

METHODIST CHARACTERISTICS OF "DOLAN" UIGUR DANCE

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Abstract: *In this article, one of the folk dances with a long history among Uyghur dances, "Dolan Mashraf" dance of Xinjiang Song and Dance Theater, is analyzed in detail. Also, body rhythm of performers, structural types of dance, stylistic features of dance are revealed in Dolan dance.*

Key words: *Dolan dance, Dolan Mashraf, Uighur nation, Chikitma, Sanam, Selikai, Selma.*

One of the folk dances with a long history among Uyghur dances is the "Dolan dance". "Dolan" Uighur dance is loved by men, women, old and young alike. It is extremely high quality in terms of musical style and performance. This article takes a look at Xinjiang Song and Dance Theater "Dolan Mashraf". Uyghur Dolan dance is analyzed briefly and in detail based on its development history, music, etc. The term "Dolan" first appeared in ancient times as the name of a self-proclaimed ethnic group. It usually refers to the self-proclaimed name of people in some settlements in the Tarim Basin and Yarkan River Basin in southern Xinjiang. Apparently, the word "Dolan" was originally a geographical name. Maigaiti District is known as the "Homeland of Dolan Dance" in Xinjiang and beyond. "Dolan" is also an ancient synonym of Maygaychi district. Translated from Chinese, it means "groups" that correspond to compatriots living together under the oasis. As the translations of Chinese characters with the same pronunciation and the same meaning appeared one after another, different translations gradually appeared in history.

To this day, the academic community considers itself "daolan". These two words better reflect the heroic, fearless, simple and hard-working lifestyle of the ancient Uyghur compatriots in the Makit district on the edge of the Takli Makan desert in ancient times. That is why they call themselves "Dolan people" in Maigaiti district. The word "Merep" is derived from



the Arabic language. It means "habits", "character" or "drinking place". In its current Uyghur language extension, it means "gathering place", which refers to recreational activities of a gathering nature.

Folk proverbs combining song, dance and music are common in the Dolan region. "One Dolan man is alone, two Dolans can dance against each other, and more than three Dolan men represent the extensive life of Mashrafe." Among them, the number "three" represents a large number of performers, which represents Dolan Mashrafe.

Although the Makit region is known as the "homeland of Dolan dance", excellent examples of Dolan dance can be seen in Yakan, Maralbishi and the Turpan Basin on the banks of the Yarkand River. Because the "Dolan" dance has become an important event for the Uyghurs, such as celebration of holidays, daily recreation and entertainment. Over the years, with the development of the Uyghur people, the Dolan dance gradually developed and became popular. Even many people living in China (non-Uighurs) began to perform the "Dolan" dance.

The industrious people of Dolan perfectly inherited the cultural essence of the ancient music and dances of the Western region. Dolan dance music gradually builds from sanban, mid-tempo and allegro to a climax, reflecting the labor processes of life in dance. The work begins with a quiet setting set to the "Sanban" overture, then is divided into the first stage of "Chiqtiman", the second stage of "Sanam", the third stage of "Selikai", the climax stage and the final stage. Dolan dance is divided into the following 4 groups in terms of performance sequence:

- **"Chikitma"** is performed with clear drums and rhythm. The dance is performed by just two people, with no gender restrictions imposed on the Performer's partner, who enter the stage singing and drumming to the beat. Women usually hold one hand up and the other behind their back. The practice dates back to ancient times when hunting, when people held torches high to illuminate the path ahead to see the direction of their prey. The men's movement is slightly different, meaning that they move boldly forward, mostly with outstretched arms. The rhythm of the movement is 3/4 beats, and each beat steps forward, sideways, or backward, and the third beat is pressed to produce a clear sound, which fully expresses the strong and weak feeling of "Chikitma".

"Sanam" is a cheerful but quiet dance form consisting of three steps and one rise movement. The Sanam dance is very graceful but requires nimble performance. The dancer takes three steps and raises his legs. In the third step, the hands draw a circular line around the wrists, reaching the sixth Uighur hand position. Hands alternate between left and right. Also, in the fifth position - they can turn their hands back to tie the wrist. The legs are pulled back, the fingers of both hands click, and the movement of the neck is coordinated. Foot steps are based on "three

steps and one rise" and the movements of the limbs are also varied. With one hand, you can wrap your wrist with a circular line and twist your fingers. Male dancers usually place one hand on their chest and the other behind their back, performing many twisting movements that show the beauty of Uyghur men. It also includes some technical movements like squats and twists, flat twists, etc. **"Selikai"** - All dancers form a large circle and rotate first counter-clockwise and then clockwise. The tone is incredibly fun, paving the way for the next Selma. The rhythm is 2/4, which is different from the previous two-man band. Everyone happily gathers together, further embodying the meaning of the Dolan dance, "gathering in groups." At the same time, it is also historically significant when people worked together to catch prey during ancient hunts, when the hunt was celebrated with joy. **"Selma"** - Based on a large circle in front of you, one hand is rotated into a fist and raised above the head, elbow slightly bent, and continued to rotate in place. As the music speeds up, so does the spinning speed, bringing the dance closer to its climax. The rhythm is 2/4 or 5/8, men and women can dance against each other. The dancer who spins the longest and fastest wins the final victory. This is the most exciting part of the whole Dolan dance. Dolan dance developed in modern times. It is distinguished by its strong, elegant, brave and free features. The Dolan dance was performed all over the country and was later included in the folk dance programs of Chinese colleges and universities. Later, it became one of the widely used projects in Xinjiang's national fitness program. The reason is that "Dolan" dance has a significant impact on big sports. Art is the product of the continuous labor process of human production. Dolan dance witnessed the development process of the Uyghur people. It is precisely because of this intense and lively life that "Dolan" escaped entertainment and rose to the highest level of art and culture. Dolan dance and culture have gradually become the most delicious spiritual food for people living in modern society. It is the various dance forms that make up the rich and colorful Uyghur dance system. Today, many choreographers are engaged in creating different forms of Dolan dance. To date, there are 4 types of Dolan dance, and we are sure that in the future many interesting types of Dolan dance will be created.



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