

Analysis of the Mural Color of Huiyuan Temple in Ganzi Prefecture

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Abstract: *Huiyuan Temple in Ganzi Prefecture is an ancient temple with a long history, which has a profound influence in the local area. Huiyuan Temple is grand in scale, unique in construction, cornices and arches, and resplendent in gold; The mural paintings in the temple are stable in color and smooth in line, which fully embodies the Oriental charm of the integration of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism under the artistic conception of Chinese traditional culture, and shows the unique regional civilization and color aesthetics, which has important artistic value. Based on the analysis of the concept, structure and decoration of the mural color of Huiyuan Temple in Ganzi Prefecture, this paper explores the artistic characteristics of the mural color of Huiyuan Temple, and establishes the possibility of understanding, researching and innovating the mural color of Ganzi Prefecture in contemporary times.*

Keywords: *Huiyuan Temple, murals, color*

1. Introduction

Huiyuan Temple, located in Xiede Township, Daofu County, Ganzi Prefecture, is a grand temple built by the Qing government with a lot of money. According to the records of "Daofu County", the Tibetan name of Huiyuan Temple is "Gada Xiang Balin", meaning "liberation", which also has the meaning of the Qing emperor's benevolence benefiting the distance. Huiyuan Temple was built in the seventh year of Yongzheng in Qing Dynasty (1728 AD). The Qing government allocated 400,000 taels of silver for the construction of the temple, and used a large number of skilled craftsmen to build this magnificent temple by imitating the form of Western Buddhist temples and mainland buildings[1]. The temple was chosen in the relatively low terrain, the surrounding hills are rounded and there are many soft folds, like a lotus flower, Huiyuan Temple is located in this "lotus treasure land" core. The temple covers an area of more than 500 mu and has built more than 1,000 monks' houses. After the temple was built, Emperor Yongzheng appointed the name of the temple, and operated the plaque "Huiyuan Temple", and sent 1,800 officers and soldiers to guard the temple. From 1730 to 1735, the Qing court sent troops to guard the temple in Taining Tower, and gave Huiyuan Temple the highest Buddhist honor of "Nine lions in Nine dragons". In 2004, Huiyuan Temple was approved as a key cultural relic protection unit in Sichuan Province, and in 2019 it was approved as a national cultural relic protection unit. It is said that the main building layout of Huiyuan Temple is built in accordance with the shape of the jade seal of the Yongzheng emperor, and the plane layout is square and solemn, mainly including archway, floodwall, gate (pavilion), hall, Buddhist college, guest hall and other buildings. The hall is carved in the Liang painting building, carved to reflect the reasons for the temple, after the colorful comic strip, the wall painted on the exquisite murals. Despite centuries of experience, the colors on the murals are still vivid. The content of murals is rich, both the classical stories of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, and the genre paintings reflecting the society at that time. The image layout in the mural is exquisite, the shape is vivid and full of personality, which fully reflects the sustenance and pursuit of people in the spiritual field at that time, and shows the modeling law and color characteristics of folk art creation.

Since ancient times, painting in different countries and regions has different requirements for color, and color can fully show the artistic beauty of painting [2]. The murals of Huiyuan Temple in Ganzi Prefecture are paintings with strong religious colors. The use of colors is bold yet rigorous, simple and general. Mural area is large, often a painting occupies a wall; the use of pigments and techniques is rich, a large number of mineral pigments are used in the murals, coupled with the use of techniques such as smudging, so that the murals show a unique bustling beauty.

2. The embodiment of color concept

Color, as the most easily grasped object in visual perception, contains different concepts in different cultural contexts. The use of color in any painting is governed by a certain idea. The difference in art form, style and taste between the paintings of different nations and regions in the world lies in the difference in concept. And the concept of painting is constantly changing and updating with the evolution of human civilization [3]. The color concept in the mural paintings of Huiyuan Temple in Ganzi Prefecture is the comprehensive embodiment of the color concept of western Buddhist culture and the fusion of Chinese Confucian and Taoist cultures.

Huiyuan Temple in Ganzi Prefecture was built in the prosperous period of Qing Dynasty, when the mural painting colors and techniques were quite mature. In addition, Huiyuan Temple was funded by the government and built by a large number of skilled craftsmen. In the painting of the murals, many styles of mainland and Western Buddhist temples were integrated, forming a unique look. The color of Huiyuan Temple murals is mainly stone blue and stone green, and other colors are used together, forming a style of "royal nobility" without losing solemn and elegant, and as a whole, it belongs to the comprehensive manifestation of cultural concepts such as "the color of virtue and propriety". For example, the White Umbrella with a Thousand hands and a thousand Eyes Buddha (as is shown in Figure 1), a large area of blue and green processing is used in the background of the picture; The Buddha statue itself uses pure red, green and white, and the hands and eyes are pure white, which is one of the "five positive colors", giving people a feeling of innocence and mystery, representing purity and liberation. The use of white makes the overall tone of the picture bright, and also reflects the position of the thousand-hand thousand-eye Buddha in people's hearts at that time. Details such as the clothing of the Buddha statue are outlined with stone color, and the backlit edge is cut off from the outside world with pure red to highlight the holiness and solemnity of the Buddha statue more obviously. The color collocation highlights the solemn and pure characters of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, and integrates the warmth of the secular. The auspicious clouds in the painting also use the high purity of red, yellow, blue, white, green, rich in variation, different auspicious clouds are both separated and perfectly integrated, so that the color of the picture is very harmonious [4]. The color of this painting not only shows quiet and peaceful, but also gives people a feeling of majesty and solemnity, which is the comprehensive embodiment of the color concept of Chinese traditional painting. As shown in Figure 2, this is a mural painted on the colonnade. In addition to the stone green in the background of the picture, the main Buddha statue uses a lot of yellow, forming a warm tone. It can be seen that when painting this mural, the society was in a relatively open and free environment, and painters were relatively free in the use of colors and could use multi-color matching. It may also be that Huiyuan Temple belongs to the yellow religion and has a preference for yellow, resulting in the introduction of a variety of colors to set off the Buddha.



Figure 1: A white umbrella with a thousand eyes and a thousand hands



Figure 2: Theme mural

3. Use of color composition

Rudolf Arnheim once pointed out that in the visual arts, the expressive nature of color is an important object of study, and the grammar of color, that is, the principle of structure and organization, also needs to be explored. The color combination of the murals of Huiyuan Temple in Ganzi Prefecture conforms to certain rules of formal beauty, giving people a strong visual sense of beauty. The use of contrasting and complementary colors in the murals of Huiyuan Temple is a combination of a series of colors, which both contrast and set off each other, thus forming a reasonable coexistence of the picture. The color of each mural has been carefully designed, and the color of the Buddha's clothing and the background environment have a certain sense of rhythm in the color collocation. The primary and secondary arrangements are not only made according to the status of the figures, but also the use of color to strengthen the contrast. For example, as is shown in Figure 3, "The King of the Kingdom", the complementary contrast of red and green is used. The cloud mountain rendered with stone blue and stone green is decorated with pure red on the gold costume of the King of the Kingdom, which forms a strong visual tension in the picture.



Figure 3: The King of the Kingdom

A variety of saturated and pure colors can show their own characteristics in the overall structure. Color contrast is better used in the picture of "King of the Kingdom", using various color lines such as black and gold lines to effectively deal with the intersection of colors, so that the picture becomes softer. The saturated and pure color contrast strengthens the visual impact of the color of the picture.

In the color contrast structure of the mural paintings of Huiyuan Temple in Ganzi Prefecture, cool colors are the main colors, and the use of contrasting colors of cold and warm colors enriches the color of the mural paintings. Through the detailed analysis of the existing murals, the picture used a large

number of stone blue, stone green and other blue cool colors, this kind of color in the baptism of time is not easy to fade or change color, always maintain a high brightness, can clearly show the face of the picture, people's visual impact is strong. Compared with the low brightness dark gray after natural color change, it can better set off the luster of stone blue, stone green and other cool colors in the murals.

The mural paintings of Huiyuan Temple are dominated by five colors: red, yellow, blue, white and green, and a large number of high-purity and high-concentration color blocks are used to give people strong visual stimulation. In addition, it is not difficult to see that the murals of Huiyuan Temple use large color blocks with the same amount of purity and concentration to contrast or complement each other, forming a face-to-face color incentive collision, and the visual impact is more powerful.

4. Processing of color decoration

The murals in Ganzi Prefecture are colorful and decorative, and have unique artistic expression. The decorative performance of color is to subjectively deal with the form and style in the picture, make the shape geometric or flat, and give a certain rule and rhythm. This method of color arrangement and combination can be traced back to ancient China's painted pottery, when there were decorative paintings on the pottery, such as "Three fish pattern painted pottery basin", the ancient people had understood the beauty of decorative paintings. The murals in Ganzi Prefecture often use bright and bright colors to create a lively and cheerful atmosphere. For example, red is widely used to depict elements such as flames, flowers, and deities, while yellow is often used to depict the sun, light, and golden light. In order to increase visual impact, murals in Ganzi Prefecture often use contrasting color schemes. For example, contrasting colors such as dark red and light green, dark blue and bright yellow are used simultaneously in a work to highlight the image and scene.

The use of color in the murals of Huiyuan Temple is a combination of colors that the painter imagined when painting, which is not only an objective representation of the object image, but more is applied to the picture under the domination of Buddhist beliefs, so as to achieve a unified color effect of the entire picture and "generate the power of faith in a solemn color environment". It reflects the wisdom and aesthetic realm of the folk mural artists, and makes them derive more possibilities for decorative colors in the mural creation [5]. A common decorative element in the murals of Ganzi Prefecture is gold and silver applique, which is also used in the murals of Huiyuan Temple. The artist applied gold or silver paint to certain areas to add a gorgeous and pearlescent effect.

Huiyuan Temple mural color using plane painting processing, easy to achieve the decorative effect of the picture. Flat painting is an effective method for the planarization of mural paintings, which can be divided into straight line flat painting and wireless flat painting. Many of the murals in Huiyuan Temple were painted with flat lines and mineral pigments. From figures to animals and plants, as well as decorative patterns, different color lines are used to outline, and then the colors are painted flat, and the edges or joints are appropriately colored, so that the whole mural has texture and decorative interest.

The repeated appearance of colors in the mural forms a rhythmic rhythm, and the white and blue clouds alternately appear through the color interval, breaking the plain flat painting processing space, forming a patchwork visual effect, producing a beautiful and rhythmic color effect. The mural paintings of Huiyuan Temple are painted on the walls, and the artists use different levels of color to create a sense of three-dimensional and depth. In some delicate mural works, Ganzi artists often use soft and gradual color transitions to express light effects or details. For example, when depicting the costumes of characters, by gradually blending similar colors, the costumes show a rich sense of hierarchy.

The mural paintings of Huiyuan Temple also use a large number of colored lines, using black lines to outline the shape, colored lines to decorate the details, gold and silver lines to create a sense of ornate and color lines with gradual effect, etc. The clever use of these lines makes the mural images more vivid and vivid, showing a unique artistic style and beauty [6]. Line is one of the most artistic expressive forms in mural paintings, and it is also an important element to enhance the interest and decoration of the picture, as shown in Figure 4. The four Heavenly Kings are one of the important contents of the fresco of the Buddhist temple. In the drawing process of "Duowen Heavenly King Map" of Huiyuan Temple, black ink lines are used to outline, and the lines are firm and graceful.



Figure 4: Duowen Heavenly King Mural

The air of the well-informed king is vividly displayed. The use of lines not only shows the body and structure of the characters, but also vividly depicts the texture of the clothes, making the picture image more dynamic. The ornaments and other items in the mural of "Duowen Heavenly King Mural" are also outlined by line drawing one by one, showing the texture of heavy items, and the whole picture gives a calm and stable effect. The murals of Huiyuan Temple are smooth and natural, showing an elegant and dynamic aesthetic effect.

5. Conclusion

The Huiyuan Temple in Ganzi Prefecture appeared in a special historical period of the Qing Dynasty, and its murals integrated the characteristics of palace art, religious art and folk art in the use of color, forming a unique color language. The mural painting of Huiyuan Temple has widely absorbed the essence and exquisite skills of traditional Chinese art, which is not only a part of traditional Chinese mural art, but also a comprehensive innovation.

With the development of society, people's artistic concepts and value orientations are diversified. Through the analysis of the color of the mural paintings in Huiyuan Temple in Ganzi Prefecture, we can better understand its artistic creation skills, visual effects and expression, symbolic meaning and the importance of cultural heritage. This helps to enrich our understanding of mural art, provide more in-depth theoretical support for its protection and inheritance, and apply its color processing skills to future mural painting. Only by absorbing more nutrients from the treasure house of traditional culture can we meet the requirements of the times and create more excellent works. While learning from the fresco color of Huiyuan Temple, it should also be combined with real life to give the works a new spirit of the times and life characteristics.

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