

Historical Evolution of Huizhou Woodcarving and Its Cultural Aesthetic Implication

Yuanfeng Li¹, Rong Li², Zihan Zheng³, Feng Zhang^{4,*}

¹College of Fine Art, Anqing Normal University, Anqing, 246052, China

²College of Fine Art, Anqing Normal University, Anqing, 246052, China

³College of Fine Art, Anqing Normal University, Anqing, 246052, China

⁴College of Fine Art, Anqing Normal University, Anqing, 246052, China

*Corresponding author

Abstract: Huizhou woodcarving, as one of the top ten folk woodcarving, has a unique historical development process and aesthetic implication, so it has been concerned by academic circles. In the previous research on Huizhou woodcarving, more attention was paid to its woodcarving art itself and carving art characteristics, but its most important cultural core was ignored. Therefore, the author takes a different approach to explore its historical evolution process and inherent aesthetic implication, and further analyzes the triple schema of painting art in Huizhou woodcarving, in order to benefit the development of Huizhou woodcarving and the protection of regional folk culture.

Keywords: Huizhou woodcarving, painting schema, cultural attributes

1. Introduction

As a proper noun, culture has existed since the beginning of written records and human activities, but "culture" as a noun obviously lags behind the basic activities of human beings. Culture contains the spiritual world and material cultural world of the whole human being, which is embodied as the core of internalizing human existence and has become a psychological state shared by all countries in the world while reserving differences. The traditional culture of China, which we usually talk about, is a collection of many traditional cultures in ancient China, including Confucian culture, Taoist culture, Zen culture, minority culture and folk culture, etc. As the main body of this paper, Huizhou woodcarving involves folk culture. Huizhou woodcarving, in a strict sense, is the most artistic existence in the cultural system of southern Anhui, which has a clear historical development and artistic inheritance.

The so-called Huizhou is an ancient name. At present, it refers to Anhui area. However, Huizhou in ancient China was actually at the junction of Anhui, Zhejiang and Jiangxi provinces, and the culture formed by the integration of these three provinces was Huizhou culture. Huizhou woodcarving, as a very representative kind of Huizhou culture, began in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, and was born out of Huizhou architecture, which was suitable for local folk customs and life scenes. It is an important object to study Huizhou architecture and regional cultural development. The cultural aesthetics and artistic characteristics in Huizhou woodcarving play an indispensable role in the development of modern and contemporary arts. In previous studies, only the plastic arts of woodcarving itself were concerned, such as Wang Yuhong's *On the Artistic Characteristics of Huizhou Woodcarving*, Zhang Wei's *Analysis of the Schema Characteristics of Huizhou Woodcarving* and Zhang Pingfei's *On the Artistic Characteristics of Huizhou Woodcarving*, while the cultural attributes and aesthetic implications behind woodcarving were ignored. Therefore, this paper aims to trace back the historical development of woodcarving, analyze its cultural aesthetic implication, and then explore the artistic characteristics of painting under its specific influence.

2. Cultural evolution of Huizhou woodcarving

The emergence and development of culture need to be supported by a certain economic foundation. Marxism mentioned in philosophy that the economic foundation determines the superstructure, and so does the formation of Huizhou culture. Since ancient times, the economy in Huizhou has been relatively developed, especially since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, which has formed an important

Huizhou merchant culture. There is a very important inheritance in the culture of Huizhou merchants, which is called merchants who are good at Confucianism. Therefore, under the impetus of economic development, Huizhou culture has been fully developed, which also provides good social and economic conditions for the formation of Huizhou woodcarving. Huizhou woodcarving originated from Huizhou architecture. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, after reaching a certain material foundation, a large number of Huizhou merchants would invest a lot of money in Huizhou architecture in their hometown, and the emergence of Huizhou architecture gave birth to Huizhou woodcarving.

2.1 Based on Huizhou merchants' culture

Ancient Huizhou has a very complete inheritance system of clan culture, and local clan culture is an important guarantee for the long-term inheritance of local culture. Clan culture is prevalent in Huizhou, advocating the development of education, and promoting the development of commerce and agriculture with education is an important means for Huizhou clans to publicize and ensure the inheritance of Huizhou culture. This model has not only been supported by the local government, but also become one of the most remarkable characteristics of local clans.

As one of the top ten business gangs in China, Huizhou merchants in the early days paid the most attention to clan friendship. All the members of their chambers of commerce were basically from the same clan, and the outstanding members of the clan had the obligation to lead their clansmen to the road of becoming rich, which was beyond the reach of other business gangs. Therefore, among Huizhou merchants' families, those who are successful in business need to invest to establish corresponding education and teaching bases for their clans, so as to train their children to learn business methods. By establishing this learning clan ancestral temple, the feelings of their clansmen can be deepened, the purpose of mutual help and assistance can be achieved, and the cultural and educational development within the whole family can be promoted at the same time.

In the eyes of the whole Huizhou merchants and Huizhou people, the family is an integral whole. No matter the people who do business externally or the people who manage the clan internally, their unanimous purpose is to push future generations to a higher social status. Therefore, they have devoted great financial and material resources to the guidance and education of culture, which has become an important foundation for the preservation and spread of Huizhou culture as a whole. It is precisely because of the joint efforts of people of the same clan that Huizhou architecture, among the whole China folk architecture, is the most large-scale, holistic, cultural and well-preserved one, and among these buildings, wood carving has become an important decorative item and decorative element. Woodcarving exists on the basis of Huizhou residents. Huizhou residents' upward spirit and United educational concept make Huizhou woodcarving show its unique charm among many regional woodcarvings.

2.2 Promotion of cultural field

The so-called cultural field is the cultural atmosphere formed by the long-term infiltration of regional culture. The change of Huizhou merchants' "Chongwen" Confucianism has made Huizhou show an extraordinary trend of learning and constructed a new cultural and psychological structure. Huizhou society in Song Dynasty pursued friendliness, advocated the rule of law, fairness and justice, honesty, rural stability and social order. Huizhou in Song Dynasty was a gathering of literati, and the cultural level of Ming and Qing Dynasties was developed and there were many schools. Undoubtedly, the literati culture and merchant culture had a great influence on Huizhou architecture in Ming and Qing Dynasties. Sculpture was integrated with the residential structure, and the exquisite wood of the sculptor was not painted, but the grain was revealed. The roof of the Qing Dynasty was decorated with elegant colored paintings, which were closely related to the development of Huizhou culture, and also made the woodcarving art of Huizhou folk houses different from that of other regions. " [1]

As for wood carving, there is a saying in Huizhou: "All houses are designed, and no house is carved". With the development of time, Huizhou woodcarving gradually extended regularly from clan horizontal to residents vertical. It contains many cultural and artistic elements in the whole Huizhou area, such as Huizhou painting school, Huizhou calligraphy, Huizhou architecture, Huizhou seal cutting, Huizhou cuisine and a series of cultures. In the process of carving, Huizhou woodcarving integrates the artistic characteristics of many cultures. This creativity, which can integrate ancient and modern art categories, is the spiritual core of Huizhou woodcarving and one of its important cultural attributes. We study the influence of Huizhou woodcarving on painting art, and the fundamental point is that we can

analyze its artistic elements from these many cultural elements.

2.3 The evolution of woodcarving culture

Early Huizhou woodcarving was based on large-scale civil engineering, so a large number of skilled craftsmen were needed, who were the main components of creating the first generation of Huizhou architecture. These woodcarvings are usually concentrated in public places, especially in ancestral temples and large-scale sacrificial activities of Huizhou people. The overall artistic atmosphere is relatively simple and unsophisticated, lacking personal artistic characteristics. In the whole design process, we should consider the residents' architectural structure and overall style level, and strive to ensure consistency, which is the main basis for the early Huizhou woodcarving.

With the passage of time, the artistic features of woodcarving are gradually recognized by the people, and a large number of woodcarving elements are no longer limited to the construction of clans and ancestral temples, but scattered to the residential houses of various households. In the whole residential building, a series of components, such as door beams, painted buildings, doors and windows, floors and so on, are full of Huizhou wood carvings. From the Ming Dynasty to the Republic of China, with the changes of hundreds of years, Huizhou's woodcarving gradually changed from a serious and simple clan feature as a whole to a personal woodcarving art loved by the people. The artistic elements involved in it have also become more and more abundant, from the initial singleness to pluralism. Only by clarifying its cultural attributes and evolution process can we further analyze its inherent artistic aesthetic characteristics.

3. The aesthetic implication of Huizhou woodcarving.

A large number of folk cultures in ancient China are full of mythological elements and immortal worship, and Huizhou woodcarving is no exception. A large number of immortal worship and belief in society, nature and mountains and rivers in Huizhou woodcarving constitute its unique aesthetic implication.

3.1 Immortal worship and folk beliefs

Zhen Yue said in the Cultural Implication of Huizhou Woodcarving: "The Classic of Mountains and Seas has collected a large number of ancient myths, and also recorded a large number of good and ill omen, sacrificial methods, witch medicines and so on. Ancient art began with entertaining the gods. Poetry, dance and music are all related to this. Therefore, the art at the beginning was utilitarian. It's a gift to God to please him. Such various ways are manifested in various works of art through the continuous development and evolution of later generations, and there are also a large number of exhibitions in Huizhou woodcarving. There are many patterns and ways used in Huizhou woodcarving, such as immortals, auspiciousness, Bo Gu, auspicious animals, auspicious animals, animals and plants, virtue and filial piety. They are closely related to China culture. Generally speaking, the use of these ways and means is contained in the way of thinking of our ancestors. " [2]

In ancient times, due to many unexplained natural phenomena and life phenomena, such as wind and fire, thunder and lightning, war, flood, skyfire, death, weather and a series of life factors, people began to blame it on witchcraft and myth. This unique national belief has been passed down and embodied in Huizhou wood carvings. Therefore, there are national beliefs and mythological worship in a large number of Huizhou woodcarvings. Due to the constant changes in the genealogy of ancient immortals in China, the artistic images in Huizhou woodcarving are also changing. For example, the image of Buddha of Sakyamuni was introduced to China from India, then to Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, Tang Dynasty, and then to Ming and Qing Dynasties. His image was constantly changing, from bony and serious at first to elegant and secular in the Tang Dynasty. The image of Huizhou woodcarving has also changed, and these immortal belief totems have gradually become an aesthetic meaning of advocating myth, luck and happiness in Huizhou woodcarving.

In addition, folk animals and beliefs have also become artistic elements in Huizhou woodcarving, such as the most common lion. The lion carved by the Han people appeared in the Han Dynasty. Because of its tall and powerful image, the lion is endowed with enough lucky and happy connotations. It represents a series of happiness aesthetics that people need, such as prosperous official career, full house of children and grandchildren, festive surplus, good luck and good luck. Therefore, in Huizhou woodcarving, there are a large number of patterns that borrow images to express people's good wishes.

Zhao Pei-lin called this mentality a religious reason. He said: "The origin of prosperity is that people started to prosper with other things at first, neither for aesthetic motives nor practical motives, but for a profound religious reason." [3] Although this religious reason became the artistic source of early Huizhou woodcarving, this aesthetic meaning of advocating happiness and folk beliefs has also become the main internal driving force for Huizhou woodcarving to integrate various artistic features. People try to combine themselves with the natural things around them, inject their emotions and souls into the carved works of art, and endow the woodcarving with the best wishes and social morality, which has become the most unique aesthetic implication of Huizhou woodcarving.

4. Painting Schema in Huizhou Woodcarving

We explore the historical evolution of Huizhou woodcarving and its aesthetic implication, with the ultimate goal of returning to its direct effect on art. Therefore, after understanding its artistic evolution process, we should also analyze its painting schema in order to have guiding significance for specific painting practice.

4.1 The plane style of painting

There are few ancient paintings in China that are directly made of wood. Therefore, the early Huizhou woodcarving is similar to the ancient painting in China in terms of the stone relief and brick relief in the Han Dynasty. Although Huizhou woodcarving is not as old as the stone reliefs in Han Dynasty, it has great similarities in artistic composition and artistic content. Lu Xun described the carving art in the Han Dynasty as follows: "The art in the Han Dynasty is exquisite, but it has no sense of triviality, and it is vigorous, but it has no sense of banpan;" It is vivid, but there is no sense of impetuosity; It is realistic and also combines the fantasy of great traditions. " [4]

The main contents of stone reliefs in Han Dynasty include all kinds of historical and cultural stories in ancient China, as well as some folklore, and these stories are the early artistic sources of wood carving. Stone reliefs can be divided into negative engraving and positive engraving, line engraving and relief, and even some hollow structures by plane carving. Therefore, in the early Huizhou woodcarving, it was similar to the Han Dynasty stone reliefs, exaggerated in character modeling, and paid more attention to the overall modeling structure, ignoring the specific details, often showing a more heavy and simple artistic atmosphere. The composition of portraits in Han Dynasty used plane decoration, ignoring the shaping of specific characters, and so did Huizhou woodcarving in plane layout. However, it is not deliberately ignoring the modeling of a single character, but the selection of its innate artistic schema.

4.2 Folk schema of painting

Because of the folk belief characteristics of Huizhou woodcarving, it also adopts folk belief schema in the composition of painting schema. Among a large number of residential buildings, Huizhou woodcarving ensures its implication and auspiciousness, so it pays more attention to the shape of a single individual, has a great sense of concavity and convexity, and the specific image is more full. It absorbs the "Three Distances" method in China's painting and the perspective principle in Western painting, so that when painting is placed in wood carving, it can still show artistic principles such as light and shade, reality, symmetry, thickness, fullness and density change, which makes the whole wood carving shape not only orderly as a whole, but also agile and lively as a single shape. Therefore, in the later period, the folklore schema gradually began to replace the flat diagram and was widely used by the people.

4.3 Three-dimensional drawing

The so-called three-dimensional painting schema is a schema that is completely different from the plane schema and the folk schema. Compared with the first two, it pays more attention to its three-dimensional sense and three-dimensional sense. Increased the weight, size, and physical changes before and after the previous plane composition. A large number of Huizhou woodcarvings are filled with this three-dimensional composition, which is basically like a small architectural model, and can show all the pavilions, figures, tables, chairs and clothing designs in folk stories truly, three-dimensionally and objectively, making people feel immersive. Huizhou woodcarving began to abandon the perspective principle of the near big and the far small in painting, and created a brand-new

three-dimensional image with a three-dimensional feeling. This is a great change and development law in the application of painting schema.

5. Conclusion

Huizhou woodcarving is an important part of the whole folk woodcarving, and its cultural, aesthetic and painting attributes are not available in other woodcarving and folk architecture. Therefore, scholars should pay more attention to Huizhou woodcarving, which is an important excavation and protection of folk culture and one of the necessary measures to develop regional culture. As a painting artist, we should be good at excavating the artistic elements in folk culture and folk art, so as to enrich the painting aesthetic system, construct the aesthetic principle of the new era, and effectively guide the painting practice, so as to achieve the long-term goal of inheriting the tradition and carrying forward the painting of the times.

Acknowledgements

This paper is a "College Students' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program Project", with the title "Application and Development of Huizhou Woodcarving Elements in Decorative Painting" and the project number: S202110372083, which is a phased achievement. Thanks to the support of Anqing Normal University and the project team.

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