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## Text Analysis of Chinese Dance Culture Ecology Research

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### Abstract

In the 1970s, the Chinese academic circle began the study of cultural ecology, and when combined with the situation in China, it had a large number of academic achievements. This article analyzes the texts of cultural ecology studies in the field of Chinese dance and roughly summarizes them into three aspects: the formation according to a specific environment, the interaction between culture and environment, and the ecological adaptation and adjustment of culture. Finally, from the objective factor or the subject development, the development of Chinese dance is summarized by the research findings of cultural ecology theory.

**Keywords:** Cultural ecology, Interaction, Adaptation and adjustment

### Introduction

In the 1950s, American anthropologist Julian Steward first proposed the concept of "cultural ecology" in his book "Theory of Cultural Change", which was recognized in academic circles as the birth of cultural ecology. Steward proposed the theory of cultural multi-line evolution. Culture does not exist and develop in isolation. Different ecological environments produce different cultural forms. Cultural ecology examines the process of culture and society's adaptation to the environment. Another important theory in the development of cultural ecology in the 1970s was the birth of Marvin Harris's cultural materialism theory. His



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research strategy is regarded as "new positivism", emphasizing the scientific attitude to studying many human issues and the acquisition of knowledge should be verifiable and confirmed. From the 1980s to the 1990s, with the continuous improvement and development of theory, system theory was incorporated into the study of cultural ecology and became the basis of the discipline. It changed the mechanical one-way determinism of the environment of the previous cultural ecologists, but from the two-way interaction between environment and culture, it has broken through the cultural ecological view that only values the natural environment and has incorporated both the humanized environment and the information environment into the cultural ecological environment.

In the search for "cultural ecology" by the National Digital Library of China, about 350 related works were obtained. The earlier works on cultural ecology by Dong Xinbin and Zheng Qi (2001), "Guide to Human Cultural Ecology", interpreted black culture, white culture, and yellow cultures, respectively, and finally came to the four classic cultural laws, namely "noumenon law", "allogeneic law", "double delusion law", and "integration law", which opened up a macroscopic study of Chinese cultural ecology. In the past 20 years, cultural ecology has been widely used in Chinese academic circles. Among the art research works, Zhang Ping's (2019) "Music and Ecological Culture", Kuang Chengquan, Liu Ning's (2018) "Cultural Ecology of Folk Art", etc., Xing Lingguo (2017) "Cultural Ecology of Hebei Folk Dance Research" is the only book that studies dance in cultural ecology. The article has a certain innovative interpretation of the overall research, the collation and classification of folk dances in the Hebei area. Through the retrieval of the paper, more textual materials have been obtained, but no one has conducted longitudinal combing on the textual research of dance. This article will summarize, comb, and analyze the text of Chinese dance culture ecology, finally coming to the research conclusion of the text analysis to provide more scholars with theoretical research reference.

### Objective

1. To sort out and analyze existing texts on the cultural ecology of Chinese dance.
2. To summarize the research inevitability of Chinese dance culture ecology from both the objectivity and subjectivity perspectives.

### Research scope

The documents and papers related to cultural ecology published in China during the decades of 1977 – 2019 are the scope of this research.



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Research methods

This article uses literature research methods, mainly through the National Digital Library of China, local libraries, and local governments to obtain books, local chronicles, and other documents; collect papers through CNKI and the Chinese journal service platform Weipu Information; and through the retrieval of "cultural ecology", 2,091 papers were obtained. The earliest research on cultural ecology in China was in 1977, with a total of 6 papers published; in 2016, the most research results were published, with a total of 106 papers.

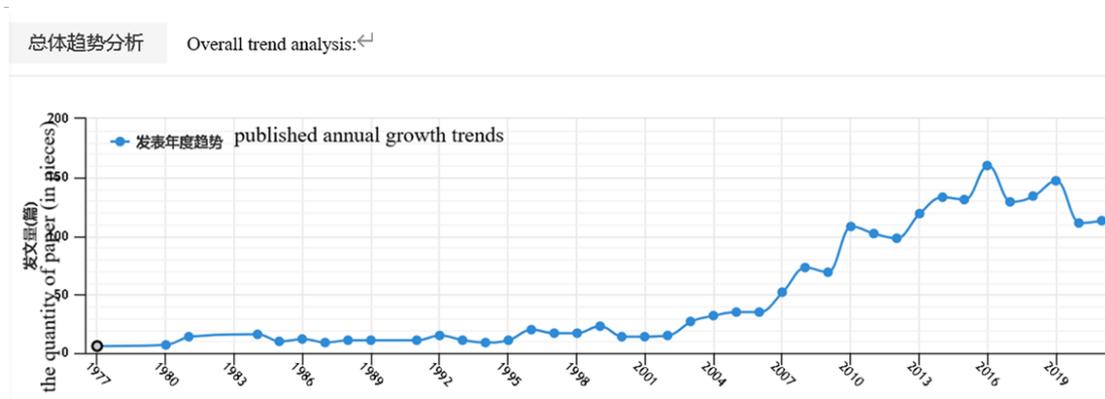


Figure 1 Data source: CNKI

Cultural ecology has been applied to many research fields, including 96 pieces of music and dance, accounting for 4.35% of the total research.

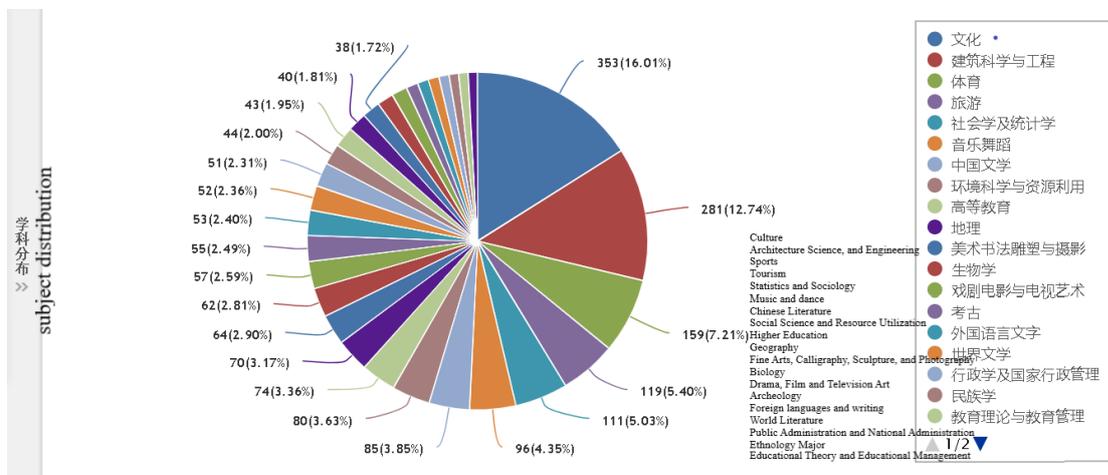


Figure 2 Data source: CNKI



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Searching for the two keywords "cultural ecology" and "dance" through CNKI, 20 academic papers were obtained, from which 12 papers related to dance were selected. Among them, it is roughly divided into dance studies, folk dance studies, and sports dance studies.

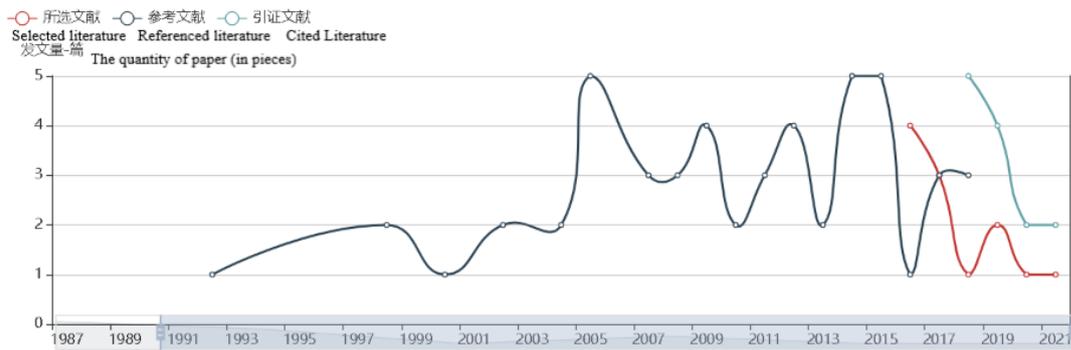


Figure 3 Data source: CNKI

After searching for the keywords "cultural ecology" and "dance" on the Chinese journal service platform Weipu Information, 16 papers were obtained, and the research field was concentrated on folk dance.

1、概述 1. Overview

检索条件: 已选文章16篇 Search criteria: 16 selected articles

检索结果: 16条 Search results: 16 items

2、学术成果产出分析 2. Statistical Analysis of Academic Achievements

序号	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Serial number										
发文章 Published Times	0	2	0	1	4	1	0	3	2	1
被引量 Cited Times	0	7	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0

图表1 近10年学术成果产出统计表  
 Figure 1: Statistical Table of Academic Achievement Output in the Past 10 Years

Figure 4 Data source: CNKI

Research results

The collected papers on "cultural ecology" and "dance" are classified and sorted out, and explained separately from the three viewpoints of cultural multi-line evolution theory, the interactive relationship between culture and the environment, and cultural adaptation and integration in cultural ecology.



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### 1. A particular environment shapes a particular culture.

Cultural ecology pays attention to the relationship between culture and the ecological environment. The focus is not on seeking universal laws that adapt to all cultures and environments, but on discovering that the special cultures and environments in different regions give rise to different cultural forms. Specific environmental factors form special cultural characteristics (Kay Milton, 1998). The paper "Functional Research of Canal Umbrella Dance in Liaocheng" by Wang Ying (2017) shows that the Canal Umbrella Dance is a comprehensive performance form integrating umbrella dance, yangko twisting, and bolide in the Luxi area. Under the cultural and ecological background of ethnic identity, the various cultural factors in the region collide and merge with each other, which has contributed to the regional cultural specificity that is different from other cultural belts. The paper "Study on the Inheritance of the Bai ethnic group's Riggao from the Perspective of Cultural Ecology" by Liu Xin (2016) uses the theory of cultural ecology to analyze the existence of the Bai's "Riggao" environment. Due to the characteristics of the living environment, unique actions have been formed. The paper "Research on Body Movement in Chinese and Western Dance Cultural Ecology Based on A Comparative Analysis of Aquatic Fighting Dance and Spanish Bullfighting Dance" by Sun Qunqun, Bai Jinxiang, and Luo Ling (2017) investigated body movement in Chinese and Western dance from the perspectives of cultural ecology, physical and cultural layers (clothing, headwear, performance props), mentality culture layer (action occasions, action awareness, social functions, social needs), and system culture layer (social system, management organization), comparing the aquarium fighting dance and Spanish bullfighting dance to get the result of the difference between Chinese and Western dance body movement culture. In the paper "Cultural Ecology Research on the Origin and Development of Samba Dance" by Wen Jing, Li Xiaohong, and Cheng Tian (2018), they use Steward's cultural ecology theory to analyze samba dance from the material culture, mentality culture, system culture, and behavioral culture perspectives. The paper "The Yi People's Dramatic Cymbal Dance from the Perspective of Cultural Ecology" by Zhang Quanhui (2016) studies the dramatic cymbal dance from the ecological environment, social customs, folk beliefs, and other factors. The paper "Research on Protection and Inheritance of Minnan Chest Slap Dance from the Perspective of Cultural Ecology" by Li Tao (2013) analyzes the natural, social, and folk cultural manifestations of chest dance from the perspective of cultural ecology. Based on the principles of cultural ecology, the paper "The Interpretation of the Relationship between Mongolian Bo Song and Dance and the Grand Tradition of Grassland Culture" by Wang Yu (2019) shows that there is a high degree of



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relevance between Mongolian Bo singing and dancing as the "small tradition" in the grassland culture and the grassland drama culture as the "big tradition". It is a folk culture cultivated by the cultural ecology of grassland art, religion, and aesthetic culture.

## 2. The interaction of culture and environment.

The science of interdependence and balance between specific ecological environments and culture. On the one hand, it is recognized that nature has powerful regulations for human beings with biological attributes that cannot be ignored. The simpler early human society was, the more directly affected by the environment it was. Differences in terrain, flora, and fauna will cause people to use different technologies and constitute different social organizations. On the other hand, human beings who emphasize social culture have extraordinary abilities to recognize, utilize, and even transform the natural environment, thereby forming cultural and environmental interactions. Duan Fei's (2019) paper "A Preliminary Study on the Culture and Ecology of Flamenco in Spain" combed the history and development of flamenco culture and analyzed the cultural and ecological characteristics of flamenco from the natural environment, social environment, and human environment, Understand the cultural characteristics of flamenco through the interaction of different factors, such as the artistic environment and the policy environment. Meng Meng's (2016) Ph.D. thesis, "Research on Lusheng Music and Dance in the Funeral Ceremony of the Miao People in Danzhai County, Guizhou", uses the perspective of cultural ecology to conclude that the cultural function of Lusheng Music and Dance in the funeral rituals of the Miao people in Danzhai County is the function of inheriting the historical culture of the Miao nationality and the presentation of the regional culture. At the same time, it carries the Miao people's worldview and outlook on life, and finally, the core point of view is the interaction between cultural ecology and the symbiosis of lusheng music and dance, culture, and the environment. Xue Feng's (2019) "The Ecological Characteristics and Inheritance of the Modern Culture of Minnan Bratting Dance" uses the perspective of cultural ecology to explain the relationship between dance and environmental changes. Environmental changes affect the inheritance and evolution of dance, and the interaction between culture and the environment changes the form of dance and its content. Xu Yumin's (2007) "Perspective of the Kun Dance Cultural Ecological Environment and Analysis of Kun Dance's Current Tense Existence" pointed out that Kundance is refined from Kunqu, and the refining of Kunqu dance should strengthen the body language of Kunqu under the culture of Kunqu, not The displacement and separation of the organism means that any one of the living organisms organically constitutes an interactive and related whole. The combined force of the organic





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natural geography and social culture of the region. Through social and cultural changes, the development of umbrella-tou Yangko was interpreted in stages, and the adaptation of umbrella-tou Yangko to the ecological environment in different periods was also analyzed, which is a dynamic study. Luo Wanhong's (2015) "The Changes and Adjustments of Miao Dance in Western Hunan from the Perspective of Cultural Ecology" discusses the changes and adjustments in three aspects of Miao dance: costumes, dance movements, and performance forms. The Miao dance in western Hunan has gradually evolved from the deep mountains of the Miao area, stepping onto the stage from Xiangxi to China and the world, becoming a cultural exchange messenger, constantly evolving in changes and adjustments. Wang Haitao and Li Jiani's (2019) "Study on the Cultural Ecology of the Three Gorges Sacrifice to Gods Singing and Dancing "Jumping Duan Gong" in the Post-Immigration Context" pointed out that in the era of migration from the Three Gorges Reservoir area, many cultural heritage and primitive cultural ecological environments disappeared, and there is an urgent need to protect, inherit, repair, and rebuild the cultural ecology. Systemically build the village culture and build a new cultural-ecological environment that continues the "Jumping Duan Gong".

The ecological adaptation and adjustment of dance necessitate dynamic observation of dance's past and present in order to achieve ecological adaptation and adjustment of dance in long-term development. It is a dynamic and interactive research theory to study the synchronicity of dance in various periods from the perspective of diachronism, which conforms to the law of dance itself and, at the same time, can analyze dance more comprehensively.

## Conclusion and discussion

### 1. The objective end of nature.

"The end of nature does not mean a world in which the natural environment has been eliminated, but refers to all aspects of the material world where there are almost no areas without human intervention". (Anthony Giddens & Christopher, 1988), according to Baker's interpretation of "the end of nature". There are two meanings. First, in the spatial and practical sense, it means that pure nature that has not been affected by humans no longer exists. Every corner of the earth is directly or indirectly left with traces of human beings, and every living thing is deeply affected by human activities. Second, in the sense of change and development, it refers to pure nature that is not affected by human activities. Changes, the end of purely objective changes, and human activities have profoundly affected the



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development direction and the speed of change in the natural world. But at the same time, "the end of nature" does not mean that the laws of nature no longer function and no longer exist, but that pure nature no longer exists. As Baker once said, "At the end of the 20th century, nature is society, and society is also nature" (Ulrich Baker, 2004). It is the problematic unity of nature and culture that makes nature and culture lose the basis for their independent existence.

It is inevitable to study dance from a cultural ecology perspective and driven by objective factors. Early human productivity was low, and people needed to master purely objective laws. Therefore, a large number of early human dances were formed, with functions such as sacrifice, prayer, and labor; and then, today, with highly developed productivity, humans need to grasp the law of "participation of humankind and interaction between subject and object" to study dance more thoroughly and comprehensively, and it is a dynamic, historical, synchronic, and interactive theoretical study.

## **2. Chinese dance and cultural ecology are inextricably linked.**

Dance is a cultural phenomenon. The purposeful behavior of human beings in a certain natural and social environment is an art form that conveys emotions through human form and demeanor. The production of dance is very consistent with the specific environment that produces a specific dance, the interaction between dance and the environment, and dance is also adapting and adjusting with social development to complete self-adaptation and self-development. In the book "Chinese Folk Dance Culture Course," Luo Xiongyan (2001) classified Chinese folk dances according to Chinese cultural types, namely, agricultural culture area, grassland culture area, marine culture area, agriculture and animal husbandry culture type, and oasis culture type. China has a vast territory and the dances in each region accumulate to varying degrees. The natural environment, science and technology, the economic system, social organization, and values of the region all affect the formation of dances in the region. In this way, the division of dances through cultural areas is an indirect use of cultural ecology to macroscopically structure and analyze dance from the perspective of learning.

In the continuous changes and development of society, dance is also reforming and adapting to the new cultural ecology. There are a large number of examples in the above-mentioned text analysis to support this argument. And a more comprehensive and thorough analysis and interpretation of dance can be achieved by using the research theories and methods of cultural ecology.





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