女性在中國舞蹈史上的角色

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女性在中國舞蹈史上佔著極重要的角色，沒有歷代女舞蹈家的貢獻，中國的文史將會是一本缺頁的書。

本文就歷史發展過程中，與女性及舞蹈相關資料，分古今兩段來分析討論。

“舞”字是一位舞人身著長袖之形，“長袖舞”最盛的漢朝，舞者以女性為主。漢唐時期舞極盛，然而文獻上除了對女舞者的舞姿讚美，身世感嘆之外，並沒創作及心靈表現的記載。雖然由於地位次要，女性舞者在歷史上十分沉黙，藉由女舞者的形象卻可推測出朝代的興衰。唐舞女的豐肌及高技巧舞蹈及清舞女的弱不禁風，便是一例。現代史由兩岸兩位承先啓動的女性談起，包含了 1960 年代女舞蹈教育家們的影響，以及 1987 年後，新生代的創作中女性主義之聲。

本文試圖敘述古史上女舞蹈家的默默奉獻及今史中的大聲疾呼，闡釋出婦女在中國舞蹈史的重要地位。
Sorceress, Imperial Concubine, Dancing Girl and Artist: The Female’s Role in Chinese Dance History

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Women, like the art of dance, have played a fundamental and critical role in Chinese history. However, just as the female societal position often seems secondary, dance too has appeared at times inconsequential. In actuality, the influence of women in dance has allowed men to “take center stage”, claiming as their own the many contributions of the art form.

Female Dancers in Ancient Chinese History

The earliest female representation in dance may be the hieroglyphic Chinese character inscribed on a turtle shell unearthed in a ruin from the Ying Dynasty. The graphic sketches a dancer wearing a costume with ultra-long, billowy sleeves. Although the sex of the dancer cannot be determined from the stylized drawing, the performers of “Long-Sleeve Dances” were, according to various records, primarily female.

Throughout antiquity, vivid accounts of Chinese poets kept alive the spirit and skillful steps of ancient dancers, yet the scattered literary references reveal little about the personal artistry and social position of female performers.

In prehistoric times, Chinese ritual dances such as “Ta Nuo” and “Chueh Ti” imitated animal movements to demonstrate aggression and masculinity. In the Shang Dynasty (16th - 11th Century B.C.) god-worshipping dances were performed by both male and female sorcerers (hai 角 and Wu 武 respectively) but those dancers portraying god, signifying authority and power, were male. The dances, shared by gods and mortals, served as a central and primary cultural bond.

According to the “Li Yueh Tzu” in the History of the Han Dynasty, the Hsia Dynasty saw the emergence of the popular Yu (“theatrical”) dance, a showcase for dance performers who were masters of facial expression. The elevated social position of the ancient dancer/sorcerers appears at that time to have been replaced by a common, lower classification “Wu Ren” (“dancing performer”) or “Yu Ren” (“theatrical performer”). The ritual sorcerer’s dance was from then on solely for divinities while the crowd-pleasing Yu dance was reserved for humans.

In the Han Dynasty (207 B.C.–220 A.D.), the Yueh Fu (Institute of Music) was developed by the government to serve as a national headquarters for music and dance. The academy collected an extensive repertoire of both court and folk dance forms. One of the