

Theme, Characteristics, Inheritance and Innovation of Paper-Cut Art in Northern Anhui from the Perspective of Farming Culture

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ABSTRACT. *In order to inherit and promote the inheritance and development of northern Anhui culture, this paper analyzes its three artistic characteristics, namely, modeling composition, pattern decoration and color from the perspective of farming civilization, and then finds that folk activities related to farming period are the ideological source of the motif and theme system of paper-cutting art in northern Anhui, thus creating its inclusive artistic value and simple Gu Zhuo expression. In the cultural ecology of the new era, the survival and development space of paper-cutting in northern Anhui is limited. This paper discusses the cultural ecological environment and innovative development path of paper-cutting in northern Anhui in order to promote new paper-cutting art forms and inherit the simple folk customs in Huaihe River Basin.*

KEYWORDS: *Paper-cutting in northern anhui, Farming culture, Artistic features, Preserve and innovate*

1. Introduction

Paper-cut art appeared as early as the Northern Dynasty and has a history of more than 1,500 years. [1] Northern Anhui is located in the geographical position of connecting north and south and traversing east and west. Therefore, paper-cutting in northern Anhui absorbs the exquisite and graceful artistic characteristics of the south and the simple artistic characteristics of northern Gu Zhuo. Farming civilization, with its life style of living together as a family, intensive cultivation and self-sufficiency, like a hotbed, fuses different cultures into a clear spring, warms and nourishes the land in northern Anhui, and brings up the noble qualities of people in northern Anhui, such as kindness, simplicity, distinction between good and evil, faithfulness and filial piety. The artistic features of paper-cutting in northern Anhui,

which are eclectic and simple in Gu Zhuo, are also the best interpretation of regional culture and people's quality in northern Anhui. [2]

2. The Theme of Paper-Cut Art in Northern Anhui

Art inheritance is not only the technical inheritance of creating a piece of art. From the perspective of the development of art, its essence is the inheritance of artistic spirit and cultural connotation hidden behind works of art, while the motif and theme of art is the main carrier of the inheritance of artistic spirit and cultural connotation. Theme and motif are a kind of structural relationship. [3] Taking paper-cut art as an example, motif is the image elements in paper-cut works, such as "doll", "lotus", "unicorn", "temple", etc., and theme is the central idea that this motif wants to express. In other words, theme is the result of artistic narration through motif structure. The theme expressed by paper-cutting in northern Anhui can be roughly divided into three aspects:

2.1 Theme of Life Education

Paper-cut artists in northern Anhui grew up in the Huaihe River Basin with rich folk culture. According to their practical feelings about seeing and seeing things in life, they use motifs to express their aspirations, so as to decorate their homes and express their interests in life. For example, the works that reflect the scenes of rural labor and life, such as "selling surplus grain", "sending fat busy", "taking a nap in the field", etc.; This kind of paper-cutting can not only reflect the people's love for life in northern Anhui, but also have enlightenment significance. Such as accumulating virtues and doing good deeds, chivalrous demeanor, loyalty, filial piety and sages, occupies a large proportion. Such as "Dream of Red Mansions", "White Snake Biography" and "Cowherd and Weaver Girl" with the theme of loyal love; "Mother-in-law tattoo", "Guan Yu" and "Yang Jiajiang" with the theme of loyalty and sages;

2.2 Theme of Reproductive Worship

Reproductive worship is a spontaneous totem consciousness of primitive human beings, and people in northern Anhui present their deep emotional demands with paper-cutting as the carrier. Therefore, paper-cutting with the theme of reproductive worship is very common in northern Anhui. This kind of paper-cutting uses rich artistic expression techniques to combine various motif forms, so as to praise the connotation of life reproduction. The works bring together the ingenuity of folk paper-cutting artists in northern Anhui, and are the perfect combination of spiritual worship and art. For example, the motif of "gourd" and "lotus" is used to express the desire for reproduction.

2.3 Good Luck Theme

Paper-cutting bears the inner needs of people for seeking happiness and praying in folk life customs, etiquette system and interpersonal communication. As an artistic symbol of people's emotional sustenance in life, it has auspicious significance. Due to geographical reasons, floods frequently occurred in northern Anhui in history, which made the local people very eager for a stable and happy living environment. Therefore, a large part of paper-cutting in northern Anhui is based on the theme of praying for blessings and good luck. Such as the theme of "good weather" related to working weather; The theme of "having enough food and clothing" related to working life; The wisdom of folk art can be found by studying the motif images in these paper-cut works.

3. Characteristics of Paper-Cut Art in Northern Anhui

3.1 Modeling Composition with Both Form and Spirit

Paper-cutting in northern Anhui is famous for its exquisite shape and delicate cutting and carving. It does not pursue sketching in shape, but abides by the traditional moral principle of "writing spirit with shape". "Similarity in spirit" is a kind of art of mental image, which does not seek resemblance but seeks resemblance in spirit, pays attention to the intention expression of the object itself, and idealizes the artistic ontology in a straightforward expression way, thus forming a patterned and flat shape, showing the decorative beauty beyond reality. In modeling, paper-cutting in northern Anhui is deeply influenced by Taoist concepts of yin and yang. Therefore, the combination of yang-cutting and yin-cutting is often used, and thin lines and thick lines are properly interspersed and combined to enhance the layering of the picture and show the changing effect of "having or not", "yin and yang" and "actual situation". In composition, it has distinct primary and secondary, free and perfect layout, and is highly decorative.

3.2 Patterns with Rich Meanings

After working in the slack season, folk artists in northern Anhui discovered the unadorned natural decorative beauty of animals and plants, and broke through the shackles of natural forms with wisdom, concretized the rich and complex external objects and unpredictable natural landscapes, and refined them into symbolic patterns with symbolic significance. Paper-cutting in northern Anhui is decorated with petal pattern, water pattern, cloud pattern, round dot pattern, sawtooth pattern and crescent pattern. Although the pattern decoration of paper-cut has its basic regulation style, for paper-cut artists, the pattern decoration is only an artistic language to express their subjective emotion and the image of the target object, and it is also a symbol of emotional expression.

3.3 Simple and Bright Colors

Paper-cutting in northern Anhui can be divided into monochrome paper-cutting and color paper-cutting, among which monochrome paper-cutting is the most basic form of paper-cutting in northern Anhui. Under the condition of excluding the interference of color, monochrome paper-cuts cut with the same color can better show the artistic beauty of paper-cuts in theme, shape, composition and techniques. Red monochrome paper-cutting is widely used. As the symbolic color of “sun” and “fire”, red means joy, peace, happiness, harmony, honor, reunion, success, courage, loyalty, prosperity and courage. Therefore, paper-cutting takes red as the expression carrier, and naturally inherits the mission of spreading good wishes and wishes. Besides the most popular red, the commonly used colors are black, white and gold. Color paper-cut, as its name implies, is paper-cut with two or more colors and forms a pattern, such as color-separation paper-cutting by combining different color paper-cutting.

4. Inheritance, Development and Innovation Path of Paper-Cut Art in Northern Anhui

4.1 Inheritance and Development

“The origin of art is in the place where culture originated.” As the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage, paper-cutting should be paid more attention to and protected. First of all, the most important thing of intangible protection is to protect the inheritors. Paper-cutting artists in northern Anhui take the promotion of traditional crafts as their duty, and their purest spirit of inheritance, creativity and craftsmanship play an important guiding role in the development of paper-cutting art. Therefore, we should explore the original ecological paper-cutting artists at the grass-roots level, improve the welfare of the inheritors, encourage and support them to gradually expand the paper-cutting team in theory and practice, and accumulate the new force of paper-cutting in northern Anhui. Secondly, the government and relevant institutions should introduce corresponding policies for the inheritance of intangible culture, so as to support the paper-cut culture to better integrate into the cultural environment of the new era. For example, a professional paper-cut talent training course should be set up in colleges and universities to inherit the essence of traditional folk culture in Anhui, and cultivate the pragmatic spirit of industrious and simple contemporary young people, “work hard and reap”.

4.2 Innovation Path

With the development of the times, only the art that the masses like to hear and hear has vitality, and only the art that conforms to the spirit of the times can have more room for development. First of all, paper-cutting in northern Anhui needs to break through the single group and region, boldly seek the collision and integration

with local folk customs. In addition, the paper-cut art in northern Anhui in the new period should broaden its motif and theme system, and absorb any motif content that can be included in contemporary economy, politics, cultural landscape, etc., so as to show the contemporary people's living conditions, emotional sustenance, aesthetic hobbies and the spirit of actively pursuing a better life. Finally, in the extension application of paper-cut art, various modern technological means can be used to endow the verve of paper-cut art to all levels of social life. For example, from the processing of craft ornaments to the decoration of residential buildings, to the signs of urban streets, and so on.

5. Conclusion

The hardworking, optimistic and positive farming spirit of the people in northern Anhui has created the unique and ancient folk art of paper-cutting in northern Anhui. In practice, carrying forward the spirit of the new era of emphasizing innovation and the pragmatic spirit of people in northern Anhui, we can renew the new life of modern paper-cut culture in northern Anhui and pass on the light of agricultural civilization.

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