

AN ANALYSIS OF RESEARCHES ON DECORATIVE PAINTING OF THE SHADOW PUPPET IN XIAOYI, SHANXI

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Abstract

In the long history of China, shadow puppet art has always been of great artistic value and aesthetic value. It is a folk art with Chinese characteristics passed down to today from generation to generation for thousands of years. The shadow puppet is a comprehensive art embodying painting, sculpture, literature, optics, mechanics and performances. However, with the change of ways of entertainment, shadow puppet art began to disappear slowly. This paper makes an analysis of the cultural connotation and external characteristics of the shadow puppet art in Xiaoyi, Shanxi.

Keywords : xiaoyi shadow Puppet color shadow vignette

1. Era Characteristics of the Shadow Puppet in Xiaoyi

The shadow play in Xiaoyi is one of the important schools of Chinese shadow plays. It gained its name for its popularity in Xiaoyi city, Shanxi Province. The shadow play is an ancient and unique folk Chinese opera art widely spread among the people. In the shadow play, the warm light is added behind a white curtain, and performers manipulate all sorts of leather-made shapes behind the curtain. With musical instruments, singing tone and speaking, characters in the play are lively on the white curtain. In this way, the audience can hear and see all kinds of drama stories, and experience the beauty of form and spirit, as if they were inside. The still shadow puppet is added with singing and lyrics by players, and a combination of dynamics and statics has a better visual effect. At the time, this had very good enlightenment effects.

The shadow play in Xiaoyi has a long history. In the Yuan Dynasty, some carvers specialized in the show play carving in Xiaoyi, and this unique shadow puppet art was gradually formed. Shadow puppet art in Xiaoyi has a style of exquisite carving, beautiful shape, lively appearance, primitive simplicity and charms, all of which work together to show a distinctive nationality style and thick local flavor. It is a shining pearl in China's folk art treasury. The Ming Dynasty and Qing Dynasty saw the heyday of the Shadow Puppet in Xiaoyi, with exquisite carving, natural colors, and lively characters. In the early years of the republic of China, the Shadow Puppet in Xiaoyi, except characteristics of shadow puppets in the Ming Dynasty and Qing Dynasty, paid attention to shapes as well as spirit, and had romantic elements. Contemporary shadow puppets in Xiaoyi, has not only inherited the ancient tradition in shapes, but also pursued innovation, creating a harmony of shape, spirit and meaning and thus letting the audience have an aesthetic experience.

2. External Characteristics of the Shadow Puppet in Xiaoyi

In the Shadow Puppet in Xiaoyi, the production of characters is very tedious and complex. It has a lot of processes including selecting skin, making skin, drawing drafts, reviewing drafts, carving, coloring, ironing, decorating and composing. Cow leather is the main material of the shadow puppet. According to the needs of the plot, with rich imagination, carvers will carve all

kinds of vivid and lifelike characters with strong personality, or beautiful natural scenery and scene props, with unique aesthetic values. Countless artists are stunned by the exquisite carving and unique color of the shadow puppet of Xiaoyi.

2.1 A Combination of Color, Light and Shadow

Color is the most intuitive in the shadow puppet. The coloring of the Shadow Play in Xiaoyi is quite similar to that of color paper cutting. They both use simple and clear color blocks and have characteristics of Chinese traditional folk culture.

Limited by natural conditions, the ancients usually extracted colors from natural raw materials and then processed and utilized, with an air of nature and primitive simplicity. In the character shadow puppet, several colors with excellent purity and transparency are often used in rendering, including red, black, green, orange and so on. Its own color is pure and simple. When mixed with the translucent yellow tone of cow leather, it looks soft and lively, simple but not monotonous, gorgeous but not too bright. The color can last for a long time, with the trace of time. In the primitive time, people could extract colors from minerals, animal blood and so on. The color ember has a function of fending off evil when it's applied in adornment.

The color of light has a great influence on shadow and atmosphere environments. In the shadow play, a warm color yellow light is usually used. When yellow light penetrates through the shadow puppet, the color with primitive simplicity seems to be covered with a layer of warm color, and the overall feeling is softer and warmer. The combination of color and light gives shadow play endless charms.

2.2 Decorative patterns

The Shadow Puppet in Xiaoyi is a public art that can reflect people's Daily life and ideas and is widely existed in people's life. Therefore, there are a lot of myths and legends reflecting people's current understanding level, for example, "A Journey to the West", "Creation of the Gods". In these plays, there are many a mythological figure and monster. In order to show these image not existing in reality, shadow puppet artists combine figures with animals, and treat with abnormal proportion in an exaggerated manner, so that people can know their images and can distinguish good and evil at a glance.

In ancient China, most patterns came from the nature. People treated the most common scene in the daily life directly or in a simple and abstract way, decorated daily objects through sculpture, drawing, weaving, etc., and formed simple and plain natural patterns. In the Shadow Puppet in Xiaoyi, there have appeared short line carved patterns such as crescent, wave, snowflake, clouds, etc., and all patterns are symbols of different spiritual. Crescent patterns are usually used to decorate clothes of characters; a large area of waves may create a huge momentum; the snowflake pattern, a symbol of pureness, is often used to describe literati and scholars; cloud pattern is an auspicious symbol, as its appearance usually represents the coming of gods.

3. The Status Analysis and Countermeasures of the Shadow Puppet in Xiaoyi

Nowadays, the current status of the shadow play is not very optimistic. Both producer and performer in those days are almost one hundred years old now. If there is no new participant, this refined technique will be lost. But many forms of entertainment today make the shadow play less important in people's heart.

No doubt, the traditional shadow play has its own limits in many aspects. It can neither adapt to current entertainment lifestyle of people nor meet people's needs. One hinder of the development of the shadow play is that it's very difficult to produce in that every shadow puppet has more than ten working processes and some complex processes may require a craftsman to work on it for several weeks, not to mention rework

due to being unable to modify small mistakes during production. Then, preservation of finished products of the shadow puppet is a difficult problem to be solved, because long-term sunshine will make the paint fade, a change of shape may occur due to temperature and humidity. These are no doubt deadly weaknesses in modern society which emphasize the industrialized production.

In recent years, local government has been committed to developing its cultural and creative industry, gradually forming a cultural and creative industrial chain that integrates shadow puppet production and performing arts with folk tourism. In order to pass down the shadow play better, the local government has founded an intangible cultural heritage base, to support cultural inheritor to carry out activities and encourage more young people to learn skills of "intangible heritage".

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ENGRAVING PRINTING TECHNOLOGY IN SONG DYNASTY

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Abstract

Engraving printing is the earliest type of printing in China, and also called the whole printing or woodblock printing, which is known as "living fossil" in the history of printing. About the third century A.D..with the appearance of paper and ink, seals began to be popular. Enlarge the seal into a plate, ink, mode of the rubbing and lay the paper on the board for printing, it is the prototype of engraving printing.

Keywords : engraving printing signet inheritance

1、 The main factors of the development for engraving printing in Song Dynasty

The Song Dynasty made great contributions to the development of China's ancient engraving printing. It provided that foundation for the comprehensive development of Chinese printing industry. In the Song Dynasty, the engraving industry was the most popular printing technology, the beautiful font, the paper and ink in good quality, the selective binding, the rigorous collating. There are several main factors to study the development of engraving printing in Song Dynasty.

1.1Written version and print

Written version is to type the characters on the paper according to the format requirements, by using a certain font to write the version, check (to make sure) that there are no mistakes before cutting blocks for printing. In the official engraving, it is usually written by someone who is good at writing among officials. On the one hand written by one person can guarantee the word font consistent and artistic in one copy. On the

other hand, it is also easy for the official directly manages the engraving craftsmen, and good for technical communication between the person who has written version and the engraver. In the private engraving, usually a celebrity is invited to write the version, on the one hand is to improve the quality of the written version, on the other hand, it may be to enhance their own reputation.

The Song Dynasty was the prosperity of printing, bookshops were everywhere in China, the number of books printed is huge, all of these have led to generate a group of people in this industry for writing version.

This group has been described as "writing craftsman", they have a very important position in the history of Chinese printing technology, because they are the main part of China's typography revolution, in which that group and the management of the bookstore jointly created a font specially adapted for engraving printing. The sculptors demanded a more regular and orderly font than regular script. After constant exploration, they