

Furniture in Murals from the Perspective of Multiculturalism in Liao Dynasty

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Abstract:

The Qidan nationality in the Liao Dynasty was a nomadic people drinking horses and the Yellow River, which ruled most of the northern part of China. The Liao and Jin dynasties is a period of great cultural integration, multiculturalism coexists, and the furniture of the Liao Dynasty also has its own characteristics. Because of the long history, most of the furniture of the Liao Dynasty came from the murals. Through the archaeological excavations of the murals of the Liao Dynasty, we can understand the social life and life scene at that time. This paper summarizes and collates the murals of different regions in different periods of the Liao Dynasty, and makes a preliminary study of the furniture in the murals of the Liao Dynasty, so that we can re-witness the furniture of the Liao Dynasty from different cultural perspectives.

Keywords:

Liao Dynasty, Murals, Furniture, Life Scene

1. Introduction

The Liao Dynasty (907-1125) was a state power established by the northern ethnic minorities. The Qidan nationality was first active in the Huang River and Tu River basins (now Xilamulun River and Laoha River). The name “Qidan” first came from “Wei Shu”. In 907, Yeru Aboji, the Taizu of Liao, became the leader of the tribe. In 916, A Baoji, the founder of Liao, was called the emperor, and the country was named “Qidan”. He imitated the political system of the Han Dynasty and built the Divine Book of the Yuan Dynasty.

Among the existing studies on Liao Dynasty furniture, one is about the history of Chinese furniture art. This kind of research will involve some problems of Liao Dynasty furniture, such as Mr. Li Zongshan's “Historical Map Theory of Chinese Furniture” and Mr. Shao Xiaofeng's “Chinese Song Dynasty Furniture” all involve a small part of the content about Liao Dynasty furniture. The other is the research on the individual furniture of the Liao Dynasty, such as “the study of the furniture of the Liao Dynasty”, “the diversification of the furniture style of the Liao Dynasty from the chair”, “the evolution of the furniture form of the Northeast-- the furniture form of the Liao Dynasty”, “looking at the furniture form of the Northeast of the Liao Dynasty

from the murals of the Liao Tomb”. The above is the study of individual furniture, types or individual regional furniture in the Liao Dynasty. However, the Liao Dynasty has a long existence, a wide range of territory and frequent cultural exchanges, and there is a lack of detailed comparative study on some changes of furniture in time and space. According to the literature records, this paper will longitudinally analyze the changes and characteristics of furniture in the murals of Liao Dynasty, and make a comparative study of the differences of furniture shapes and customs and cultures in different regions.

2. The Furniture of Liao Dynasty from Different Cultural Perspectives

The emergence of multiculturalism in the Liao Dynasty mainly comes from the vast territory, which can be divided into the north and the south within the jurisdiction of the Liao Dynasty. There are different ethnic groups in these two areas. Due to historical and ethnic factors, the Liao Dynasty produced different cultures. Because of the different modes of production and living habits, the cultural traditions of the ethnic minorities ruled by the Liao Dynasty are quite different from those of the Han nationality in the Central Plains [1]. In addition to the literature records, our current understanding of the Liao Dynasty mainly comes from the murals of the Liao Dynasty. This is especially true for the understanding of furniture in the Liao Dynasty. The murals in Liao and Jin dynasties not only inherited the tradition of tomb frescoes since the Han and Tang dynasties, but also retained the cultural heritage of the Qidan nation, forming a kind of tomb fresco with strong national characteristics [2]. After the founding of the people’s Republic of China, under the influence of the burial culture of the Central Plains, tombs began to be buried, and tomb frescoes [3]. Murals are also widely distributed in Chifeng, Inner Mongolia in the north, Liaoyang in Liaoning Province in the east, Datong in Shanxi Province in the west, Beijing in Beijing and Xuanhua in Hebei Province in the north. Murals have been found within the jurisdiction of Wujing of the Qidan nationality. it contains murals related to furniture. From the furniture in the multicultural murals of the Liao Dynasty, this paper analyzes the characteristics of furniture in different cultures.

In the process of their development, the northern ethnic minorities show a dynamic trend of continuous differentiation and integration, and a nation is often of multiple sources. therefore, the ethnic origin of the northern ethnic minorities is very complicated. each ethnic group has different cultural forms, but they have a lot in common, it can even be said that The common cultural elements among the northern ethnic groups are no less than different cultural elements [4] . After the founding of the people's Republic of China, Qidan implemented a two-sided official system, which not only protected the original form of local culture, but also created a smooth channel for the infiltration of Han culture, thus accelerating the process of integration of advanced culture and local culture in the Central Plains [5].

The furniture of the Song Dynasty paid attention to advocating conciseness and essence in modeling, especially in some furniture depicted in the paintings of the Song Dynasty. The shape of “Jane” is full of changes in lines, including the rational preciseness of straight lines and the gentle and graceful beauty of curves. It also pays attention to the harmony and moderation of the lines, the beauty of rhythm and rhythm, and the harmonious and orderly shape, which embodies the harmonious aesthetic design thought of the golden mean of the literati in the Song Dynasty. It is the aesthetic expression of “plain” [6]. The furniture in the southern part of the Liao

Dynasty reflects the Han culture in the furniture of the Song Dynasty. The southern areas under the jurisdiction of the Liao Dynasty included Liao Nanjing and Liao Xi Jing, that is, Hebei, Beijing and Shanxi today. Due to historical factors, the southern region is an area under the jurisdiction of the Han Dynasty, mostly inhabited by the Han nationality, so it is mainly agricultural culture.

Looking at the use of furniture from the perspective of Chinese culture, the appearance and use of the high table is the most frequent in the murals in the south, which is the main furniture used in people's daily life, such as dining, drinking, etc., while the low table is only used as a shelf for holding articles, which is different from that in the north. In the tomb of Han Shixun in Xiabali Village, Xuanhua, Hebei Province, draw a picture of "drinking and listening to music" (Figure 1). There are three tables in the painting, two high-foot tables and one short table: the square high-foot table at the top left of the picture. the front of the high table and the legs on the left and right sides are connected by double horizontal legs, which is closer to the table, and there is a dwarf between the upper table and the table. On the right side of the screen is a long red high table. The legs of the table are connected by double horizontal cymbals, which are close to the table, and the feet are decorated with metal. Bowls, dishes and other cutlery are placed on the two high tables. At the bottom of the picture is a long yellow low table with legs and feet connected by a single cross. There are three wine bottles on the low-footed table, which are mainly used as shelves. Also in the "Banquet Picture" (Figure 2) of Zhang Shiqing's tomb in Xiabali Village, Xuanhua, there is also a low table with round holes for holding wine bottles, which is also used as a shelf rather than a table for banquets. And the high tables are all furniture used for banquets. The "maid picture" (Figure 3) of the mural tomb of Xu Congyu, an envoy of Datong Army in Shanxi Province, shows a large coat hanger, 1.45 wide and 1.25 meters high, in the shape of a trapezoid with thick and broad feet. Two handmaids stand on both sides of the clothes hanger, and the right handmaid puts a hollowed-out drum-shaped stool in front of the body. The outer outline of the stool is like a drum, hollow and has a skeleton, delicate and lightweight structure, beautiful lines, and feet with mu.

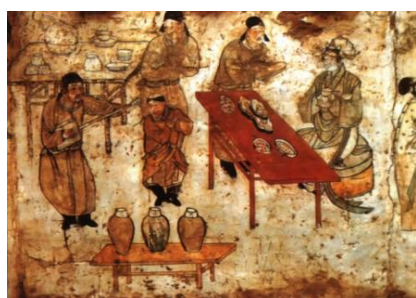


Figure 1. *Drinking and listening to music.*



Fig. 2. *Feast.*



Figure 3. *maid.*

The northern areas under the jurisdiction of the Liao Dynasty included Liao Shangjing, Liao Zhong Jing and Liao Tokyo, that is, Inner Mongolia and Liaoning today. The northern region belongs to the northern grassland area, which is mainly the nomadic living place of the Qidan nationality, and the northern grassland culture is the main culture in the northern region. The Qidan nationality is mainly nomadic in the northern grasslands, with high altitude and cold climate, and has the habit of migrating at 04:00. 04:00 is a typical prairie life because it has no fixed place for home. Therefore, the furniture in the northern region also has a certain particularity.

Looking at the use of furniture from the perspective of grassland culture, in the murals in the northern part of the Liao Dynasty, high tables and low tables are used as furniture for daily tea, alcohol and banquets, but the frequency of low tables is still very high. and as the Liao people's daily banquet, dining when the main furniture. For example, the low square table in the Tomb Master's Feast Picture of Yangshan No. 1 (Figure 4), the legs of the table are connected by a single stick, and the table is filled with melon and fruit utensils; similarly, the low table has bowls and dishes on the long table (Figure 5), and the characters in the picture sit around the table; all the low tables in the above scenes have furniture used by the Qidan people for banquets and meals. Due to the special geographical location and climatic environment in the northern region, hot wine or tea will be used when preparing drinks or meals. For example, the No. 1 tomb of Yangshan, Aohan Banner, Chifeng, Inner Mongolia, draws a "tea ceremony" (Figure 6), which shows the attendants preparing to make tea and drink tea. There is a high table in the middle of the picture, the whole body of the table is painted black, the legs of the table are connected by double horizontal curtains, the legs of the front of the high table are connected with the table, and there are two round hole-shaped panels, and there is a horizontal bar under the panel. In the lower left corner of the picture, there is a bamboo stick, which is used to hold food and has the function of heat preservation, which is very rare in murals in other areas. in the lower right corner of the picture, there is a three-legged brazier with cloud-shaped feet turned outward, and the fire is burning, which is used to make tea. The Qidan people in the northern grasslands have regional characteristics in the use of furniture.



Figure 4. Kitchen map.



Figure 5. Tomb host banquet map.



Figure 6. Tea ceremony map.

3. Conclusions

To some extent, furniture is the product of culture. On the other hand, the furniture of the Liao Dynasty has gone through a long process of evolution, from low seats to tall seats. The development model of furniture in Liao Dynasty, at the same time, the Han culture of the Central Plains Dynasty was integrated into the grassland culture of Qidan, which is particularly obvious in the furniture of Liao Dynasty. The furniture in the southern part of the Liao Dynasty inherited the furniture style of the Northern Song Dynasty, while the northern region inherited the furniture characteristics of the prairie style of the Liao Dynasty

Conflicts of Interest

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

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