

On the Strength, Energy and Charm of Jindo Drum Dance

论珍岛鼓舞的力、气、韵

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Abstract

Jindo Drum Dance is an extremely distinctive form of Korean folk dance that is still very much alive as a performance medium and has been designated by the Jeollanam-do Government as an example of intangible cultural heritage. Current research on Jindo Drum Dance has focused on its choreography, comparing different styles and genres and analyzing specific dance movements; methodological studies on the practice level, however, remain very limited. Through a combination of visits and field studies, I have categorized and summarized the strength, energy and charm of Jindo Drum Dance from a first-person perspective, and have further investigated the cultural connotations embodied within the dance form. This paper firstly aims to promote a broader perspective of Jindo Drum Dance through integrating theory with practice and then aims to provide further references for those who study Jindo Drum Dance by sharing my own personal experiences.

Keywords: folk dance, Jindo Drum Dance, strength, energy, charm

摘要

珍岛鼓舞是极具特色的韩国民俗舞蹈，是至今仍活跃在舞台上的全罗南道指定非物质文化遗产。该舞蹈现有的学术性研究多围绕舞蹈学、流派差异性以及舞蹈动作分析展开，欠缺实践层面的方法性研究。笔者通过自身走访学习，从第一人称视角对珍岛鼓舞力、气、韵分别进行了梳理与总结，并对舞蹈所包含的文化内涵进行了挖掘与概括。一是希望理论反哺实践，实现自我思想高度的提升，二是希望通过个人学习经验的分享，在大家对珍岛鼓舞的学习实践中提供指导借鉴的助力。

关键词: 民俗舞蹈, 珍岛鼓舞, 力, 气, 韵

1. Introduction

When Korean ethnic groups migrated from the Korean Peninsula to China, they brought with them their own traditional dancing culture that included both folk dance and court dance styles. Apart from the traditional dancing styles introduced by folk people and court dancers, the Korean Dancing Teaching and Training Strategy known as the Li Wu System – invented by the Korean dancer Choi Seung Hee and practiced both by herself and her students – has become the solid foundation of Chinese Korean ethnic stage dancing art, of professional dancing teaching and even of non-professional dancing

teaching (Xiang, Kaiming, Yan, Deshan, 2002). It is not only the core model of Korean dance training but is also the archetype of the style and aesthetics of Korean dancing. It is therefore easy for us to conclude that the traditional dancing culture on the Korean Peninsula is the home culture of Korean ethnic dance in China, for their origins can be traced back to the same key point in history.

My research begins with an exploration of Jindo Drum Dance and its methodologies of strength, energy and charm, relating these methodologies not only to the performance and teaching of Chinese Korean ethnic dance but also coming to an understanding of how we may absorb the merits of Jindo Drum Dance for our own use.

Jindo Drum Dance is one of the Korean folk dances. It is the second most typically represented drum dance and second only to the Court Drum Dance. The Jindo drum dancer needs to hold the drumsticks and also play the drum with both hands; this differentiates it from any other folk drum dances. It has been called “the two drums” or “the double drums”, for its unique way of holding the sticks and playing the drum simultaneously.

There are four schools of Jindo Drum Dance – each of which respectively belongs to the deceased owner of a particular skill; they are recognized as Jeollanam Specified Intangible Cultural Heritage, Taiyu Liang, Park Kwan-yong, Tiancheng Zhang and the owner of the funeral activity skill, BinqianPiao (who has not yet been appointed as the heritage owner of drum dance culture). Current research focuses mainly on the study of dance, variations in dance schools and in taught dance movements. There is a marked lack of cultural study in the ontological methodology of Jindo Drum Dance and so my research will place emphasis on the performative dimensions of Jindo Drum Dance – namely “strength energy and rhyme” – and will explore the relationship between these three.

2. The Root of Strength

Every dancer knows that a one-minute performance on stage can often require up to ten years of practice; each beautiful move is the result of daily assiduous training. Only when a dancer has gained qualified basic skills can he/she have the capability to perform well. Only when the dancer “Dance[s] as if one’s feet is in the floor” can the dancing moves be seen as perfect. To distinguish an excellent dancer from a banal dancer, one only needs to look at their foot movements. Thus, the basic training of a dancer’s lower limbs and the knowledge of how to dance with brevity are crucial to a dancer. Although lower limb practice is important in Jindo Drum Dance, it has some additional rare requirements that cannot be seen in other dances.

Jindo Drum Dance lays emphasis on the relationship between a dancer’s feet and the earth. From a cultural perspective, it is a reflection of humans’ relationship with earth as being a complex and collectively artistic phenomena. Human beings live on the earth, eat on the earth and produce their daily needs from the earth. Most Koreans still follow this tradition – even sleeping on the floor. It is clear that the morphology of dance has been largely influenced by peoples’ cultural perceptions and living habits. The relationship between man and life is reflected in the closeness of the feet to the floor in dancing.

Such strength is well demonstrated by the positioning of dancers' feet on the floor in Jindo Drum Dance. In order to learn Jindo Drum Dance, we have to further analyze the relationship between the dancer's feet and the floor they move over; the insights of the following paragraphs will be followed by an analysis of energy and rhyme.

2.1. The Relationship between Feet and Floor

Jindo Drum Dance makes full use of the relationship between the feet and the floor. Through stamping on the floor to gain strength, feet are treated as if they are the roots of a tree. When this strength collapses, a (bottom-up) counter-force reaches all the way up to the center of the breath (*Dantian*), and so the strength stops there until the next stamp occurs and sends down the strength from above – so beginning the cycle once again. To explain simply; the center of gravity of the body is focused on our feet. When we change the center of gravity from left to right, the relationship between feet and floor can be clearly felt. Thus it is that the body perceives how all our strength lies on the surface just where the feet touch the floor. The audience may not directly notice this relationship between feet and floor/floor and strength by themselves, but through the performers' delicate dancing, audience members will perceive that the dancers' lower limbs are carefully composed and extremely powerful. This diversified visual experience can be achieved by the distribution of unbalanced strength.

The exercise of lower limb strength is a special element of the Jindo Drum Dance; its concepts and methodologies all differ from our general knowledge of how we move the body and use its strength. Whereas muscles are used to maintain strength and exhibit powerfulness, Jindo Drum Dance takes advantage of the counter force between the feet and the floor and uses the dancer's knees and muscles to transport the strength upwards or downwards. One may raise such questions as whether the strength exemplified in Jindo Drum Dance is demonstrated only by the body- or whether it is possible to have this force emanate from elsewhere without the mobilization of other functions of the body. In studying Jindo Drum Dance, we do have to disregard some previous assertions and focus primarily on the singularity of the experience.

2.2. The External Form and Inner Relations of Strength, Knees and Hips

2.2.1. External Form

2.2.1.1. Knees

If we analyze movements undertaken during this dance, it is possible to see that the knees are slightly bent. Due to joint force on the knees, the dancer's legs are neither fully straight nor deliberately bent down to form a curved shape. The strength is locked, instead, within the capsule of the knees and can be transported upwards or downwards through the knees to form a joint force between thighs and shanks. During the dance, the knees should always bend and stretch along with the rhythm. Artists have told me that the external form taken by the knees has its unity and singularity in Korean traditional dance; at the same time, similar characteristics of movement can be seen in other Korean traditional dances as The Hat Dance. Through my observation of the movement of

knees, I realized that both the starting and ending points of the bend-and-stretch move lie on the “slight bend state”. Although it appears as a simple upwards and downwards moving of the knees, the truth is that it requires intense resilience and inner power.

2.2.1.2. Hips

Chinese traditional folk dance prefers to use curved shape to demonstrate soft feminine features favored by traditional Chinese aesthetics. Some examples of this include the rolling steps and T-shape-three-step-swing in the Jiaozhou Yangko of the Han people; the Yunan festive lantern wrench and Tibetan hip sat sack; the Tribhangi in traditional Dai dance, etc. However, Korean dance does not portray the female body curve either in posture or in movement. In most cases, the body remains straight. The shape of the hip joint resembles the knee-joint, but the hip joint cannot move from side to side to maintain the straightness of the center of gravity. The hip joint – linking the upper limbs and lower limbs – is the second lock of the body after the knee-joint. It is where the torso is placed on the fulcrum of the legs. Because hips link to the body, so the movement of this middle part of the body can only be upward/downward or forward/backward. There is no compressional movement from right to left in this part of body.

2.2.2. Inner Relations

To analyze the inner relation of the external form of the knee-joint, we have to understand the cause and connotation of movements that are separate from the morphological analysis of hips and knees seen in previous sections of this article. From the external perspective, it is merely a rhythm called “dynamic rhythm”. The cause of this movement is at the crux of fully understanding and mastering “dynamic rhythm”.

Jindo is the third largest island in Korea and is located to the southwest of the Korean Strait along the Jeollanam Coastline. Living in this coastal area, Jindo people fish and farm in order to make a living. Some researchers believe that the rhythmic movement of the knees in Jindo Drum Dance is closely related to the movements made during the transplanting of seedlings that are often mentioned in paddy songs. The earliest version of the Jindo Drum Dance, is called “Sprout Drum Origin” which links the sprout drum of the Jindo Paddy Song to the origin of the Jindo Drum Dance. This kind of performance is usually seen in Nongak (Lv, You, 2011).

This reminds me of the Mud Extraction steps of a Chinese Han folk dance called ‘flower-drum-lantern dance’ – a vivid depiction of farmers’ steps on the paddy field. Although the relationship between these two farming activities and the dancing movement has not yet been confirmed, the connection with the heritage of Jindo Drum Dance seems to link strongly with this view. The prototype of the resilient foot movement originates with farmers who work in muddy paddies – pulling their legs out of the sticky field. The artist told me, “To them, it is not dance; it is life itself.” As a learner, I cannot experience these farmers’ original lives to know what such a life experience really is. I can only imitate by using the external form and my knowledge of the actions of farming. It is vitally important, therefore, to be imaginative when one is performing the Jindo Drum Dance. I have also noticed the regularity of movement in the bending and stretching of both feet and knees that creates a special rhythmic dancing movement. I mean by this that the knee-joints are

not only the cause of dynamic rhythm but also act as the body accompanies instruments in dancing; this gives birth to an essential rhythmic type of movement in Korean dance.

Ever since learning the posture of Korean dance in high school, I have been unable to forget its uniquely reserved, composed exquisite style. Under the unified aesthetic style, all postures and gestures emphasize the Korean dancing style. There are a number of similarities and differences between Korean dance and Jindo Drum Dance, but it is the hip movements in Jindo Drum Dance which embody the core movements. As I mentioned before, the hip joint is the second lock in lower limbs; yet it is neither widely open nor absolutely closed; it simply links the upper body and lower limbs flexibly and serves the upward gravity center of the body. When we connect our feet, knees and hips, we form a “standing circle”. If we try to connect more parts of our body – namely, feet, knees, hips, upper limbs and head – the whole body becomes a circle in space. This confirms what I mentioned previously in that the hips cannot move forwards or backwards; to do so in either way deform the circle and compress it.

To conclude; the root of strength is vital. Firstly, it is the foundation of mastering Jindo Drum Dance and secondly, it is the basis of energy and rhythm.

3. The Combination of Strength and Energy

The Chaoxian nationality is an ethnic term, differentiating the Chinese Korean ethnic group (who migrated from the Korean Peninsula) from North and South Koreans. From culturally anthropological perspective, the Chaoxian nationality is not only a migratory culture but is also a cross-border culture too. These two different cultural angles reveal two separate relationships: the migration culture shows that the Chinese Chaoxian ethnical culture is the sub-culture of Korean culture – which also vertically inherits the cultural kinship and history of the latter. On the other hand, the cross-border culture juxtaposes the two cultures to form a lateral relationship in cultural space (Piao, Yongguang, 2011). To understand the cultural origins of their relationships is to avoid confusion caused by the difference of the application of the “energy” concept in Jindo Drum Dance and in Chinese culture.

3.1. The accumulation and delivery of energy starts with *Dantian*

According to Inner Canon of Huangdi, a famous book of Chinese medicine, man is the creation of the heavenly and earthly energies; a combination of the body and spirit. This statement, which is based on the Qi monism and a world-view of the integration of both form and the spirit during the Warring States Period, says the essence of human is “Qi” – energy (An, Zhengxi, Ding, Zhangxuan, 2012).

There are three *Dantians* on human body: the upper one, middle one and the bottom one. The *Dantian* to be discussed here is the bottom one – located under the navel; the ancient people called it “the origin of life” and “the door of breath” (Xiao, Zhicai, 1999). Since the bottom *Dantian* is situated in the middle of the human body, the energy produced is able to radiate in all directions and to all parts of the body. There are two forces shown during this process – a stretching one (which demonstrates the uprising and lively spiritual state and the dynamic of life) and a contracting one (which embodies reserved femininity and a suppressed feeling). These two forces show the relationship of Yin and Yang in Korean traditional culture.

In Jindo Drum Dance, the accumulation and dispersal of energy is in the charge of *Dantian*; this process moves through the whole body and the performance. The lower *Dantian* is considered the origin of the body's energy in Jindo Drum Dance. Due to the changing rhythm in different sections of the dance and the varying requirements of strength in different movements, the application of breath is totally different throughout the performance. Through intense practice and a deeper understanding of each experience, however, one can control the application of breath skillfully. In this case, the energy materializes into the dancer's body and is transformed into various forms, according to dancer's will.

In the Jindo Drum Dance, the rule to apply the energy is called "energy first, movement after". This indicates that the movements that construct a piece of dance are not built mechanically, but are brought about naturally by the previous breath. To use one's energy to form both the posture and the dance is the core instructive methodology in Jingo Drum Dance; from this emanates the focus and form that distinguish Korean Dance's shapeless feature.

So what exactly is "Qi" – or energy? This can be explained broadly as the origin of the universe, the basis of everything and the mother of the world; more narrowly, it can be defined as the inner energy of the body that is controlled by *Dantian* and by breath.

3.2. The external demonstration of back and arm

Unlike other kinds of dances that are shaped by the structure of their movements, or are brought to form simply for the sake of formality, Jindo Drum Dance does not place emphasis on structural formality but prefers to use breath to push and form postures. The demonstration of back and arm in Jindo Drum Dance should therefore be mentioned. By analyzing the function of back, arm and strength towards movement, the relationship between inner energy and external formality can be revealed.

No matter how energy emanates from *Dantian* and meets with energy coming upwards or downward from the lower limbs, the route of its travel always remains the same. This route begins with the *Dantian*, moves from the back to head, turns down from the chest and then returns to the *Dantian*. It forms a cycle that never ends. (Zhang, Xiaomei, 2004).

When this energy fills the dancer's back, it can be felt acutely in the region of the scapula. The sensitivity of the scapula makes it easier for a learner to grasp the idea of the energy moving through their body. When the scapula expands and feels heavy, this is actually the expansion of energy filling the dancer's back. This expanding/falling state of the scapula and of the muscle alongside the armpits is actually not related to any movements either above or of the shoulders. Many performers, however, confuse it with the waving action of their shoulders and arch their backs too much so that the shoulders cannot be opened wide. It is therefore essential that learners control the formality of movement in the back accurately; breath must not only move through the body but must also, with the help of the dancer's arms, turn the energy in to a spatial occupation and arrangement of postures. The energy accumulated at the dancer's back flows from upper arms to the very tips of the fingers. When the dancer's arms rise up, the space under the armpits is like two swelling balls trying to form a round shape and moving from the elbow and lower arms through to the wrist and the tips of the fingers. The feeling of

holding an energy ball under the arms needs to be maintained. In the Jindo Drum Dance, whenever the arms rise up horizontally along the body, fingertips of each hand must be no lower than the ear lobes. The logic of this positioning is similar to that of the perpendicular arrangement of the hips. Maintaining the height of the arms in such a way ensures the round space beneath each arm does not lose its shape. When the dancer's arms are lowered, the space between the body and the arms narrows but the feeling of energy still remains there and the expansion of energy in the dancer's back is strengthened by the confrontation of energies. The round shape formed by the dancer's arms is consistent with the round shape formed by their lower limbs and so there is a unity linking both the upper and lower limbs.

3.3. Going through the body to the state of completeness

The previous two points analyzed the origin of the energy and how the energy forms specific postures using the dancer's back and arm separately. To segment the contents of energy is to clarify the abstract concept of energy on paper. The energy produced, however, cannot be segmented into such individual sections because it is an entity that functions within the whole body. To assess if breath control is good enough, the smoothness of the breath must be taken into consideration. A smooth breath can produce a corresponding sense of evenness in actual body movements; without this, the dancer's posture may become so clumsy and awkward that the performer is often no longer able to demonstrate the "shapeless" temperament of Korean dance. The crux of performance (and the accuracy of movement) lies, therefore, in the control and distribution of the breath.

To a large extent, the application of breath (or lack of) has a direct link with physical strength in performance. In Jindo Drum Dance, energy and strength are both separate and, at the same time, integrated. Strength embodies energy (Liu, Jingwen, 2014); one mutually helps the other. The energy gained during respiration is demonstrated in the resulting actions. This combination of energy and strength shapes and defines the infinity beauty of both the movements and poses of Jindo Drum Dance. The lack of any one of these disparate elements can mar the beauty of the performance. This means that dancers need to constantly practice both harnessing and demonstrating these elements of energy and strength.

In western cultures, strength and energy are two separate concepts with very different meanings. Expressed within a Chinese context, however, these two words are combined to form a compound word known widely as "Liqi." "Liqi" can be defined as a relationship between elements that depend on each other and can turn into one another. The reflection of this concept in dancing is exactly what Taoism defines as Yin and Yang – a sense of completeness. The application of energy and strength within the discipline of dance echoes a world-view of both man and the universe as an integral whole. The acme of perfection in the performance of Jindo Drum Dance is [to] "combine the energy and strength to form posture" and "dance as if shapeless".

4. A Further Investigation of Charm

In contrast with other Korean traditional dances, the performative style of Jindo Drum Dance can be described as very cheerful; this is integrally linked to its origins as a dance form.

There are two versions of the origin of Jindo Drum Dance. The first version tells us that it is a combination of drum dance and drum game; the dance uses body gestures while the game uses a beaten rhythm and regularly changing formations. This combination of elements is not only related to a harvest festival performance in the Jindo area, but is also a widely accepted mass drum game. We can analyze its functionality as being interesting and entertaining while, at the same time, serving as the physical symbol of harvest. The second version of Jindo Drum Dance comes from the school of Binqian Park, which focuses on witchcraft music and sacrificing to the god by entertaining him with agricultural music. In this version of the dance, the dancers seem to be possessed by the very god they seek to entertain with their performance – a performance which emphasizes the craziness and excitement of possession (Li, Yunshan, 2006).

These two versions of the original Jindo Drum Dance both focus on the uniquely cheerful emotion within the performance – contrasting greatly with the performative style of traditional Korean dance. Though it has such a creative breakthrough in its style of performance, Jindo Drum Dance still follows the traditional aesthetic standards of Korean dance in accordance with the unique charm of Korean ethnic groups. It does not have many exaggerated poses or external expressions of emotion, for the emotion is, rather, hidden inside the heart. Within this peaceful performance style, however, there is a strong emotional resilience and elasticity. It is justifiable to say that the heart is the channel used to release experience and to communicate emotions in Jindo Drum Dance.

Charm is the unique and indispensable cultural symbol of dancing and carries with it a number of special features. To identify a demonstration of charm in Jindo Drum Dance is not only to feel the distillation of dance itself but also to experience the aesthetic protocol of the Korean people. In order to perform this dance with both emotion and compassion, it is necessary to demonstrate requisite body gestures and to understand the delicate charm of the dance itself. “Charm” can be regarded as the key style of Jindo Drum Dance. Charm is the expression of the main body of the performance – carrying with it the idea and attitude from the created work. This is why Buffon, the French natural historian mentions that “the style is the man”. Plato defines charm as the contemplation of “attentive observation”. Through such “attentive observation”, charm is expressed as a concept that begins with the individual and ends up with the infinite notion of beauty. The “style” of Jindo Drum Dance is based on work that co-exists within the main body of the performance. If the identity of life is found in a heartbeat and a breath, then “charm” is the “style” identity of Jindo Drum Dance which is motivated and filled with spirituality. The concept of “charm” is a product of Eastern aesthetics. In Western culture, it is characterized by converting the virtual to figurative – converting idea and attitude to concept and theory. Whereas Western aesthetics continually pursue the notion of ‘truth,’ Eastern aesthetics maintain a balance between virtual and figurative, bringing “beauty” to the fore in thought, spirit and mind. It is difficult to give a precise description of “charm.” It is not the objective existence that you can see, pick up and touch. The charm of the Jindo Drum Dance is that it is visible and touchable – we can see the combination of people and drums and understand the connection of performance and spirit in the Jindo Drum Dance. Amongst humans, through dance and charm, we can produce and explore beauty on a number of levels. In

the following sections I will explore the enlightenment of “charm” from the perspectives of the interior heart and the exterior eye.

4.1. An Inner value that lies within the heart

Korean dance is heavily influenced by Confucianism and so its emotional expression tends to be reserved, focusing on the expression of the original heart without putting on airs and graces. This expressive form is simpler than the dance forms of other nationalities.

I met with an artist to talk about the roles of the mind, heart and body – identifying which one played the most important role in Korean dance. The artist told me that, when practicing, the mind is the first, the heart is second, and then the last is the body. I then asked, what about during a performance? The artist explained that, during practice, the dancer must mobilize his/her mind to guide the body. He/she must know clearly the requirement of each movement and must complete each action by following specific instructions. During performance, however, the most important element is the dialogue and communication between the dancer and their audience. In order to produce an enduring emotional performance, dancers must express their real feelings and convey heart-felt emotions. The heart is acknowledged as the only source of emotion in Korean dance; that is to say the heart can express all feelings and can produce a natural, more sincere performance. With such an emotional honesty in performance, extra facial expressions are rare. Even when the performance is profoundly compassionate, there are no exaggerated facial expressions. Instead, the intensity of emotion is demonstrated by the strength and rhythm of the dancer’s actions.

4.2. External expression in the eyes

In the communication between performer and audience, the fulfilled inner emotion of the dancer must be transformed into a tangible form by certain means in order to connect both interaction and dialogue between performer and audience on a spiritual level. If the emotional construct has no support, it cannot be expressed and conveyed. Jindo Drum Dance shares a core aesthetic performative feature with Korean traditional dance – for both give emphasis to the heart and eyes.

Leonardo Da Vinci once said, “The eyes are the window to the soul.” Mencius also said, “The best part of human body must be eyes. A bad guy cannot hide his evilness behind his eyes. A good man’s eyes must be shiny; a bad guy’s eyes must be dark. Listen to one’s words and look at his eyes, you cannot judge him wrongly.” No matter whether these quotes originate in the West or East, scholars share this common sense that one’s ideology and emotional range can be reflected in one’s eyes; the most delicate feeling impossible to express through language can be delivered through the eyes.

Drawing on this, there is reason to believe that there are two important relationships exemplified in Jindo Drum Dance. First is the relationship between the dancer’s eyes and their emotions. Second is the emotional communication between the dancer and their audience. The first relationship unifies the dancer’s emotion and expression to be fully authentic without any hypocrisy. Within a cultural and scholarly context, the

pursuit of authenticity is a reflection and infiltration of the concepts of morality and cultivation in Korean culture. The latter relationship unifies the dancer's connection with an audience's emotions. Dancing is a non-lingual art; it communicates by gestures and by facial expressions. The eyes are the most direct way to for us as humans to reflect ideas and express feelings; in contrast with single facial expressions, they have fewer limits and can better reflect the inner movements of the heart. This helps to establish a closer emotional relationship with an audience.

The uniqueness of dance as a cultural experience is harbored by the heart of the dancer and expressed through their eyes; the specification and delicacy of charm is obvious. "The grand image is shapeless; the great voice cannot be heard." Those which cannot be heard, which cannot be seen – which are beyond tangible items – are great images and great voices. Charm lies in the figure, appearance and posture of human body; the expression of charm in dance is consistent with a similar understanding of charm in literature, music and ethics.

Conclusion

To study Jindo Drum Dance as an exceptional case has significant and unique values for the learner. As the appointed Intangible Cultural Heritage of Jeollanam, Jindo Drum Dance is still actively performed on stage. Most existing academic studies, however, focus either on its cultural origin and development or on its similarities/differences with other dancing forms and so neglect the methodological study of the performance on a practical level. During my time of practice, I have learned that Jindo Drum Dance embodies both a national and cultural identity while, at the same time, it possesses an appealing artistic charm and significant learning value. The demonstration of strength, energy and charm is layered throughout both the performance and the learning of this incredible dance form.

I chose to travel to Korea to learn Jindo Drum Dance because it was a technique I was passionate about learning. In my years of study for my Master's degree, my aims are to learn new things, to broaden my horizon and to enlarge my mind – all the while enhancing and further developing what I have learnt in my Bachelor's study period and in trying to have a breakthrough. Professor XuShuying once said that going abroad makes for a better returning. Thanks to this opportunity of studying Jindo Drum Dance first-hand, I have learned two very important things. First, I examined the relationship between our own Chaoxian ethnic dance and Korean dance; in studying this relationship, I moved from mere practical knowledge to a deeper and more theoretical understanding of the nature and form of Jindo Drum Dance. Secondly, I learned that my increased knowledge of this particular form and technique can not only be applied to my own teaching work and career but can also help to provide other learners with some practical guidance. Further analysis of the concepts of strength, energy and charm and their inter-relationships will form the theoretical basis of my Chaoxian ethnic dance teaching – where I have hopes of not only teaching this style of dancing but also of sharing the spirit and values it exemplifies. During the process of studying Jindo Drum Dance both practically and theoretically, I have also gained an holistic understanding of Chaoxian ethnic dance.

Extending and applying what has been learned through this aspect of dance education provides us with two suggestions relating to the learning of dance and to dance therapy. For individual learners, the content of an article is not enough to support a complete work; it's a difficult, repetitive process for many pioneers who generalize the perceptual practical experience to the height of methodology by rigorous review and summary. What I want to share is not only the reorganization of this learning experience after I have disassembled the work but also my definition of an effort to guide this methodological approach with the help of my 20 years' comprehensive dance experience – an approach which identifies the parallels of theory and practice. I hope this can stimulate discerning, imaginative learners more profoundly than simply a presentation of an inherent concept and purely theoretical learning. Alternatively, this can be helpful for art therapy or dance therapy. I have been given a personal opinion (from an American professor) that “[the] Korean dance is more effective in exercising and conditioning the body than some popular aerobic exercises such as Pilates”. While this may be a salient comment, it is not one I currently wish to expand. Those readers who are interested in this aspect of therapeutic physicality will find the answer from the first and second parts of this paper, where there is detailed analysis of the concepts of strength and energy found in Jindo Drum Dance.

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