

Analysis on the Graphic Modeling of Batik in Danzhai

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Abstract:

Objective: Analyze and research the graphic modeling of Danzhai batik, understand its cultural connotation and formal language, and provide theoretical basis and creative inspiration for the innovative application of Danzhai batik and other folk traditional handicrafts in modern design. **Methods:** Based on the field investigation of Guizhou Danzhai Ninghang Batik company, combined with literature, the artistic characteristics of danzhai batik graphic modeling, such as symbolism, randomness and practicality, were studied. **Results:** The batik graphic modeling in Danzhai contains folk culture such as nature worship, ancestor worship, totem worship and marriage customs. The research on the regional characteristics and national characteristics of batik graphic modeling in Danzhai is a creation for the protection and inheritance of Danzhai batik in modern society. More development opportunities and better living space. **Conclusion:** Analyze and summarize the artistic characteristics of Danzhai batik graphics, provide corresponding theoretical references and basis for the follow-up in-depth study of Danzhai batik, which is conducive to the inheritance, promotion and dissemination of national traditional culture.

Keywords:

Danzhai, Batik, Graphical Modelling, Folklore, Nationality

1. Introduction

Zuo Hanzhong explained the meaning of the term “modeling” in the book “Chinese Folk Art Modeling”, that is, plastic art, which refers to the use of certain material materials, and modeling methods such as shape, light, color, point, line, surface, and body. Occupy space, create a visual plane, relief or three-dimensional image, show the concrete things that exist objectively, and thus have a close relationship with vision. If combined with the characteristics of folk art modeling, it can be divided into three categories: plane modeling, three-dimensional modeling and comprehensive modeling [1].

The modeling of Danzhai batik belongs to a kind of plane modeling. Its traditional graphic elements have a variety of shapes, rich content, and a strong sense of form. They are ubiquitous in all aspects of Danzhai people’s lives. These traditional graphic

elements come from life and nature, and show the strong desire of Danzhai people to pursue beautiful things and yearn for a better life.

Danzhai is the famous “Hometown of Batik”, an ethnic village inhabited by the Miao people, located in the southeastern part of Guizhou Province. The unique climatic environment and geographical location provide suitable raw materials for Danzhai batik, so that batik can be better passed down in Danzhai and become an indispensable living material for the locals. Danzhai batik style is free and easy, and the composition is rich. The motifs are mostly derived from natural animals and plants and folklore. Common are butterfly patterns, nest patterns, bird patterns, dragon patterns, etc. Danzhai batik is generally used in clothing and daily life Supplies, exquisite batik patterns can be seen on dresses, backpacks, sheets, straps and other items [2].

The graphic design of Danzhai batik is the cohesion of the emotions of the Miao people, and the embodiment of aesthetic consciousness, cultural connotation and aesthetic value. Under the current conditions, although Danzhai batik has developed from the original graphic model with strong regional characteristics and national characteristics and culture to now has added patterns that conform to the aesthetic elements of the current era, but its main decorative motif and spiritual core have not changed. By studying the national emotions and folk culture behind its graphic modeling, it is not only conducive to the spread and protection of Danzhai batik in today's society, but also provides a more detailed theoretical basis and source of inspiration for its application in modern design [3].

2. Danzhai Batik

Danzhai County is affiliated to Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture in Guizhou Province. It is a relatively remote mountainous area. The word Danzhai is taken from Danjiang County and Bazhai County respectively. The two counties are combined into one county, so it is called Danzhai. It is adjacent to Kaili City, Duyun City, Majiang County, Leishan County and Sandu County [4], and is the main settlement of the Miao people. There are a large number of folk batik artists gathered here, and the batik art here is unique and has the reputation of “the first dye in the East”.

The free and unrestrained style of batik in Danzhai is deeply loved by people. Danzhai people often use it to decorate their own clothing, such as sleeves, shoulders, straps, waistbands, and daily necessities, such as bed sheets, quilts, and curtains. The production materials of Danzhai batik are mainly blue indigo and beeswax. The wax is dipped with a wax knife. The exaggerated and deformed design techniques are used. The smooth and flexible lines express the flowers, birds, insects and abstract geometric patterns in the natural world. The patterns are rich and changeable. The image is full and vivid, the composition is harmonious and unified, which has great aesthetic and practical value [5].

Danzhai batik has a long heritage. Today, the local Miao people still maintain the traditional batik technique. In the field investigation of Ninghang Batik Company, we found that Danzhai folk batik follows the traditional production process and patterns, cooperates with clothing designers, and innovates in pattern themes. Popular and used as clothing and daily necessities in the region and even the country. In terms of its function, in addition to the traditional form of bed sheets, quilts, and door curtains, it

is mainly used for the design of daily necessities such as modern clothing and backpacks. As shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Batik doll. (Photo by Li Yamei at Ninghang Batik Company)

Although the carrier of Danzhai batik graphics has changed compared with the past, its main patterns have not changed. Traditional patterns such as flower patterns, dragon and phoenix patterns, butterfly patterns, and fish patterns are still the main ones. These traditional images express the worship of the Miao people's ancestors to nature and their good wishes for the reproduction of their descendants, symbolize their nationality and show us the Miao culture.

3. The Artistic Characteristics of Batik Patterns in Danzhai

3.1. Symbolic

Symbolic refers to the use of a specific concrete image to express similar or close to concepts, thoughts and emotions. In the graphic modeling of Danzhai batik, the patterns do not simply appear. The patterns of Danzhai batik are all expressions of the emotions of the Miao people. There are mainly two ways to express the affection for things: One is to use homophonic or symbolic techniques to metaphor a certain allegory, that is, to express a certain abstract concept with a specific object. Among them, the allegory of auspiciousness and fertility is the most common. For example, bats and pomegranates appear at the same time, bats are “fu”, pomegranate has the meaning of many children and many grandchildren, and the two appear together to symbolize the beautiful meaning of many children and many blessings [6]; As shown in Figure 2, In the understanding of the Miao people, the fish pattern mostly symbolizes women, while the bird pattern symbolizes men. The combination of fish and birds expresses the good wishes of the Miao people for the reproduction of offspring. The other is to use graphics to express profound historical connotations and worship of ancestors, which is more of a continuation of thought. The bronze drum pattern shown in Figure 3 evolved from the bronze drum used in the sacrifice, expressing the memory and worship of the ancestors.



Figure 2. The combination of fish pattern and bird pattern.

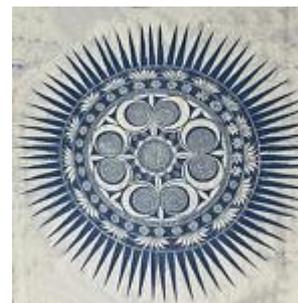


Figure 3. Bronze drum pattern.

3.2. Randomness

Folk artists are strongly subjective when creating images, and their sources of inspiration are often affected by the living environment and change. Danzhai batik graphic modeling is full of randomness. This arbitrariness is mainly manifested in two aspects, one is the randomness of the creative process, In the process of creating graphics, painter has a model for reference, but when creating graphics, she is affected by the situation in which she is in a strong randomness, and the spark of inspiration often flashes in improvisational creation [7]. For example, when the artist of Ninghang Batik Company draws a bird, she will draw an image of a bird with an open mouth because of a toothache, and will draw another image of a bird with a closed mouth as the toothache relieves after going to the doctor. As shown in Figure 4. When another female painter was drawing a thousand birds picture, she thought of the child on her back, so she drew a bird mother with a bird on her back [8]. As shown in Figure 5. The second is the randomness of graphic composition. Danzhai batik is often full of beauty, and there is no standard criterion for composition performance. It is often painted where there is blank space. It is precisely the randomness that makes the graphic shapes of Danzhai batik more agile and full of life. We can not only glimpse the life situation and cultural customs of the time from these graphics, but also experience the emotions that the creator gave to the graphics.



Figure 4. Different forms of birds.



Figure 5. Mother bird piggyback bird quoted from the Internet.

3.3. Practicality

The practicality of Danzhai batik is mainly embodied in its strong decorativeness. First of all, in terms of color, the dyes of Danzhai batik are vegetable dyes. The main raw material is Banlangen. The blue and white form a sharp contrast, which gives a harmony. Unified visual effect, with strong ethnic and regional characteristics. Secondly, in terms of pattern design, Danzhai batik is a folk art created by the people of Danzhai to meet the needs of daily life. The content of the pattern varies according to the scope of use. For example, sheets and quilts prepared for marriage will be painted with yin and yang fish, butterflies, birds, pomegranates and other patterns that represent reproduction and reproduction. The entire sheet and quilt are painted to appear plump and dense but not messy, representing the Miao nationality. The aesthetic concept of people taking fullness as beauty. Such as Danzhai batik wrapper, the middle is the sun pattern, the four corners are evenly arranged with bird patterns and patterns, and the picture is symmetrical and balanced. The neat composition and two simple tones of white and blue are very distinctive and appealing, and very aesthetic. (Figure 6)



Figure 6. Danzhai batik wrapper.

4. Research on the Graphic Modeling of Danzhai Batik

The batik patterns of Danzhai are very rich in themes, and the modeling language is very decorative and artistic, which contains the cultural connotation of the original beliefs of the Miao nationality. The patterns of Danzhai batik are mainly divided into animal patterns, plant patterns and geometric patterns. Animal patterns include butterfly patterns, bird patterns, fish patterns, etc., which are the worship and pursuit of reproduction and reproduction; Plant patterns include pear patterns, pomegranate patterns, etc., which are worship and love of nature; Geometric patterns include woto pattern, horseshoe pattern, copper drum pattern, etc., which are worship and memory of ancestors. From ancient times to the present, these patterns have been developing and innovating, with strong decorative and regional characteristics. The following will discuss the batik graphic modeling of Danzhai from three aspects: tracing the source of Danzhai batik graphic modeling, Danzhai batik graphic modeling and folk culture, and analyzing the typical patterns of Danzhai batik.

4.1. Tracing the Origin of Danzhai Batik Graphic Modeling

The main patterns of Danzhai Miao batik are animal patterns, plant patterns and geometric patterns. These patterns are mainly derived from the reproductive worship, totem worship and ancestor worship of the Miao people. The ancient Miao people attached great importance to population reproduction. Mainly because the Miao people are restricted by natural disasters, living conditions and medical and health conditions, the population survival rate is low, which greatly affects the development of productivity and the continuity of the clan, thus giving rise to reproductive worship. For example, the frog patterns and fish patterns in Danzhai batik all contain the Miao people's desire for the reproduction of offspring. Totem worship is a kind of belief, ancient clans and tribes believed that they had a special blood relationship with certain animals and plants, so they regarded these animals and plants as totems of their tribes. In the legends of the Miao nationality, it was the wayu bird that incubated the ancestors of the Miao nationality, so they regarded the wayu bird as the protector of the nation, and used bird images in batik modeling to pray for the stability and prosperity of the nation. This is a typical totem worship [9]. Ancestor worship is also a source of Danzhai batik graphic modeling. Mother Butterfly hatched Jiang Yang, the ancestor of the Miao ethnic group, in the legend of the Miao ethnic group. By drawing various patterns of butterflies, they expressed the Miao ethnic group's remembrance of their ancestors and prayed for their ancestors' blessing [10].

4.2. Batik Graphic Modeling and Folk Culture in Danzhai

Danzhai batik, as a kind of folk art, contains rich folk culture. The production and development of its graphic modeling cannot be separated from social history and culture. To study its shape, one must understand the folk history and culture behind it.

Many graphic shapes in Danzhai batik are deeply influenced by folklore activities and concepts. For example, there are many traditional festivals in the Miao people, where grand sacrificial activities are held, and people will wear bird patterns and dragons decorated with totem worship and ancestor worship. Batik costumes such as patterns, fish patterns, and butterfly patterns were all dressed up to worship their ancestors and pray for abundance of grains and prosperity. Even now, there are still many traditional sacrificial activities in Danzhai every year. It can be seen that whether it is the elderly or children, men or women, they will wear traditional costumes and sing and dance, which not only expresses respect for ancestors, but also the beauty of the Miao people. Longing for life and good wishes.

The batik graphic modeling of Danzhai is not only deeply influenced by folk culture, but also enriches the content and expression of folk culture. There are many patterns used in traditional folk customs to express beautiful meaning in the graphics of Danzhai batik. The pomegranate pattern in Figure 7 usually symbolizes many children and many grandchildren. It often appears on the dowry sheets for brides or the batik dresses of the Miao nationality. It vividly shows the folk's concept of marriage customs regarding the reproduction of offspring. In addition, the Miao people wear various patterns on their costumes when celebrating activities, which also adds a festive atmosphere to folk festivals. The dynamic display of Danzhai batik in folk activities is more attractive than static works. It complements and integrates with folk culture and has a wider impact.



Figure 7. Pomegranate pattern covered.

4.3. Analysis on the Typical Patterns of Batik in Danzhai

4.3.1. Butterfly Pattern

Butterfly pattern is one of the typical patterns in Danzhai batik graphics. Very popular in the Miao area. According to the “Ancient Songs of the Miao Nationality”, Jiang Yang, the ancestor of the Miao nationality, was hatched from the eggs laid by the mother butterfly. Butterflies have a feeling of worship and love, which is not only the worship of nature but also the love of ancestors. They think Mother Butterfly can bless the village's peace and prosperity, and the children and grandchildren will last forever. Therefore, various butterfly patterns can be seen on the clothing and daily necessities of the Miao people.

The butterfly patterns in Danzhai batik are in a variety of postures, both concrete and abstract; some are exaggerated and deformed, but also complex and continuous. In the graphic modeling, the butterfly pattern is often decorated with elements to symbolize the image of the egg, which reflects the pursuit of reproduction of offspring. The posture of the butterfly is mainly the unfolded shape, the insect-shaped or fish-shaped body is combined with the petals and leaves [11]. As shown in Figure 9, or use the combination of characters and butterfly wings to form a concrete image of “Mother Butterfly”, which appears in combination with bird patterns to express the nostalgia and reverence for the ancestors, as shown in Figure 8.



Figure 8. Mother Butterfly.



Figure 9. Butterfly pattern.

4.3.2 Wotuo pattern

“Wotuo pattern” is a pattern with eight swirls surrounding a bronze drum. It is one of the representative patterns in the batik pattern of Danzhai of the Miao nationality. There are many versions of the origin of the Wotuo pattern. It is generally believed that the Miao nationality is a migrating nation. During the migration process, the Miao ancestors crossed rivers and layers of obstacles before finally settle down. Therefore, the wotuo pattern is a commemoration of the migration history of the ancestors of the Miao people for thousands of years. Each line and circle in the Wotuo pattern is a record of their ancestors’ difficulties. The Miao people think this is a totem of the Miao ethnic group, a pattern unique to the Miao culture, and it represents the bravery and strong qualities of the Miao ethnic group’s ancestors’ Spirit, every time when painting it, the girls are a kind of commemoration and inheritance. At the same time, they believe that younger generations should also have this hard-working and persevering quality, and they can feel the blessings of their ancestors. Therefore, the Wotuo pattern is not only a symbol of the spiritual quality of the Miao culture, but also means respect and worship of the ancestors.

Wotuo patterns often appear on the collar and sleeves of Miao costumes, because “collar” and “sleeves” play an important role and significance in Miao costumes. The pattern is decorated on the sleeves and shoulders of the clothes, which is the worship and worship of the nation. Reminiscences of ancestors, as shown in Figure 10. On major festivals, they all wear costumes decorated with woto patterns to show their respect and commemoration of their ancestors. In Danzhai batik, woto patterns are usually combined with geometric, plant, and animal patterns. As shown in Figure 11, the combined pattern of the Woto pattern and the butterfly pattern, relying on its rigorous and standardized graphic modeling characteristics, conveys cultural connotations with national emotions, symbiosis ideas and prayer psychology. It is a model of ethnic minority traditional patterns that blend rationality and sensibility [12].



Figure 10. *Wotou pattern on clothing quoted from the Internet.*



Figure 11. *Wotou pattern and butterfly pattern quoted from the Internet.*

4.3.3. Bird Pattern

The bird pattern is a typical pattern in Danzhai batik, and its modeling origin is closely related to the cultural beliefs of the Miao people. Danzhai Miao is a branch of “white-collar Miao”, it is considered to be a tribe of birds, and is also called “the last tribe of bird totem”. Therefore, the batik patterns of Danzhai Miao are mainly bird patterns.

In “Ancient Songs of the Miao Nationality”, the eggs of the ancestors of the Miao nationality were hatched by the wagtail. The legendary wagyu bird is said to be similar to the golden pheasant in real life. Most of the bird patterns in Danzhai batik are created with golden pheasant as the basic modeling element. Through abstract deformation, a wide variety of vivid and interesting bird patterns are drawn.

The bird patterns in Danzhai batik are very rich. The basic feature is to reflect the vigorous posture of the bird through sharp feathers. It is mostly presented in the shape of a single eye on the side. The posture in the picture is either flying or standing, with various shapes and vividness. It demonstrates the rich imagination and creativity of the Miao people. In terms of display form, they usually like to combine bird patterns with various plant and flower patterns. As shown in Figure 12. But the fish pattern is most combined with the bird pattern. The two often appear together in the pattern, because in the hearts of the Danzhai Miao people, they hope that “there are as many children as fish cubs”, so they like to decorate their clothing or daily necessities with fish patterns to express their need for nurturing life and their desire for the growth of the ethnic population. Bird patterns are often used to express males or metaphor male yin. The combination of the bird pattern and the fish pattern means the combination of men and women and reproduction of offspring, which is a profound manifestation of the worship of fertility by the Miao people. As shown in Figure 13, a bird with a fish in its beak is a pattern that often appears in Danzhai batik. It is a vivid metaphor for the blending and reproduction of men and women. In Danzhai batik, there are many similar patterns. The Miao people express their desire and admiration for fertility and reproduction through graphic creation in batik patterns. They are affectionate and vivid, conveying their good wishes for the birth of children and grandchildren.



Figure 12. *Batik pattern with bird pattern and plant pattern.*



Figure 13. *Birdbit fish batik graphics, quoted from the Internet.*

5. Conclusions

Danzhai batik perfectly retains the cultural traditions of ethnic minorities, has distinctive regional and cultural characteristics, and shows the life taste and aesthetic concepts of the Miao people. It is not only a true portrayal of the daily life and folk culture of the Miao nationality, but also a carrier of the historical development of the Miao nationality. The batik patterns in Danzhai vividly reflect the information of the historical changes and folk culture of the Miao nationality, which is of great research value. This article explores and analyzes the artistic characteristics of Danzhai batik graphic modeling, the traceability of the modeling, the relationship with folk culture, and the typical patterns. Knowing that these graphics are not produced out of thin air, their creation and production are closely related to the ancient people's worship of nature, totems, and ancestors, and are inseparable from the environment in which they live and their national culture. Understanding the cultural connotations behind these traditional patterns is conducive to us further applying the design elements in modern society, so that these traditional models will shine in the new era, and provide a certain reference for the inheritance and research of Danzhai batik.

Conflicts of Interest

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

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