

Teachings of the Buddha and Buddhist on Performance-East Asian Dances

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Abstract

Buddha's teachings is one of the most influential religion in the world which a huge variety of them can be observed in eastern parts of Asia. Asian dance performance in many countries were heavily affected by Buddha's teachings in their subjects and performances. These views can be used to display the royal court of Korea and Japan, Burma and Thailand court drama, Peking Opera, puppet show in Asian countries such as Burma, Indonesia, China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia and Bdaya dance in Javanese, Indonesia and Prahara celebration in Sri Lanka which were affected by the various teachings of the Buddha and Buddhist on issues such as regarding the destruction of worldly desires in the friendly spirit of true beauty, simplicity while in complexity, incarnation of Satan and evil spirits in the bodies of patients, considering the country's politics and governing the nation, fitness of body and soul after rebirth, a belief in the other world, sanctification of Buddha's tooth. The methodology in this study is descriptive-analytical, and the fundamental question of this research is: In what cases, the teachings of the Buddha in East Asian dance performance have been effective?

Keywords: "Buddha", "dance", "theater", "theater –dancing", "East Asia"

1. Introduction

Buddha is one of the most influential thinkers in human history. Buddha's teachings spans more than one thousand and five hundred years, which has surrounded throughout East Asia. Buddha's teachings has undergone enormous changes over the years, and like Christianity in Europe is divided into different sects. Although teachings of Buddha in Tibet, Central Asia, China, Korea, Japan and Sri Lanka are different, it has a lot of influences. And currently expanding the range of its effectiveness to Southeast Asia.

The most important feature of the Buddhist school of thought is cosmological aspect which is brought in religious texts. Buddha's teachings were full of gods, demons and spirits. Lyrics and poetry in Buddha issues different Gods as theme for praise. The God of Sun that is generous and is symbol of morality's goodness. Masculine and feminine deity, the god of storms and wind god, the god of war, God of fear, God of the horizon (which its statue is a white girl), god of fire, and Vishnu, the god of the dead who had died and since then governing the dead (Mozaffari, 114: 1378).

But the remarkable point is that the worldview of popular beliefs implicating the untimely and non-regulated interferences of metaphysical entities in the universe. This effect is visible in the culture and daily life. The most important concern of people, especially Brahama and Buddhist is satisfaction and contentment of the deities in several ways such as diverse dances. This has led to plentiful performance of the rites and rituals, religious dances among traditions of people. Among these rites and rituals that are performed in East Asia according to the Buddha's teachings include Opera Theater, New Shows, Puppet Shows, dancing demons, rural exhibitions, Bdaya dance, Prahara and celebrations which have been analyzed in this study.

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2. An Investigation on the influence of Buddhist teachings on East Asian dance performance

2.1 Having Faith in the human worlds

In Buddhist school, reaching law-abidingness requires defeating the demons. As sun overcomes many clouds, and rotates its shining wheel in the sky, Buddha also disposes Satan and becomes victorious, and run the wheel of law. (KhodayarMohebbi, 49: 1353).

One of the Buddhist faith, the belief in the superhuman worlds above us like ghosts, demons, mythological figures and animals and ... (Ramez, 43: 1328).

Since these faces do not have human-like features, come as masks or Animal masks in East Asia performances which run by Buddha's teachings which according to Buddha's teachings, reaching happiness requires overcoming these creatures. In Burma and Thailand, this type of dance was shown through dance with the mask shown. (Kazemi, 47:1390)

Thai female dancers dance group is the fundamental group of Burmese court -Ytyn. Thai masked dance - blood –with the treasures of its Ramayana became a model for the Burmese Zat- Gyyroyal court dance mask. Burmese in their religious epic adaptation of Vyshnavayt considered the hero Rama as a previous incarnation of the Buddha.

As in Thailand's court performance, royal and professional performers are combined in one group. Glittering clothes and caps like crowns embellish actors who imitate actions, at the same time that the narrators narrate the story and the Chorus sing the text (Brandon, 1388: 44).

In 612 a Chinese performer Mymahy, introduced and presented the Buddhist dance performance which originated in China to the royal court of Japan. Different faces, musical instruments and theatrical dresses were probably imported from China before the year 550 (Arlington, 67:1930).

In Korea, this theatrical type was backed by court was known as Kyak. And in Japan Gykagv was named as "harmonious entertain men". Prince Shotoko, regent of Japan ordered Mymajy to establish a school of music and dance in the court, and assigned some boys to be his apprentices. Dancers and musicians also came to Japan following Mymajy. Gykagv, spread Buddhism to Japan which was a new cult and Shotoko, during his reign, willingly public is ed it. A document from the thirteenth century describes the Gykagv performances: at first Buddhist ritual music (Ntvry) with flute, drums, bells and cymbals, then chorus monks, the Buddha masks pass one after another (Gyvdy) and then another batch of ten actresses wearing Chinese female masks, king Barvmvn (a Brahman Hindi) Karvra (or Garvda, king of birds in Hindi mythology), Lion tamer and other interesting vessels on the face come and pass. Finally, the face-capped persons on a makeshift elevated stage perform funny pieces for warning about the sin in Buddhism. In the twelfth century, Gykagv lost royal patronage and its running was gradually abandoned (Valley, 1922: 107). One of the most unusual forms of Japanese theater is that highlighted theatrical faces remain stable. Almost 250 Gykagv masks are being kept in a series of temples, and the oldest one traces back to the seventh century (Brandon, 46).

These painted masks also show themselves in Beijing Opera. In Beijing Opera, there are four types of acting roles, masculine, feminine, face painting and comics (Bracket, 1375: 147).

The female dancers dance in the temples of the village to invite the spirits. When a soul reaches the road, captures the village spirit (Brandon, 57:1388).

Buddhism is one of the most effective factors in the production of modern show (Ramez, 45:1328).

Modern shows' topics and themes are more historical - religious and warlike operations and heroism play a significant role in them. These topics are often strongly influenced by Buddhist's teachings. There are usually three actors in Modern shows. The three actors are Shyth the main hero and his role has two parts: in the first part he appears to be normal, but in the second part, he is a mask on stage. It can also represent the beliefs of Buddhism beyond human. Vaky is the second actor to take the role of Shyth and usually appears in the role of a monk. The actors could have a player called "liquidation". Apart from the three main actors in the modern show, there is a chorus category consisting of ten, twelve individuals who are

sitting motionlessly and talk with music (flute and drum) call. It also represents the Buddha's teachings based on reaching Zen and ecstasy associated with sitting. New stage is a square wooden platform that is open from three sides and has an additional section on the right side for the Chorus and one in the back for the players. This scene has a roof like a temple roof to which is held by four pillars. On the right side of the back wall, three trees are painted, on the wall facing there is always a polished pine tree painted on the wood that is used as the background scene (Ernst, 1975: 34-36).

There are five new dramas which all these categories, based on the principle of Buddhism are emphasized and discussed:

1. Performances in praise of God
2. Dramas about knights
3. Dramas about women which Buddhism from long time ago had a positive attitude toward women and during history women have been seeking enlightenment as much as men.
4. Miscellaneous dramas which are often about crazy people or spirits.
5. Shows about demons, monsters or other supernatural forces. Traditionally, the application of a modern show is a combination of all the five mentioned above (Sorrell, 34:1967).

2.2 Proportion of body and soul after rebirth

A unique characteristic of the show in Asia, is the significant importance of puppet show, and more especially shadow show. Cotton doll or puppet show in all Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia, China, Japan and Korea) are well-known. The unique form of puppet theatre that is performed on the surface of the lake (Mvarvaynvk) is an honor for Vietnam. Various types of leather shadow plays can be seen across the vast expanse which begins in India in the West and passes from Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and reaches China in the East (Vnv worked and Nyrmala, 197:2004). According to Buddhist's belief in human after rebirth, everyone's soul is tailored to his physical condition, and this is exactly according to the shadow puppet from the doll which was displayed on the screen of East Asia dance performance.

Some of Buddhist's teaching which is called "karma" seeks quality of rebirth and cause of transmission of soul to a superior or inferior body and says: Future life of every creature is determined according to this law. And because of this, one's deeds, speech, and conceiving would have results and causes which would determine his next life. According to karma, every man is like a farmer who harvest his crop. And all his deeds, sayings, thoughts finds a fixed place in his soul. And makes it susceptible and organized which at time of incarnation, i.e. in the next life form appropriate to make the body fit and will have a new body (Gonabads, 198:1336).

Doll bodies probably are in strong relation with the belief in liveliness of objects and were used as symbols that represent the tribes. When moving shadows are seen on the white curtain falls, allowing the human

audience to imagine the world of the spirits. These dolls are ideal representative of human's relation with sacred structures. Puppet shows are floating with moral and ethical atmosphere, and all the forms of puppet shows in Asia served humanity like a pioneer movement and pattern for future advancements of theatrical forms.

2-3 Considering the country's politics and governing the nation

Beijing Opera actor who plays, sings and does conventional gestures in their best form on an empty stage in colorful costumes. In Beijing Opera, there are four types of acting roles, masculine, feminine, face painting and comics. Men's roles are usually the types of scientists, statesmen, patriots and homeland and so on. Types of female roles include chaste women, lovers, evil women and old women.

Painted faces symbolize types such as warriors, gods, officers and courtiers, and finally comic roles including actor or joker has the right to make impromptu game and mockery (Bracket, 1375: 147).

Thai female dancers dance group is the fundamental group of Burmese court - Ytyn. Thai masked dance - blood - the treasures of his Ramayanayy became a model for the Burmese royal court dance mask Zatt Gyy. Rama, was considered the hero of the religious epic adaptation Vyshnavayt Burma as the previous incarnation of the Buddha. As in Thai court performance, professional dancers and courtiers were combined in one group. And splendid costumes and crown-like caps embellished actors who imitated actions as the narrators narrated, and the chorus were singing. Soon there were new texts: a minister, Myavady, created the impression that he inspired a story called Aynayvng and his Thai pattern Aynayvis about romantic adventures of Indonesian Prince. In the nineteenth century, the court plays which were written by NiaYvpvnYvkyn Yu and are regarded the most important literary achievements of the court. Subjects including political conspiracy, murder and betrayal, were observed in abundance in their dramas (Brandon, 1388: 45).

In Buddha's teachings, great emphasis is placed on the political affairs of the country and governing of the nation. In the two first instruction of Buddha's seven instructions we observe. First, the more people gather to discuss about political issues and provide national defense needs. Second, people of all ranks of society should come together as a single body, and all participate to discuss about the affairs of the country. From Buddha's view, the best way to rule a country is that the ruler should overcome his ego foremost.

A leader should meet his people with a heart filled with kindness, and educate them and show them the paths of glory so that all remove impurities from their hearts and minds. The joy that is gained through good advice, gives much more pleasure than the world's material things can give. So the ruler should give good education to their people and keep their heart, mind and body at peace (Rajabzade 103:1374).

2.4 Incarnation of Satan and evil spirits in patient's bodies

Buddhists consider some incurable physical and psychological diseases as a result of the incarnation of demons or evil spirits in the patient's body. In the meantime, there are also some people who claim to communicate and penetrate in the harmful demons and ghosts. They know dances, incantations and different songs and for healing every patient or neutralizing any magical, they perform special edition of this collection. Among such dances, is the dance of the demons. Dance of demons in ritual dances in East Asia, is a popular - spiritual dancing and has always been supported and encouraged by Buddhists. Religious dances are performed in order to attract the attention of holy beings or evil spirits, for the benefit of humans temporal.

2-5 Simplicity yet complexity

Using simple realism on stage in colorful costumes peak is closely associated with Buddhist temples. Shrines dedicated to Buddha, luxurious, colorful and responsibility on the other hand, monks are seen around the site eventually live simply. However, these contradictory images can be considered to create a cohesive whole in the Buddhist worldview. During the Ming dynasty, performing various styles existed throughout the China. The integration of the various styles displayed by these actors led to a particular show that is known as the Beijing Opera. The character of Beijing opera, staged, the acting and the type of contract have particularly created simple ideas in them. But the actor and actress in Beijing Opera has a special significance. Peking Opera actor on an empty stage in colorful costumes, plays, sings to the beautiful form of contractual movements.

2-6 Sanctification of Buddha's Tooth

Tooth Temple is located in downtown "Candi". Tooth Temple has caused many pilgrims come to Ceylon, and the candi city became one of the most important centers of Buddhist religion, To the point that it can be truly considered Buddhism Shrine. Because they set up this temple for the tooth which they said belongs to Buddha. Every year hundreds of thousands of Buddhists from around the world come to Candi to perform special religious ceremony.

When the Buddhist spirit went up to sky and his body remained on the earth, a big difference appeared between his disciples, each of them has an idea on his body burial, and representatives of each country, "Buddhists" who tried to honor the Buddha's body burial portion of his land, Because Big Buddha did not belong to a particular country, he was a religious leader, was that finally got the idea that every part of his holy body is given to a country, and thus one of his teeth was granted to Ceylon city, The brought the tooth with special rituals and respects to ceylon so that all of his disciples were able to visit it, they established a huge temple and named the temple, the temple of the tooth.

Mgavana king who ruled between 331-301 AD, ordered so that the tooth of Buddha, a symbol of country's authority, once a year being carried between people so that people can express their respect. The ceremony continued and eventually finds a certain grandeur. Prahara celebration in August every year, coinciding with the the start of the lunar new moon and continues till full moon. Caravan of a great and big celebration in Candi city moves in front of the temple of the tooth. In this convoy traditional dance bands, dancing demons, procession the ranks of students and mutrib or musician procession follow the head of the temple tooth and groups who are wearing traditional dress go along a train of dozens elephants which are decorated with colorful lights and velvet fabrics. The convoy passing several streets of the city in this way. On both sides of these street, the crowd are watching a splendid show or display of this caravan.

2-7 Destroying the secular desires in a realbeauty-loving soul

Buddha believed that all human's suffering and misery come from his intense greed leading him to a stage of arrogance where in this world and the other world, dreams about limitless wishes and hopes.

Nirvana is a word that means in Buddha's philosophy , “ to completely suppress all physical lusts and the sky is in his idea, turning off of innate feelings off tabs, or selfishness. Or in other words, a complete remission of pain and struggle of the individual soul, and the final redemption of the roaring sea. In Indonesia, the last heritage of the early Islamic era Javanese dance is feminine. These shows that are even more abstract than Algonig, are considered as a symbol of the ancient royal splendor.

In Bdaya dance, woman dancer with slow movements and a hypocrite runs an elegant and sophisticated dancing. It is possible that in one of the pieces, an strong drama struggle happens that is both the indicative of the real battle of the story and reveals destruction of worldly desires in a friendly spirit of real beauty. It affected and overshadowed the the mutual interaction of physical and intellectual aspects of such a show. Some manners of Nantrysm probably have an impact on these types of shows.

And desinging of the dance led to the creation of choreography and stage position similar to Mandela that is effective on the magical- religious layer and stimulates the enlightenment in ideal audience that means sovereign. Dancers often become souses or servants of the sovereign and he takes them into the battle so that with showing or displaying them, causes the freedom or releasing of spiritual forcecs against the enemy. Anciet history of Bdaya choreography that is still performed goes back to the sixteenth century, but it is believed that this type of dramatic is more related with ancient forms of Hinduism – Buddhism. Central Java is one of the royal heritage of Bdaya ktavang sorakatra. Sultan Agung of Mataram who is believed to be in the southern Pacific coast while in contemplation and meditation, and at the same time the goddess of the sea was trying to seduce him through this dance. After that, every year in a day of the coronation of his successor this dance is performed so that reinvigorates the spiritual covenant of the goddess and the king. It is believed that the Goddess appears somewhere among dancers.

Conclusion

Many customs associated with dance and drama in East Asia and in countries such as China, Japan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and ... are influenced by the teachings and rituals of Buddha. These teachings are in the form of presentation and display such meta-human worlds, like gods, spirits of the dead, demons, mythological figures, the belief in supernaturals, proportion of body and spirit after rebirth, considering the bodies of the patients , consecration of Buddha's tooth, destroying the secular desires in a real beauty-loving soul ... The teachings of Buddha in the form of a dance drama such as court performances in Korea, Japan, Thailand, Burma, Beijing opera, puppet show cotton in Asian countries such as Burma, Indonesia, China, Japan and Korea, Bdaya dance in Java, Indonesia, the celebration Prahara in Sri Lanka and etc...have been focused.

In Table 1: the relationship between these lessons with the contents of East Asian dance display is shown

Association with the teachings of the Buddha	Location	Drama tic elements in East Asia	Column
Introducing human-like display engulfed the worlds of gods, spirits of the dead, demons, mythological figures	Royal Court of Korea and Japan	The use of face masks	1
Shrines being Opulent, colorful and complex in Buddhism	Burma and Thailand show court	Glittering costumes and crown-like caps	2
Considering the politics and governing the nation	Burma Court Drama	Subjects including political intrigue, murder and betray al in a royal performance	3
Destroying the secular desires in a real beauty-loving soul	Beijing Opera	Simplicity in decoration of the stage, the acting and the subject contract	4
Considering the politics and governing the nation	Beijing Opera	Male roles and types, such as scientists, statesmen, patriots homeland	5
Incarnation of Satan and evil spirits in the bodies of patients	Beijing Oper	Dance of demons	6
Liveliness of objects, Doll being ideal representatives for human's relation with sacred structures, shadow puppets representing the spirits	Cotton puppet show in Asian countries such as Burma, Indonesia, China, Japan and Korea	Cotton doll or puppet show in all Asian countries	7
Destroying the secular desires in a real beauty-loving soul	Bdaya dance in Java, Indonesia	Intense fighting in the dance drama Bdaya	8
Buddha's tooth symbol for country's magnificene	Prahara celebrations in Sri Lanka	Tools for revering Buddha's tooth and passing from the front of the temple	9

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