

An Analysis of the Historical Origin of Porcelain Carving in Southern Fujian

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Abstract:

The folk craft of porcelain carving is popular in Southern Fujian of China, and its influence has spread all over southern Fujian, eastern Guangdong and Taiwan of China. However, there is still no unified understanding of the time and place of the formation of porcelain carving. After in-depth investigation and field investigation, it is concluded that the earliest origin of porcelain carving is Chaoshan area, and later it was introduced to southern Fujian and Taiwan. However, it should be noted that the evolution and development of any kind of art is not the result of a single factor. In the process of development, it is inevitably affected by the local culture of Southern Fujian, and other art forms also have a corresponding effect on it, thus forming the unique folk craft of porcelain carving.

Keywords:

Porcelain Carving, Roof Decoration, Origin and Development

1. Introduction

Cutting porcelain carving is a kind of traditional folk handicraft in Southern Fujian. The main techniques are “cutting” and “pasting”. “Jian CI Diao” is its name in Fujian, while Chaoshan people call it “tie Rao”, while Taiwanese people call it “Jian Nian” and “Jian Hua” [1]. The basis of the process of porcelain carving is grey sculpture. By means of pasting, the glazed tiles are used to form images. According to the specific process, it can be divided into flat sticking, floating sticking and round sticking. In the specific process, first of all, steel bars and steel wires should be used as the skeleton structure to initially shape the prototype of the object. Then, river sand, red soil and rice straw should be added into the shell ash to mix, and brown sugar and glutinous rice paper should be used to prepare the final mixture, which is called hemp ash. The hemp ash can be kneaded into the matrix, and then the porcelain pieces can be pasted onto the skeleton made of steel wires.

The decorative parts of porcelain carving can be divided into indoor porcelain carving and outdoor porcelain carving on the roof. The decoration of indoor porcelain carving is mostly in the wall, mural, wall and other decoration; the decoration of roof

porcelain carving is mostly in the ridge, vertical ridge, ridge eaves angle and other parts [2].



Figure 1. Porcelain cutting works of Guandi temple in Dongshan.



Figure 2. Porcelain cutting works of Master Sun Liqiang.

2. A Debate on the Origin of Minnan Porcelain Carving

There are several different opinions about the origin of Minnan porcelain carving: one was invented by artists in Zhangpu and Zhaoan of Zhangzhou in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, there were many kilns in Zhangzhou, and there were abundant pieces of porcelain, which provided abundant raw materials for the production of porcelain carving.

Another theory is that Chaozhou was introduced into Guangdong. At the junction of Chaozhou and Zhangzhou, the folk customs are similar to those of Southern Fujian. The Central Plains culture accepted by Chaozhou is mainly introduced by Chen Zheng and Chen Yuanguang of Tang Dynasty, which is the same as Zhangzhou. Since then, in Song and Yuan Dynasties, a large number of Fujian people came to Chaozhou, and because Zhangzhou was narrow, a large number of people moved to Chaozhou, or because of the war to avoid disaster, they settled in Chaozhou. Therefore, the customs of Chaozhou naturally tended to be consistent with those of Southern Fujian. This provides convenient conditions for the mutual spread of art categories [3].

Third, the art of cutting and pasting originated in Quanzhou. From the analysis of the development history of Fujian ceramics, Quanzhou has had famous Dehua kiln, Anxi kiln, Jinjiang kiln and so on since the Five Dynasties. Ceramic resources are rich in Ming and Qing Dynasties. With the development of folk handicrafts, porcelain kilns in Yongchun, Jinjiang, Nan'an and other places have sprung up, which undoubtedly provides a good social environment for the production of shear stick art. In addition, Taiwan scholars found that among the first group of "scissors" artists who crossed the sea to Taiwan were Su Yangshui brothers from Luojiang, Quanzhou, whose works are still preserved in Taiwan's nangu Wufu Palace (1925) and Xinpu Guanghe Palace (1928) [4].

3. On the Origin of Porcelain Carving in Chaoshan

3.1. The Development Foundation of Porcelain Carving

It is an undeniable fact that porcelain carving is a kind of folk arts and crafts based on Grey sculpture. At the same time, the development of grey sculpture provides material and technical basis for the emergence of porcelain carving. Gray sculpture, also known as “gray batch”, is popular in Guangzhou, China. It is a local traditional sculpture technology, and also distributed in Fujian and Taiwan. However, it is worth considering why the grey plastic technology can be unique in Guangzhou.

First, topographically, Guangzhou is located in the Pearl River Delta and belongs to the subtropical monsoon climate zone with warm and humid climate. This kind of climate condition often leads to accelerated weathering of walls. In addition, Guangzhou is a coastal area, and typhoons pass through frequently. Therefore, decorating the roof with up to 100% gray plastic decoration can increase the roof pressure, so as to avoid the damage to its structure caused by typhoons blowing from all directions. At the same time, the raw materials of grey plastic have the characteristics of alkali resistance, which can release a layer of calcium carbonate on the surface of grey plastic, which can provide protection for buildings.

Second, the material of grey plastic itself includes straw and paper bars, which can be produced in Guangzhou, so it is convenient to use local materials. The unique material structure of grass reinforced ash and paper reinforced ash can act as pores in the interior of grey plastic, which partly reduces the weight of architectural decoration and makes large-scale roof decoration possible. At the same time, with the passage of time, the internal structure of pores is gradually stable and firm, increasing the stability of architectural decoration. During the prosperous period of Southern Fujian porcelain carving in Qing Dynasty, a large number of Chaozhou craftsmen went back and forth to southern Fujian to engage in the creation of this art. Mature Chaozhou porcelain carving art was brought to southern Fujian by craftsmen, which promoted the maturity of porcelain carving art.

In Chenghai county annals of Jiaqing in Qing Dynasty, it was once described as follows: “Wangzu likes to build houses, carve beams and paint buildings, and build bamboo trees in ponds and terraces. A large number of small clans competed to build ancestral halls, boasted of magnificence, and spared no expense” [5]. It can be seen that the solid spiritual and material foundation in Chaozhou, Guangdong, has promoted the development and perfection of architectural decoration art. The mature development of architectural decoration gray plastic technology in Chaozhou area of Guangdong Province provides an internal driving force for the emergence of porcelain carving in Southern Fujian, while the flow of people and economic and trade exchanges between Southern Fujian and Chaozhou in eastern Guangdong provide an external driving force for the emergence of porcelain carving. Therefore, we can infer that the maturity of grey sculpture technology and population flow in Chaozhou area of Guangdong Province are the extremely important factors for the emergence and development of porcelain carving in Southern Fujian.

3.2. Origin of Raw Materials for Porcelain Carving

In Southern Fujian, the porcelain cutting sculptures are represented by Guandi temple in Dongshan, Zhangzhou, the family of Shen Yipu in Zhaoan County, and the Chen family of Chen Xianghua in meizhuang village, Xiangyun Town, Nan'an County, Quanzhou. Most of these porcelain cutting sculptures are made by famous local craftsmen in Chaozhou, Guangdong, who have made some innovations and transformations.

Sun Qi's family is a famous craftsman of porcelain carving. He is as famous as Lin shaodan. His son, sun Liqiang, was born in 1965. At this time, sun Qi's family has become a family of porcelain carving in Qiangang village. Influenced by their elders, they have mastered the technique of porcelain carving since childhood. As they grow older, their technique becomes more and more exquisite. Later, they teach the technique of porcelain carving to their son sun Peixian. Through field investigation and interview with sun Peixian, the author learned that the raw materials for porcelain carving in Zhangzhou are produced in Dehua and Chaozhou. Due to the mature production technology and large output of raw materials in Chaozhou, the raw materials for temple, ancestral hall and temple decoration in Southern Fujian are all from Chaozhou. At the same time, according to sun Peixian's recollection, the skill of cutting porcelain carving was brought by Chaozhou craftsmen at first, but the specific master or craftsman has been unable to verify. However, in the process of porcelain carving, porcelain is very important, so there are higher requirements for the level of local porcelain industry. As a kind of folk architectural decoration art, only when the raw materials are common and cheap can it be developed on a large scale. The important raw materials of porcelain carving depend on porcelain, which is closely related to the development of porcelain industry [6]. Therefore, it is very important to investigate the origin of raw materials of porcelain carving.

The original materials of porcelain carving are some bright overglaze porcelain with red, blue and blue as the main colors. In the Qing Dynasty, the utensils of ceramic workshops and the scattered pieces of porcelain around could be the source of porcelain pieces for porcelain carving. Therefore, in some of the porcelain carving works that were older, the irregular shape and discarded blue and white dish materials occupied the majority of the porcelain pieces. At the end of Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China, porcelain cutting was prosperous. Therefore, there were porcelain factories that provided raw materials for porcelain cutting. Therefore, most of the porcelain cutting in this period was soft in texture, convenient in cutting and rich in color. Therefore, the author speculates that the perfect porcelain industry system in Chaoshan area provides a large number of sufficient and easily available raw materials for the better development of this technology.

Chao Mei phenomenon reports that Chao porcelain is the largest export of local products Chao belongs to Fengxi, where porcelain is produced most About 78% of the people in this area are engaged in this business. Most of the people in this area buy Porcelain for daily use, and most of the rest are sold to Nanyang Chaomei porcelain is produced and exported to Shantou with an annual value of 5 million yuan, and Fengxi porcelain is the most. In 1761, Zhou shuoxun wrote Chaozhou Fu Zhi, which also recorded: "market city: Haiyang County Fengxi market, ten miles southwest of the county, is a place of cultivation and a city day by day" [7]. The large-scale production in Fengxi District of Chaoshan has expanded the system scale of Chaozhou ceramics. At the same time, from the characteristics of porcelain, it can fully meet the characteristics of porcelain needed for porcelain carving.

3.3. Decorative Theme of Porcelain Carving

Minnan porcelain carving is not only of high aesthetic value, but also a window to study Minnan folk culture. The themes of porcelain carving include traditional stories, historical legends and opera characters. In essence, it expresses the subjective will of the people in Southern Fujian to drive away evil spirits and ward off disasters, and symbolizes people's yearning for a better life. Therefore, the study of the subject

matter of porcelain carving can help us trace back to the source and have a deeper understanding of the art of porcelain carving.

The porcelain carving works in Guandi Temple of Dongshan can be divided into three themes: auspicious animals, animals and plants, and characters. The themes of auspicious animals include rare animals in Chinese myths and legends, such as dragons, phoenixes, cranes, deer and unicorns, while the themes of animals and plants cover birds, fish and shrimp, insects, flowers, melons and fruits, etc. So in a word, whether it's auspicious animals or animals and plants, all these show the common value pursuit of our working people, and show the commonness of our traditional culture. However, as a regional architectural decoration, we can understand the unique folk culture from the characters of Guandi temple in Dongshan.



Figure 3. Opera with porcelain carving in Guandi Temple of Dongshan.

The porcelain carving works with character theme are an important part of the architectural decoration materials of Guandi temple in Dongshan. Through the interview with the fourth generation inheritors of Zhangzhou porcelain carving, we know that most of the porcelain carving materials come from the popular Chaozhou Opera in Chaoshan area of Guangdong Province, such as “Li Shimin ascends the throne”, “Mu Guiying is in command”, “mother-in-law stabs the word”, “Eight Immortals cross the sea”, etc On the ridge, there are 120 porcelain carving works of heroes [9]. There is an old saying in Southern Fujian: “there is drama on the top of the house”. Chaoshan people often say that “there is drama at the corner of the house”. These so-called “drama at the roof” refer to the porcelain carving [10]. It also proves that there are a large number of porcelain carving works from opera on the roof. Through the interview with the fourth generation inheritors of Zhangzhou porcelain carving, we know that most of the materials of porcelain carving characters come from the popular Chaozhou Opera in Chaoshan area of Guangdong Province. The reason is that the information exchange of ancient people is not frequent, so in Chaoshan area, the main way to spread moral ethics and classic stories is Chaozhou Opera. This art form is loved by the local people, and the local porcelain carving has absorbed a lot of Chaozhou Opera elements.

Colorful costumes and costumes are the important media for the expression of the characters of porcelain carving. The characters of porcelain carving in Guandi Temple of Dongshan are more exaggerated in color and action than those in Chaozhou Opera. The color is more lively and the composition is more bold. Among them, porcelain carving also absorbs the composition of Chaozhou Opera characters' clothing color in the color matching of characters. Before the creation of characters, a large number of porcelain raw materials with contrast color and complementary color are selected. Among them, the mainstream colors such as red, orange, yellow and green are reflected in the color matching of Chaozhou Opera Costumes.

4. Conclusions

In a word, porcelain carving is a representative architectural decoration in Southern Fujian, but its development is still uncertain in the academic circle. Based on the analysis of the development basis, origin of raw materials, subject matter and other aspects of Minnan porcelain cutting carving, the author tentatively believes that the origin of porcelain cutting carving comes from the more mature skills in Chaoshan area. Through folk cultural exchanges, it was introduced into Minnan by Chaozhou master. However, any kind of folk art shows its own regional characteristics, and porcelain cutting carving is no exception, In the process of the development of porcelain carving, it was also influenced by many factors, such as marine culture, Central Plains culture, religious culture and so on, and finally formed a colorful porcelain carving technique.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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