

COMMENT ON “CULTURAL THOUGHT AND PHILOSOPHICAL ELEMENTS OF SINGING AND DANCING IN INDIAN FILMS”


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Singing and dancing are a visual rhetoric that often appears in Indian movies. It generally follows the pattern of three-stage songs and six-stage dances. The songs and dances are generally well produced and have a high artistic level. Indian song and dance films have a profound influence all over the world. It is usually an effective form for people to express their inner feelings and emotions such as happiness, sorrow and joy. And, for Indian films, it has gradually become a type of film to show human expectations for the future.

For Indian films, without the innovation of singing and dancing, there would be no attractive Indian films, so singing and dancing became the life source of Indian films. In a complete Indian song and dance film, there are usually at least six to eight complete singing and dancing scenes, which

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combine the dance with the narrative of the film and bring the film plot to a climax. For example, in *Caravan*, there are a total of eight singing and dancing scenes, which become a visual highlight of the film. In terms of length, the singing and dancing content of Indian song and dance films accounts for 1/4 to 1/3 of the entire film information. In Indian films, there are many song and dance sequences that are free from the constraints of the film plot in time and space. And it is precisely because the song, dance and funny scenes are forcibly displayed in the film, they further play a role in rendering and deepening the thought, emotion and theme connotation of the protagonist in the film. In addition, Indian song and dance films use singing and dancing elements as an effective way for people to vent their emotions. The most commonly used techniques in Indian song and dance films are to express people's romantic sentiments and reflect on life. The elements of singing and dancing have become an effective way for people to vent their emotions, expressing people's positive attitudes towards life and expectations for ideals.

Yang and Zhang (2023) believe that the elements of singing and dancing that frequently appear in Indian films are rooted in the culture and religion of the Indian nation. India is a nation that is good at singing and dancing and has a very long tradition of singing and dancing. More than two thousand years ago, there was a treatise on dance in the history of India - *Natyasastra*. For Indians, dance with a long history is not only an art, but also contains many religious meanings. Religion is closely related to Indian society, politics, economy and culture, and it penetrates into every aspect of Indian life. There are many religions and sects in India, mainly including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Sikhism, as well as Jainism, Judaism and Buddhism, which are believed by a few people. Therefore, there are many temples and halls in India, and singing and dancing have become important forms of expression for sacrifices, worship and festivals. Most Indians believe in Hinduism. Shiva, who created dance, is one of the three major gods of Hinduism. Indians express their worship of Shiva as their love for dance. On ordinary days, people are used to celebrating and expressing emotions in the form of singing and dancing. Regardless of the city or the countryside, as long as everyone is happy, they will hum and dance. This also explains why Indian dance with many factions and distinctive features can occupy such an important position in Indian life. India does not need too many dance halls, because singing and dancing are everywhere. There is no need for singing and dancing halls to deliberately set off the atmosphere. Singing and dancing come from the heart. Just as the Indians themselves said: "Music and dance

are the culture of India. We feed our children in singing, and then give him his own name.” Singing and dancing exist in every life stage of Indians and they live in people’s blood.

Compared with films, singing and dancing are like condiments in food. If there is, it will be more fragrant, if not, it will be authentic. But for India, singing and dancing represent a traditional way of life. Their gorgeous dance and beautiful songs seem to symbolize a kind of spiritual power. The role of this spiritual power showed its unique charm in the turbulent political environment at the beginning of the last century. For example, although India in the 1930s was still under British colonial rule, the Congress Party led by Mahatma Gandhi at this time forced the authorities to make huge concessions for the independence of the Indian nation. It is reflected in many films and songs: the film *Hometown* spreads patriotism through singing; the theme song *Salute to Mother* of the film *Mother* is a metaphor for the desire for national rejuvenation. On the contrary, the film *Mother’s Love* of the same period did not get much appreciation from the audience because it did not intersperse with songs. From this, we can see the absolute significance and important position of the songs in Indian films. In 1943, with World War II continuing to affect the world economy and culture, the British government imposed strict censorship on the Indian film industry. Therefore, at that time, brisk music and entertainment films prevailed. But even such films often use music songs and puns in a veiled way to express the Indian people’s national feelings and patriotic messages. Like the movie *Fate*, the director Geyan Mukherjee described a criminal’s story, which caused a great sensation in India after it was released. The theme song is full of strong patriotic enthusiasm and reflects the spirit of a series of slogans put forward by Gandhi at that time.

In the article, the authors pay attention to the inspiration of Indian films to Chinese films. Since the beginning of the new century, the Indian film industry has formed its own unique aesthetic style and industrial system. Among them, the Indian film represented by Bollywood can best reflect the strong national color. Through video narrative, it pays attention to the closed and backward side of Indian society, showing consciousness and cultural conflict in the modern business society. Compared with Chinese films, the current Indian films are more innovative in inheriting traditional aesthetic practices, without completely cutting off the connection with traditional films. And they are more inclusively helping audiences understand the aesthetic values conveyed by Indian films between old and new. In terms

of its relationship with Western culture, it is different from China, which is deeply influenced by Western culture and follows the development direction of Western aesthetics. Indian films appropriately add Western elements to the singing and dancing scenes designed and arranged by themselves to make them more dynamic and modern. However, if you taste carefully, you can find that traditional Indian music is still contained in it. Some people believe that this is because the Hindus' artistic and aesthetic traditions are rooted in religion. They show a relatively conservative nature. Of course, there are also opinions that Indian films have found a successful paradigm that combines the West and India, classical and modern. The bold and innovative expression of singing and dancing that is gradually integrated into the narrative in the film is the most typical example.

Whether it is the focus and speculation on social reality, the inheritance and innovation of national culture, or the longing and pursuit of a better life, Indian films are trying their best to convey their national values through these creative intentions and build a nation belonging to India through visualized images. The landscape makes the value orientation of Indian culture more distinct. With the increasing improvement of the Indian film industry system, the national landscape in Indian films can be presented in a three-dimensional way, and the national image in Indian films can be fuller and more impressive. Chinese films should learn from Indian films that allow audiences to “think while laughing”, shoulder social responsibilities through film and television works, focus on excavating and presenting social issues, and use films to touch the souls of audiences. In addition, Chinese films should also consider how to fully explore their own national characteristics, use imagination and creativity, and confidently display national culture like Indian films.

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