

Origin and Evolution of the Peacock Dance

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Abstract

As one of the most valuable intangible cultural heritages, Chinese ethnic dance been the focus of Chinese cultural studies, due to its abundance and diversity of 55 different types of ethnic dances from 55 different ethnic groups. Chinese ethnic dance could be dated back to the early 1950s, the origins and development process of which are all worth high research value. However, though Chinese ethnic dance has long been recognized and approved by the world dance studies, there lacked detailed research work about any single ethnic dance among the 55 types in total, including the Dai Peacock dance, one of the most representative ethnic dances among the Dai minority group, and among all Chinese ethnic dances as well. As a professional ethnic dance dancer, the author has long been interested in how diversified ethnic dances were originated and then got developed. Therefore, the author went to Mandan Village, Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, where Dai minority group gather, to conduct a fieldwork about the history and evolution of peacock dance. The author embodied both second-hand literature review work and the primary information of interview records with local Dai minority group, and with National-level Dai Cultural Inheritor, Hanbing Bo, so as to reveal the origin of such a featured Chinese ethnic dance from multiple perspectives, as well as to indicate and trace the evolutionary processes of external body movements and internal cultural implications underlying the Dai Peacock dance.

Keywords

Peacock Dance; Dai Minority; Evolutionary Processes.

1. Introduction

Chinese ethnic dance is a critical branch of Chinese dance, and could be dated back to the early 1950s. In the research area of ethnic dances, Chinese ethnic dance has long been a typical subject. However, there lacked detailed research work about any single ethnic dance among the 55 types in total.

The author has been to Yunnan to conduct a fieldwork about the history and evolution of peacock dance, the most prevalent and common type of Dai dance. The author embodied both second-hand literature review work and the primary information of interview records with local Dai minority group, and with National-level Dai Cultural Inheritor, Hanbing Bo.

In this paper, four parts will be discussed. From the introduction of peacock dance and its importance to the Dai minority group, and right towards the origin of peacock dance from both mythical and geographical perspectives. Then the essay would be following a chronological order, from the traditional peacock dance to the male peacock dance represented by Mao Xiang, and from the time when female peacock dance was initially fermented by Dao Meilan and to the contemporary peacock dance, featured by Yang Liping. In each stage from the "Green peacock" to the "Golden peacock" and ultimately to the "White peacock", the evolutions of body movements and artistic as well as cultural implications of the peacock dance were all documented throughout its evolutionary history.

2. Origin of the Peacock Dance

2.1. Peacock Dance: The Most Featured Dai Cultural Art

The Dai (Tai) people are one of the 55 recognized ethnic minority groups in China. Approximately 1.5 million Dai people live in Yunnan Province, in the south-western region in China. They are famous for their folk traditions and especially their dances.

Dai dances began as imitation mainly of birds -especially peacocks- in the region of Xishuangbanna, Yunnan province. As time goes by, the peacock dance is no longer performed only in Xishuangbanna. It has extended its development in Ruili, Luxi, Mengding, Menglian, Jinggu, Canyuan and other Dai settlements in Dehong Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture of Yunnan Province. Yunnan's pristine tropical forests are the suitable habitat of peacocks. In Yunnan, a Peacock dance is performed on almost all festive occasions, especially during Water-splashing Festival and Buddhist rituals (Guo, 2021).

Peacocks are sacred in Hinayana Buddhism. In the eyes of the Dai people, the peacock symbolizes beauty and peace and is generally considered to be a good omen (Shi, 2011). Some Bodhisattvas, shown riding on peacocks in several Buddhist scriptures, hold lotus flowers and peacock tail feathers as amulets. The feathers of the peacocks are splendid when spread, and the body movement mimicking spreading out tail feathers is featured in the Dai peacock dance (Bilger, 2017). According to the national-level Dai Cultural Inheritor, Hanbing Bo, "Imitations of the stately strutting movement of the peacock are typical in Peacock dance, and they are marked by undulations of the waist and the arms of the Peacock dance dancers."

2.2. The origin of Peacock dance

The following section will focus on the legends and geographical conditions which cultivate peacock dance to originate at first.

1) Legend underlying peacock dance: myths

There are many folk legends concerning the origin of peacock dance. One version documented in this research was told by the majority of the local Dai households in Mandan Village, Xishuangbanna. A long time ago the feathers of the peacock were not so colorful and beautiful. The peacock was known, however, for its relative tameness and obedience. Once during a Buddhist festival at a local temple word spread that the Buddhist patriarch would descend to earth. A great throng of adherents came rushing to the temple, which quickly became overcrowded. In the meantime, a peacock in a remote mountain region heard the news of the imminent arrival of the patriarch at the temple and being a devout Buddhist peacock, it flew the long journey to join the other worshippers in the already overcrowded little temple, where the patriarch himself had just arrived. When the peacock, in agitation at not being able to get a better view of the patriarch, paced back and forth behind the throng of other worshippers, the patriarch became aware of this and cast a beam of the light of Buddha in the direction of the devout peacock. The light beam struck the tail of the peacock, lighting it up in iridescent colors and producing the characteristic "eyed" tail feathers by which the peacock is recognized today. On departing, the patriarch said to the devout peacock that the two would meet during the next Baipala Festival. From then on, when the Patriarch descended to earth during the Baipala Festival, he would first meet with his human followers at the temple, and afterward, he would visit the peacock on its remote mountain and watch it prance and dance and show off its beautiful tail. That is how the peacock came to be so beautiful, and that is also why the Dai perform a dance in its honor every year during the major Dai festivals, including the harvest festival and of course the Baipala Festival.

Because of its beauty and religious meaning, the Peacock dance has become featured in a greater number of important local festivals in Yunnan, including carnival festivals like the "Water Splashing Festival", when and the Dai people gather together and celebrate the harvest

through splashing water (Pang, 2020), and the religious festival like the “Closing-Door Festival”, when the Dai people host a ceremony to sacrifice food, flowers, clothes, and other wealth to Buddha.



Figure 1. Closing-door Festival in Yunnan[39]

2) Geographical conditions: giving rise to the boom of Peacock dance

While myths and legends are subjective, the geographical environment is a necessary factor in determining the origin of any folk-dance form. The geographical environment of the Dai people is mainly in the southern part of Yunnan, which is located at an altitude of around 2000 meters above sea level. The range of altitude that is suitable for the peacocks is around 900-1200 meters and should generally be lower than 2000 meters (Fowler). Therefore, peacocks tend to gather in Yunnan and there are over 300 green peacocks, which is half of the total number in China, in Chuxiong, Yunnan (Yang, 2022). As a result, many Dai people are familiar with the life characteristics of peacocks, and because of this long-term contact, they imitate the graceful movements of peacocks to form dances. This gives rise to the form of the Dai Peacock dance from a geographical perspective.

2.3. Traditional Peacock Dance

In 1950s, traditional peacock dance emerged, and was danced mainly by male dancers since male peacocks dance more often and more attractively compared to female peacocks. In Yunnan, the male peacocks are more beautiful, while the female are less beautiful in comparison. Male peacocks secrete sex hormones from the gonads in their bodies, which stimulate the brain and unfold the tail screen (Serrano et al., 2008). When peacocks are ready to mate, they fan out their iridescent tail feathers (known as trains), before rushing at females, shaking those feathers to catch their attention (Allen, 2018).

During peacock dances, men wore masks and other heavy body decorations resembling painted peacock feathers, patterned clothing waist tied with colored paper or colored silk tied into the body, and tail performance through the dance to imitate the peacock's various movements such as the peacock nesting, looking for water, walking downhill, and dancing (Liu, 2013). The

dancers used their hands, eyes and feet with the beautiful body curve changes and similar footwork combined with the dance to present a beautiful peacock with an uncanny resemblance to the image. However, this peacock dance restricts the performance of the dancer's body dynamics and body language.



Figure 2. The traditional peacock dance: The dancer was dancing tiredly with heavy costumes and decorations mimicking peacocks[40]

3. “Green Peacock”: Peacock dance before Cultural Revolution

3.1. Background Introduction: Why Transformation of Peacock Dance Occurred

Before the founding of PRC, the development of dance in the Dai region was very uneven and slow. In some places, the peacock dance was relatively simple, and only a few folk artists could dance the peacock dance. In other areas, there were professional artists in almost every village, and besides the peacock dance, they would also dance the elephant dance and the fish dance. The peacock dance at that time was only performed in the squares and had not yet formed a real stage art (Wilcox, 2018).

After the founding of PRC, under the guidance of the Party's cultural policies and guidelines, professional and amateur dancers collected, organized, processed and created peacock dances and Dai dances, which accelerated the development of peacock dances and Dai dances and made remarkable achievements (Wilcox, 2019).

3.2. Mao Xiang: The First Male Peacock Dancer Who Brought Peacock Dance Onto Stage for Aesthetic Appreciation

Born in Ruili City, Yunnan Province, Mao Xiang was initially a Dai farmer who loved observing peacocks. According to historic records, Mao Xiang often hid in the woods to observe every move of the peacocks, and knew very well the life pattern, habits and various forms of the peacocks (Wilcox, 2018; 2019). He was mesmerized at a “secret power” hidden inside peacocks as well as the nature, so his understanding of peacock dances belonged to a general appreciation of folk art, with a warm mood, strong style, full of festive colors, and a green beauty, close to nature. Mao learned how to perform the Peacock Dance, however, due to his lack of professional training, the peacock dance and the Dai dance remained folk dances in concept.

Being impacted by liberalization that took place in China then, Mao Xiang first took the lead in removing the peacock frame and mask, liberating his body from the heavy and tangled peacock mask and props, and wearing new costumes with national characteristics, so that the

performers were no longer constrained by the bulky peacock frame during the dance. Without the masks, the performers have been able to improve the dance movements on the basis of the peacock dance, focusing on the use of expression and eyes, making the image of the peacock more alive and vital (Yu, 2014).



Figure 3. Mao Xiang performing his free-hand peacock dance[41]

In 1951, when the Cultural Troupe of the Central Academy of Nationalities visited Yunnan, Mao Xiang performed the original peacock dance for the group at a public party as usual. After the performance, the art troupe of The Central Institute for Nationalities recruited him as a member. Then, Mao Xiang obtained a chance to study folk dance in the former Soviet Union. There he appreciated quite a lot folk dances, which he found some elements could be borrowed to innovate the current peacock dance. There he absorbed the big roc dance, mandarin duck dance, elephant dance, and garland dance, as well as Mongolian, Uygur, and other ethnic dance movements to the original peacock dance. He borrowed the “round field step” from Han classical dance and applies it to the flow of the Dai peacock dance. He also gained inspiration from Mongolian dance and borrowed the rhythm of Mongolian shrugging shoulders in the movements of the Dai dance such as the walking step and the peacock playing in the water (Uking, 2009).

In 1956, after the establishment of Dehong Prefecture Folk Dance and Song Troupe, he joined the troupe as a dancer. In 1961, he joined the Chinese Friendship Delegation to visit Myanmar with Premier Zhou, and his famous peacock dance performance “double peacock dance” shook Myanmar. Mao Xiang and Bai Wenfen performed “Double Peacock Dance” in the “China-Myanmar Border People's Festival” in 1956. “Double Peacock dance” was developed during the frontier dance movement, which focused on ethnic folk dances. During this period, the “people-centered” line of artistic creation was opened up, and many literary and artistic workers began to study and collect folklore. Therefore, the “Double Peacock dance” was in line with the aesthetics of the people at that time and was well received by them. The performance was the first formal peacock dance ever throughout the history that could be appreciated through aesthetic views (Wilcox, 2019). The two dancers danced beautifully and cooperated well, and

the love story of a pair of male and female peacocks was vividly portrayed. Since Teacher Mao Xiang, peacock dance has been performed not only in folk but also in formal stages. Combining diverse and delicate cultural elements, Mao Xiang danced freely and impressively to the foreign audience. With the performance “Double Peacock dance”, Mao Xiang was regarded as the “Peacock Prince” in Myanmar, and the wish of “how good it would be if I could see Mao Xiang's peacock dance” was widespread in the hearts of the people in Myanmar. Premier Zhou once praised Mao Xiang for his featured peacock dance, calling him a “Peacock delivering peace and friendship” for first taking peacock dance from public places (squares or farms) onto the formal stages inside and outside the nation to let audience from home and abroad appreciate the peacock dance (You, 2016).



Figure 4. Mao Xiang and Bai Wenfang performing the famous “Double Peacock Dance” in Myanmar[42]

3.3. Conclusion

Viewing the development of the peacock dance in the modern era, Mao Xiang was undoubtedly the founder, for he has incorporated certain rituals and performances into the peacock dance for the first time in forever, so that the traditional peacock dances not only had an important place in the folk square culture, but also had a certain opportunity to be performed in the public arena. Mao Xiang's artistic creation of peacock dance has become far-reaching because of its association with traditional culture, leading the development trend of peacock dance. His peacock dance was regarded the “green peacock” dance, symbolizing a brand new start and a turn point for peacock dance to transform from purely self-entertaining to more appreciable on the stage. However, it is still close to nature because of lack of professional training that time.

4. “Golden Peacock”: Peacock Dance after Cultural Revolution

4.1. Background Introduction: Relationship between Cultural Revolution and Ethnic Dances

At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, traditional Chinese folk music was classified as the “Four Olds”, which are four pre-communist elements of Chinese culture including old Ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits, and was the subject of “sweeping”, change, so traditional

Chinese folk music and dance were severely damaged. During this era, with the introduction of new cultural policies beginning in 1966, a decade of suppression of Chinese ethnic dance nearly wiped out memories of pre-Cultural Revolution activities in China's dance field. Forced to serve political and propaganda purposes under enormous pressure from guidelines of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, led by Mao's fourth wife Jiang Qing, works of art were expected to foment revolution and, in her words, be "red, bright, and shining" (hong, guang, liang), like Jiang Qing's revolutionary operas (Wilcox, 2019). The Cultural Revolution pitted young people against older generations so that many revered artists and artistic traditions suffered humiliation and destruction, as did untold numbers of people perceived to be bourgeois. Therefore, ethnic dances, including peacock dance, was being criticized of being "old" and "not being revolutionary".

The Cultural Revolution has also contributed to the transformation of the ethnic dances. Before the Cultural Revolution, the ethnic dances formed a relatively stable overall pattern. Due to the relatively limited ideology at that time, the creators seemed to be afraid of their own works, which were too "far" from the prototype of life or the original form of folk dance. They generally took a cautious attitude towards the selection of themes, genres and the processing of dance movements and tended to be homogenous. Therefore, while creating brilliance, there is also a certain tendency of sameness and patterning (Wilcox, 2019). Although there are various differences in values and aesthetic consciousness, they all reflect a strong sense of innovation - they are eager to break through the traditional techniques and fixed patterns -- even the "successful experience". In the review and reflection, after experiencing confusion, exploration and even pregnancy pains, a batch of innovative and eye-catching works emerged successively. This gave rise to the continuous innovation of peacock dance, and the development of an improved type of peacock dance after the Cultural Revolution (Wilcox, 2021).

4.2. Dao Meilan: Pioneer of a New Era of Female Peacock Dance

As Mao Xiang's student and the one of whom he was most proud, Dao Meilan absorbed the advantages of Mao Xiang in Dai dance and added her own unique understanding and interpretation of the work in the process of choreographing her own peacock dance, and her dance "Golden Peacock" was the first Dai dance performed by a female dancer. Dao Meilan has been with peacocks since she was a child, and became acquainted with dance. In 1954, the ethnic arts and crafts team of Xishuangbanna went to various villages to select literary and artistic seedlings, and 10-year-old Dao Meilan was selected. There she realized her ambition of making peacock dances that were danced by female dancers. She once said: "The peacock is so beautiful, and women can show it. Remove the mask and lift up the beautiful skirt. It represents the opening of the peacock, plus the beautiful eyes and the face of the Dai girl. Pretty." (Xu, 2022).



Figure 5. When Dao Meilan was 10 years old being recruited by the Ethnic Arts and Crafts team of Xishuangbanna[43]

However, the Cultural Revolution nearly ruined her dream and her talents. In 1970, during the Cultural Revolution, Dao Meilan was sent down to Yunnan Province as a draughtsman in a construction machinery factory, leaving the stage she loved. Although the Cultural Revolution has placed a huge hindrance for the development of ethnic dance and dancers, Dao Meilan never stopped her exploration about peacock dance. The Cultural Revolution had led her to focus more on daily lives and wanted to use her peacock dance as an expression towards freedom. She kept observing the daily lives Dai girls in Yunnan where she worked to help her illustrate a Dai girl figure in her dance more vividly. She recalled that, the Dai girls would swim in the Lancang River, wash their hair, return home smelling good, return to the bamboo building, and pick a little flowers along the way, green, all kinds of flower. She faced the cold reality with determination and walked out from the flowers and praises to factories, rural areas, troops, schools and hospitals. Everyone loved to see her dancing. Seeing the people being so sincere, Dao Meilan saw the hope of returning to the stage (Wilcox, 2019).



Figure 6. Dao Meilan danced in a public square[44]

After experiencing the pain of the “ten years of turmoil” (Cultural Revolution), she returned to her work in peacock dancing. She used her personal experience and feelings to create and perform “The Golden Peacock”, showing that the golden peacock has spread its wings and soared high again after the “Gang of Four” was crushed, and depicted a quiet, peaceful and happy life in the Dai countryside after the turbulent years.



Figure 7. Dao Meilan performing “The Golden Peacock” after Cultural Revolution[45]

4.3. Conclusion

Dao Meilan viewed her peacock dance as having more inner values than self-entertainment or just demonstration of the beauty of the dance. "I do not dance the peacock dance for my personal beauty on the stage. I perform in China to represent the Dai people, and to represent the People's Republic of China when I go abroad. A people's artist must have a national soul in his heart. In the moves, every look in the eyes represents the spirit of a nation and reflects the spirit of a nation. The soul of the nation is here" (Laitimes, 2021). Dao Meilan's peacock dance highlighted the liberation and freedom through stretching poses in her peacock dance. She also created the first peacock dance for women, and used a figure of "golden peacock" to release a sense of power of revival and growth for the whole nation.



Figure 8. Dao Meilan's peacock dance symbolized freedom and the power of female dancers[46]

5. "White Peacock": Contemporary Peacock Dance

5.1. Yang Liping: "Peacock Princess of China"

Yang Liping is undoubtedly one of the most influential contemporary dancer in China. She was born during the Great Chinese Famine and lived a hard life. She moved to Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture with her family when she was nine. Fearful of persecution in Cultural Revolution, Yang's father left his family and divorced with Yang Liping's mother. Eleven year-old Yang, as the eldest child, and her mother supported the whole family. Yang Liping loved dancing since childhood and never entered any dance school. However, with her talent, she joined the Xishuangbanna Singing and dancing Troupe from the village in 1971. Her tough

childhood life has contributed to her persistence and compassion to the Chinese who suffered (Mead et al., 2019).

One of the troupe's duties was to go to the countryside to spread "revolutionary culture", that is, to dance with people in the stockade. It was when started Yang Liping's seven-year tour. Each time they visited the village for three months, the actors lived and ate with the villagers, helped them harvest crops during the day and performed at night. During this period, Yang Liping saw a lot of ethnic groups, learned a lot of dances, as well as appreciated the unrestrained body, all of which inspired her (Yang & Luo, 2019).

"The green peacock in Xishuangbanna is smaller than the common blue peacock, but more delicate." In the village, Yang Liping often hid behind the linden tree to watch the peacocks walk, observing how they walk and shake their shoulders, "they are natural dancers". According to Yang Liping, "dancing is a joyful thing, to be able to talk to God" In many villages, where children are born and old people die, there were grand dance scenes, and Yang danced with them all night and all day. At this time she would again remember what her grandmother, who had a lifelong love of dancing, said, "Dancing is a joyful thing, to be able to talk to God" (The Cultural Dance, 2014).



Figure 9. Yang Liping teaching the gesture of peacocks[47]

During the Cultural Revolution, Yang Liping's parents divorced, and she also witnessed students beating their teachers. After a series of tragedies occurred both in her life and what she has seen, she began to feel pessimistic about human nature, so she liked dancing more. "Dance a little more simple." She recalled. She was able to find joy in dancing, and the Cultural Revolution has also taught her further about the importance of involving human nature in her dance (Anonym, 2020). Because of her extraordinary talents and outstanding abilities to comprehend meanings behind peacock dance, Yang Liping soon became the best peacock dancer in China, and was crowned as "the Peacock princess".

5.2. Yang Liping's Masterpiece: Spirit of the Peacock

In 1990, on the stage of the closing ceremony of Beijing Asian Games, a white peacock appeared. That was Yang Liping, performing the well known peacock dance: "Spirit of the peacock". The

beautiful peacock was dressed in a white costume symbolizing holiness, with a crown of feathers and a long white skirt below the waist, bringing an ethereal feeling when it rotated. In “the Spirit of the Peacock”, Yang Liping seemed to imitate the movements of the peacock such as “standing up to the wind”, “jumping and spinning” and “flying with open wings”, but in fact, it is much more than imitation, but on the basis of imitation, the soul and form of the peacock were well integrated. The creation of the dance work incorporated Yang Liping's unique understanding of folk dance, with costumes, music, and movement working together to create a peacock dancing in the natural forest, fully highlighting the symbolic meaning of the peacock, namely, nobility, elegance, holiness, and beauty (Li, 2022).



Figure 10. Yang Liping wearing white costumes, dancing gracefully[48]

5.3. Conclusion

Yang Liping showed the audience the agile, solitary, beautiful peacock through movements such as lifting the calf, opening the shoulder and rotating. This is a collision between the heart of the dancer and the heart of the audience, thus enhancing the audience's desire for art and their sense of beauty. The entire work uses the characteristics of modern dance to give full play to the dynamic nature of the body, creating a new dance vocabulary and flexible dance movements that are more in line with the aesthetic characteristics of modern people, which is the treasure of the work's endurance. Yang Liping's interpretation of “The Spirit of the Bird” has gone beyond people's imitation and praise of the king of birds, and is a perfect combination of human, god and totem, giving the peacock a “divine glory” (Cerini, 2020). Yang Liping stressed the spiritual meaning of peacocks in her dance, hoping to deliver a spirit of holiness, which she hoped to see in human world also. This dance contained Yang Liping's thoughts, understanding and perceptions of life, sublimating the original figurative image of the peacock and revealing a deeper connotation of the imagery. In her dance, the soul of the bird appears so noble and the meaning of life so powerful, as if the human being is the bird and the bird is the human being. Therefore, the “Spirit of Peacock” returned to the figure of peacocks. The roots of humanity were found in the life value of art, enabling it to reach spiritual sublimity and artistic nirvana (Wilcox, 2019).

6. Conclusion

The above research is theming the evolution of the traditional Dai Peacock dance, about its body movements and underlying implications. The whole research is developed through four parts: the origin of peacock dance and its traditional form, peacock dance before the Cultural Revolution, peacock dance after the Cultural Revolution, and modern peacock dance. As a comprehensive methodology, the author has included both primary and secondary information in this research to trace the authentic development and evolutionary history.

The evolution of the Dai Peacock dance started from legends about religious symbols of peacocks, and the beneficial geographical location where moist and temperature are perfectly suitable for peacocks to live permanently has given rise to the emergence of such peacock dance. The traditional peacock dance was informally performed by men during random festivals or gatherings, during which men wore masks and other heavy body decorations resembling painted peacock feathers, patterned clothing waist tied with colored paper or colored silk tied into the body. The most significant problem related to the traditional peacock dance was its limitation in the performance of the dancer's body dynamics and body language due to the heavy props and costumes. But it was the first time for the Dai people to try to mimic peacock movements. Before Cultural Revolution which restricted folk arts from developing, Mao Xiang was the first male who performed peacock dance on stage to audience from home and abroad. His peacock dance was regarded the "green peacock" dance, symbolizing a brand new start and a turn point for peacock dance to transform from purely self-entertaining to more appreciable on the stage. However, it is still close to nature because of lack of professional training that time. During Cultural Revolution, the evolution of Dai Peacock dance was inhibited as a type of the "Four Olds". However, this dark time period has also given rise to the accelerated evolution later--as the Dai Peacock dancers, represented by Dao Meilan, were increasingly eager to break through the traditional techniques and fixed patterns which they were tired of during the Cultural Revolution. Dao Meilan was the first female Peacock dancer, and was the pioneer for female Peacock dance throughout the entire evolutionary history. Dao Meilan's peacock dance highlighted the liberation and freedom through stretching poses in her peacock dance. She also created the first peacock dance for women, and used a figure of "golden peacock" to release a sense of power of revival and growth for the whole nation. Finally in the contemporary world, the Dai Peacock dance met its peak exposure at 1990 Beijing Asian games, where Yang Liping danced the spectacular "Spirit of Peacock" to the whole world, which mesmerized and shocked the world at once. Since then, the peacock dance has received increasing attention, not only in improving its body movements, but also diving deeper into the implications underlying the Dai Peacock dance. Yang Liping stressed the spiritual meaning of peacocks in her dance, hoping to deliver a spirit of holiness, which she hoped to see in human world also. The roots of humanity were found in the life value of Peacock dance, enabling it to reach spiritual sublimity and artistic nirvana.

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