

A Brief Analysis of the Development History of Chinese Confucian Music Aesthetic Thoughts

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Abstract

Chinese traditional music culture with a long history, is broad and profound. All kinds of music aesthetics thoughts are prosperous and bright in the long river of history, which has a great influence on the formation of Chinese music aesthetics thought system. Throughout the history of the development of the world's musical aesthetics, the developmental history of Chinese musical aesthetics has displayed distinct and unique aesthetic features, and many schools of musical aesthetics have appeared, such as Confucianism, Taoism, legalism, Zen, yin-yang and so on. After a long period of collision and integration, the various schools were generally accepted and absorbed by Confucianism and Taoism. In particular, the Confucian music aesthetics has always occupied an important position in the Chinese music aesthetics, from the pre-Qin period to the present. The idea of Confucian music aesthetics was initiated by Confucius, and gradually matured through the inheritance and development of Mencius and the enrichment of Xunzi.

Keywords

Chinese traditional music culture, Confucianism, development of Chinese music aesthetics.

1. Introduction

The origin of Chinese music aesthetics can be traced back to the prehistoric times, which was called the glorious period of the prehistoric times due to its great development in the Western Zhou Dynasty. During this period, the Western Zhou Dynasty gradually realized the transition from hunting civilization to farming civilization, from slave society to new feudal society. And the ruling class also realized that music had the function of serving politics, and regarded ritual and music as a national event. In this period, the first category of music aesthetics and the thought of music aesthetics in the history of Chinese aesthetics appeared, which developed the theory of harmony about music characteristics.

From Zhou Taishi's proposition that "with harmony, everything develops; with homology, nothing develops", to Dan Mugong's discussion of the relationship between "music" and "heart", it is believed that the harmony of music will inevitably influence people's vitality and affect all aspects of people. Dan Mugong's understanding of the relationship between subject and object in music aesthetics reached the highest level at that time. The music aesthetics of this period opened the herald of the music thoughts of Confucianism, and directly influenced the formation and development of the music aesthetics thoughts of Confucianism and Taoism.

The pre-qin period was a brilliant period in the history of Chinese ancient thought. Among them was the founder of Confucianism --- Confucius. Confucius was the beginning of Confucian music aesthetics, he put forward some basic concepts and propositions in the aspect of Confucian music aesthetics, such as "kind", "moderation", "happiness" and so on. His music aesthetics thought was "etiquette" and "music" thought. The aesthetic criterion of music is to be "innocent".

He attaches importance to the function of music, the cooperation of ritual and music, and the maintenance of hierarchy.

Taking Mencius and Xunzi as representatives, they further enriched Confucius's music aesthetics, not only puts forward some new concepts and new propositions, but also makes theoretical argumentation on some aesthetic phenomena of music that Confucius involved. At this stage, an important development is the emergence of the theory of mind and nature. Especially in Guodianchujian "nature from life", statements about mind and heart were rich and profound. By the Han Dynasty, which was mainly represented by "Yue Ji", the theory of Confucian music aesthetics was fully expressed, and the theory of "the feeling and the heart" was put forward, which was an important contribution of Chinese aesthetics made to the world aesthetics. Confucian music aesthetics was fully implemented in the Han Dynasty, and Dong Zhongshu's idea of dethroning the hundred schools and respecting Confucianism exclusively established the dominant position of Confucianism, thus making Confucian music aesthetics the mainstream aesthetic form of the time. At this time, the thought of Confucian music aesthetics had reached a mature state. After the Han Dynasty, from the Wei and Jin Dynasties to the Tang Dynasty, the musical aesthetics of Confucianism began to expand, interweaving with the musical aesthetics of Taoism and Zen, and influencing and absorbing each other.

Among them, Ji Kang's on the sound of no sorrow and music was the most typically non-Confucian work at that time. In the Song and Ming dynasties, the Confucian Music thought completed the integration of the Taoist and Zen music aesthetic elements, indicating that the Confucian music thought formed the most representative of the Chinese traditional music as a whole characteristics of the music aesthetic thought. In fact, after the Song Dynasty, the music aesthetics thought is basically comprehensive, each kind of music theory permeates the thought of Confucianism and Taoism. Taking Xu Shangying's Xishanqinkuang as an example, it is difficult for us to judge whether it belongs to Confucianism, Taoism or Zen. In fact, Xishanqinkuang was based on Confucianism and integrated the thoughts of Taoism and Zen. Under the big framework of Confucianism "From the ancient time to now, the heart follows nature, and morals makes us better men. Improve ourselves then improve the whole world". The thoughts of this period were both intermingled and independent. After the Song and Ming dynasties, as the music aesthetics thought, Confucianism was still dominated, but at this time the music aesthetics thought of Confucianism, whether in Connotation or extension, was expanded to a certain extent. It has become a more profound, thorough, in-depth Confucian music aesthetic thought.

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