

# Analysis on the Inheritance and Development of Root Carving Industry and Countermeasures——Take Minhou County, Fujian Province as an Example

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**Abstract:** *The root carving industry of Minhou in Fujian is very influential nationwide. There is also a saying among the people that “the national root carving looks at Fujian, Fujian root carving looks at Fuzhou, and Fuzhou root carving is in Minhou”. However, with the rise and development of electronic information, the development of root carving industry in Minhou County has been greatly impacted. It can be found that the development of root carving industry has not followed the trend of the times to realize the promotion of informatization, which has led to the slow development of root carving industry in recent years. Based on the analysis of the current situation of the root carving industry, this paper puts forward some suggestions on the development of the root carving industry in Fujian, and how to promote the rural revitalization of the root carving industry.*

**Keywords:** *Fujian root carving; Inheritance; Development; Innovation; Rural vitalization*

## 1. Introduction

The history of root carving art is very long, and it is of great significance for China's traditional art. Root carving art is not only the combination of ecological environment and humanistic art, but also an important embodiment of Chinese traditional culture. The root carving industry of Minhou in Fujian is one of the important areas for the development of root carving. However, with the development of society and the progress of electronic information, the development situation of the root carving industry is very severe.

## 2. The Position of Root Carving Industry in China and Its Significance for Chinese Traditional Culture

The root carving culture has a very profound history. In China's history, the art creation with root materials can be traced back to the Warring States Period. With the development of human civilization, the root carving works have also changed from the early simple tomb furnishings sculpture to the later works of art with rich and flexible shapes. Up to now, root carving works also have higher artistic value, aesthetic value and ornamental value. Through the combination of art and practicality, the influence of root carving has gradually increased. As China's intangible cultural heritage, root carving is an important part of Chinese traditional culture and has an irreplaceable position.

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Foreign critics once said that Chinese root carving was the most distinctive art in the East. It can be seen that root carving occupies a very important position in China. The art of root carving has a long history. According to records, it roughly originated in the Warring States Period <sup>[1]</sup>. However, in different periods, root carving played a different role in promoting society in terms of economy, art, life, etc. Therefore, root carving has an important influence and far-reaching significance on China's traditional culture and art.

### 3. Current Situation of Root Carving Industry in Minhou County [2]

Root carving is the art industry with the most regional and cultural characteristics in Shangjie Town, Minhou County. With rich body materials, distinctive knife techniques and smooth lines, "Chinese root carving art" is used to interpret the unique artistic achievements of "hometown". It describes the prosperous place of the Eight Min Culture.

The processing and production of root carving in Shangjie Town are mainly concentrated in Jianping Village, and the rest are distributed to other nearby villages. Almost every root carving manufacturer has a fixed supplier of raw materials. According to the survey, most of the raw materials come from Sanming, Yongchun, Zhangzhou and other places, while some high-quality raw materials come from Taiwan, Southeast Asia, South Asia and other regions. The root carving of Shangjie Town is a unique school, with a detached antique style, sophisticated material selection, rich cultural connotation, rich local flavor and local folk customs.

However, due to the rapid development of information technology, traditional handicrafts such as root carving have gradually declined. At present, the root carving industry has low brand added value and insufficient bargaining power. Root carving products have gradually declined due to domestic competition, and 40% of root carving enterprises will face life-threatening challenges. With the continuous expansion of production scale, the environmental protection problem has become more prominent, the natural environment has been destroyed, and the forest land has been exposed in large areas. According to research, in order to find suitable root materials, the manufacturer personally led or invited migrant workers to invade the green land, which was greatly reduced. Seriously damaging trees, digging roots and damaging local natural environment, the root carving industry in Shangjie Town has developed rapidly, but there is no overall planning and the management system is chaotic.

At present, the root carving plants on the streets are scattered in various villages, which is difficult to concentrate. Enterprises are operated in a decentralized manner and repeatedly constructed. Resources are exhausted and wasted, which is not conducive to the refinement of the industry. And technological changes have promoted the popularity and influence of Fuzhou root carving. At the same time, the information is relatively closed and the sales channel is single, which is not conducive to establishing a good marketing model. According to the survey, some large root carving factories in Fuzhou have begun to transform, and some old root carving factories began to carry out a series of innovation and restructuring for traditional families in 2003. Break the workshop production mode, invest millions on the original basis, and establish modernization. The painting workshop independent of the workshop improves the quality of root carving painting process. However, most root carving factories maintain the traditional manual production and operation mode, with few product types and passive sales, which makes it difficult to develop.

### 4. Difficulties in the Development of Root Carving Industry

#### *4.1 The Rapid Development of Electronic Information Technology Industry Hinders the Development of Traditional Industries*

In recent years, with the development of science and technology, the application of the Internet has become more and more extensive. The era of big data has come. People can easily get the information they want by sliding their fingertips on their mobile phones. The progress of science and technology promotes the improvement of mechanization. The fast-paced life also requires large production and scale. It has become an indisputable fact that mechanization has become the mainstream. And the huge consumption power brought by online shopping. However, the root carving industry belongs to the traditional handicraft industry. In terms of production, the degree of mechanization is not high, the degree of informatization is insufficient, and large-scale production is not possible. Therefore, the development of the root carving industry is also increasingly slow.

With the popularization of electronic information technology, we-media and other emerging industries are booming, and many cultural and creative products are rapidly spreading all over the world. However, the root carving industry is no longer as vigorous as before. With the decline of the root carving industry, many root carving workers and artists have lost their economic resources, forcing them to change their careers and find another way.

#### ***4.2 The Social Consumption Concept [3] Has Changed***

The most important aspect of the works produced by the root carving industry is that they have aesthetic value and certain ornamental value. But this limits the scope of consumers. Such conditions also determine that most of the consumers who buy root carving products are those who have high consumption capacity and love root carving art. However, with the development of society, consumers have higher and higher requirements for products in demand, and pay more and more attention to the comprehensive performance of products. Often, products with high added value are more popular with consumers, while root carving products, which only have aesthetic value, are no longer able to meet people's needs.

#### ***4.3 Most Root Carving Enterprises with Small Workshops and Family Production Are Scattered, Which Makes It Difficult to Form a Scale***

Hong Minzai, president of Minhou County Handicraft Association said: "It is not uncommon for family manufacturing route carving companies to wait for customers to come for transactions, negotiate prices and conduct chaotic competition." From the perspective of the industrial chain, root carving is mainly limited to manufacturing and processing with overlapping patterns.

According to the survey, since the 1990s, with the acceleration of urban construction, Fuzhou Root Carving Company has gradually moved to Minhou Shangjie Town, forming a scale of 60,000 people. However, thousands of root carving shops are crowded and the streets are lined with people. Most of them are "front stores and back factories" family style workshops, lacking overall planning, with a single business model and extensive development of root carving industry.

Small workshops such as family workshops have insufficient production funds, poor production environment and low production efficiency, and production patterns <sup>[4]</sup> are easy to be similar. As a result, root carving products cannot be sold and the transactions are scattered. A perfect production scale cannot be formed.

#### ***4.4 Insufficient Social Attention to Root Carving Products***

As the root carving industry is a traditional handicraft industry, not a necessity of life, and most of it is operated by small rural workshops, it is difficult to form a wide range of social concerns. But nowadays, the main way of information transmission is electronic information equipment, vast platforms, websites, and social software. The small workshop economy is not combined with electronic equipment and communication platforms, and the root carving industry has small output, tight funds, elaborate and complicated production process, high informatization human cost, and insufficient informatization talents. It cannot improve the social popularity of the root carving industry. Moreover, according to statistics, China's national informatization index (MQ) is 38.46, while the informatization talent resource index is only 13.43. It can be seen that there is a huge demand for national informatization talents, but there is a serious shortage of informatization talents. Therefore, it is very difficult for small workshops to introduce root carving industry informatization.

#### ***4.5 Mechanization Age Hinders Root Carving Industry***

As we all know, the formation of root carving products mainly depends on handwork, and root carving art is a time-consuming handicraft that strives for excellence. At present, the economic development has driven the industrial development. With the popularization of mechanization, the root carving industry has also improved the utilization rate of machines. However, this change, on the contrary, has caused many unfavorable factors in the root carving industry. In the root carving industry, the craftsmanship used to be inherited from generation to generation by the master, but now it is too dependent on machinery, the product design is lack of innovation, and the aesthetic is single. Many practitioners have decreased their ability to operate, and their skills and methods have declined, making it difficult for root carving works to retain their natural form and achieve the unity of spirit and shape. This also makes many consumers feel that there is too much mechanical participation, which makes it difficult to sell products, thus hindering the development of root carving industry.

### **5. Suggestions Based on the Inheritance and Development of Root Carving Industry**

#### ***5.1 Establish a Network Platform to Promote Traditional Root Carving Culture***

For the root carving industry, it is necessary to keep up with the trend of the times and adapt to the

changes in the market. Internet electronic equipment is constantly accelerating the transmission of information and the close contact between people. The combination of "Internet plus+Root Carving" can expand the development space of root carving industry, and expand people's understanding of root carving by using the Internet platform. We can also promote a series of small videos, such as root carving production, through the Internet We Media to increase popularity. WeChat official account launched a series of root carving cultural content popular with the masses to attract consumers. By using the Internet to broadcast goods live, we can also combine it with the traditional culture of root carving in the process of publicity to enhance the attention, so as to increase the income.

### ***5.2 Scale up the Industry, Merge Small Enterprises into Medium and Large Enterprises, Improve the Degree of Mechanization, and Create a Root Carving Brand***

Small root carving enterprises are short of funds, scattered in sales, and lack of communication between small enterprises, so they often have similar works. The local root carving industry is used to gather family workshops, so that small workshops can develop together and improve production technology. The merger of small and medium-sized enterprises has improved the problem of capital shortage of enterprises, and can also produce a cluster effect of root carving enterprises, which can quickly promote regional economic development, improve the degree of industrial organization, accelerate the transformation of the traditional root carving industry development mode and industrial structural adjustment in Minhou County, promote industrial energy integration, and reduce the similarity of works. Root carving enterprises should also strengthen brand awareness and build root carving brands to better promote root carving products.

### ***5.3 Extend the Industrial Chain and Increase the Added Value of Root Carving Products***

In today's rapidly developing information age, modern people are often tired of the monotonous architecture and technology, using metal, concrete and glass as the framework and decoration. In terms of spiritual aesthetic needs, people began to pursue the return to nature, the basic, the desire for green and healthy life, and the design style of environment, architecture, home furnishing and decorative accessories also changed with the change of people's ideas.<sup>[5]</sup> At present, wooden handicrafts are still loved by some people. With this advantage, we can create a series of root carving life products, and promote the development of root carving products towards life, diversification and diversification. For example, on the basis of aesthetics, design root carving household products, living decorations, tea table supplies, flower pots, lampshades, etc. Make root carving products no longer only have aesthetic value. Use the combination of root carving and life to improve the added value of root carving products, increase the utilization rate of root carving products, and make the sales of root carving no longer limited. The root carving art can also be combined with cultural and creative products to promote some delicate root carving small objects, such as bookmarks, small wooden hairpins, ornaments, etc., to become a brand of root carving art.

### ***5.4 Preserve Traditional Craftsmanship and Combine Root Carving with the Times***

The improvement of mechanization is an inevitable phenomenon of social progress. However, in order to develop the root carving industry, traditional skills cannot be completely discarded. The creation of root carving emphasizes the preservation of its original form, association on the original basis, and artistic processing, which requires not only the creator to have superb carving skills, but also high aesthetic ability. Now, due to the popularization of mechanization, root carving works show clumsiness, serious mechanical marks and other problems emerge in endlessly. Therefore, root carving enterprises should gather and recruit some skilled root carving artists and designers to inherit the natural form, design and techniques of root carving, retain the traditional root carving craft, improve the aesthetic ability and artistic appreciation ability of root carving staff, and make root carving works not only a production line type work, but also a work of art full of emotion and vitality. After retaining the artistry of root carving, use machinery to replace some repetitive and boring processes of root carving, so as to speed up production, combine tradition with machinery, improve the design level of root carving workers, and let them have a deeper understanding of root carving techniques, and improve the production accuracy of root carving artifacts.

### ***5.5 Thoughts on Environmental Problems***

As the root carving industry uses wood as raw material, it has a huge demand for tree root materials, unreasonable deforestation, which has led to large-scale destruction of the natural ecological environment. Therefore, it is necessary to plan the use of trees in root carving enterprises. The local government should pay attention to this matter, divide the area where root carving enterprises use trees,

and encourage root carving enterprises to plant trees. For enterprises, the root carving technology of employees should be improved to reduce the rate of invalid works, so as to slow down the damage to the environment.

## **6. Use the Development of Root Carving Industry to Promote Rural Revitalization**

### **6.1 Open the Market and Improve the Popularity of the Countryside**

The root carving industry is combined with the times. When the root carving market is gradually expanded, the product industry is upgraded, and the added value of the products is gradually improved, the industrial chain is extended, the brand benefit is gradually formed, and the promotion of the network platform has greatly improved the rural popularity of Minhou County. It will promote the continuous expansion of the scope of consumers, no longer limited to a single consumer group. The gathering of rural enterprises has brought significant economic improvement to the countryside, and rural infrastructure such as water, electricity and roads can be improved, bringing many employment opportunities to the countryside, increasing labor resources and promoting the modernization of development. These will certainly bring about the growth of rural economic income and bring about a turnaround for rural revitalization.

### **6.2 Hold Root Carving Exhibition to Promote the Development of Local Tourism**

With the gradual development of root carving in Minhou County, various root carving exhibitions are held. Online product platforms can expand the popularity of Minhou County, and offline exhibitions can bring certain economic benefits. The rural areas of Minhou County can improve the tourism infrastructure, combine it with root carving, improve the popularity of Minyue Water Town, Longquan Villa, Shiba Chongxi and other scenic spots, encourage consumers to visit, promote the diversification of tourism market and resources, and build tourism towns. It can be seen that holding root carving exhibition can not only help consumers better understand root carving products, but also promote root carving culture and promote the development of traditional culture. It can not only bring economic benefits, but also enrich the local tourism culture and create its own unique root carving culture.

## **7. Conclusion**

The ancients said: "A house of five mu and a tree of mulberry can make 50 people wear clothes and silk; a chicken, a dolphin, a dog, a swine can make 70 people eat meat without losing their time; a hundred mu of land should not be taken, and a family of several people can make it without hunger." All things in nature have their own way of survival. If you want to survive and make achievements, you must follow its laws. The revitalization and development of root carving industry also need to adapt to local conditions. Based on the analysis of the current situation of root carving development in Minhou County, this paper puts forward corresponding suggestions to promote the development of root carving industry. In my opinion, root carving art is a very viable industry. I believe that the root carving industry in Minhou County will certainly revitalize, Create the glory of yesterday again.

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