical aesthetics is a philosophy that is defined as the beauty and emotion evoked when listening to a musical piece. Music aesthetic is made of the emotions the song elicits, as well as its symbolic representation and sound. Aesthetics of music is a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of art, beauty and taste in music, and with the creation or appreciation of beauty in music. Musical aesthetics is a philosophy that is defined as the beauty and emotion evoked when listening to a musical piece. Music aesthetic is made of the emotions the song elicits, as well as its symbolic representation and sound.

Music has value primarily in beautiful, its beauty being whatever affords pleasure to the listener. But the quality of a work's expressiveness, its depth, richness and subtlety, for example, also seems to form an important part of any value judgment we make about the work. The book “Musical Aesthetics: An Introduction to Concepts, Theories, and Functions” by Jonathan L. Friedmann, Cambridge Scholars Publishing: It covers different areas of musical aesthetics these are 1. Aesthetics of Emotions, 2. Aesthetics of Listening, 3. Aesthetics of Performance, 4. Aesthetics of Composition, 5. Aesthetics of Nature, and 6. Aesthetics of Commerce.

The Britannica dictionary states that aesthetic is related to emotion, response, and enjoyment. It is natural to suppose that a spectator's response at least in part emotional and that emotion plays a crucial role both in the enjoyment of art and in establishing the value of art. Moreover, it is not only art that stirs our emotions in the act. Act aesthetic attention: the same is or may be true of natural beauty, whether that of a face or of a landscape. These things hold our attention partly because they address themselves to our feelings and call forth a response which we value both for itself and for the consolation that we may attain through it. Thus, we find an important philosophical tradition according to which the distinctive character of aesthetic experience is to be found in distinctively "aesthetic" emotions.

New Knowledges

There are only monophonic folk songs in the Dong area in the north. From the perspective of song structure, most of them are in the form of section songs, and the division of song sections is largely restricted by the lyrics. The melody is based on the pentatonic scale, often with sol, do, re, and la as the main tones. Generally speaking, there are more Zheng tunes in major tones and Yu tunes in minor tones, followed by Shang tunes and Gong tunes. There are also a small amount of non-tonal sounds (especially in recitation-style songs) that alternate with each other and sometimes appear up and down in the melody. In the same song festival, sometimes there are songs with mode and tone modulation, which shows that the Dong songs in the northern region are richer in mode than the Dong songs in the southern region. There are many lining words and lining chambers in the songs.

Conclusions

This method expands the phrases, increases the changes of the melody, and enriches the tune. The lyrics generally rhyme, the lines of the poem are even-numbered, and the rhymes are generally on the even-numbered lines. The number of words in each line is variable, mostly odd, and the rhythm and structure of the tune are adapted to this. Northern Dong folk songs are generally not accompanied by musical instruments, and they are often sung with a natural voice, or combined with a small voice, which is simple and natural, full of life.

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