

Traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou: Re-Invention of Tradition in the Process of Commercialization

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Abstract:

This paper expounds the current situation and classification of traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou, and focuses on analyzing the decorative style and creation techniques of traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou. In the background of commercialization, starting from the composition, lines, characters, colors and other important elements in the New Year Pictures, carry out in-depth analysis, and explore the methods and new ways of traditional re-creation. The purpose of this research is to protect, inherit and carry forward traditional culture, so that traditional New Year Pictures can be accepted and learned by more people. At the same time, traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou can provide valuable resources for the innovative practice research of traditional patterns.

Keywords: New Year Pictures; Re-invention; Important elements;

I Introduction

Nowadays, the progress and development of science and technology are very rapid, but people's desire to pursue localization and nationalization is also increasing day by day. A commodity is the product of labor produced for sale. Engels said, commodities are not for consumption by individuals, but for consumption by others, and they become

commodities when they are produced for society. According to Marxist political economy, commodities are products of labor for exchange. By definition, commodities must pass through the exchange process to realize the transfer of use value, in which labor and worker are also commodities. The duality of commodities shows that the value of use and value are unified attributes in commodities. The New Year Pictures of Tantou¹, as a unique artistic work in

¹ Tantou, an ancient town on the Zishui River in southwestern Hunan Province of China, with bamboos all over the mountains and plains, crystal clear karst creeks and simple and honest folk customs, gave birth to the treasures of Chinese folk arts and crafts - New Year Pictures of Tantou.

The New Year Pictures of Tantou is the only handmade woodblock watermarked New Year pictures in Hunan Province. From the late Ming and early Qing dynasties to the early years of the

Republic of China, New Year Pictures of Tantou gradually formed their own unique artistic style: bright and moist colors, ancient, clumsy, exaggerated, full and personalized modeling methods, pure local materials and unique craftsmanship, making the works has the general artistic effect of relief. The New Year Pictures of Tantou go through more than 20 processes from the selection of papermaking raw materials, the manufacture of paper, the brushing of the base, to the engraving, seven printings, and seven

China, has a history of more than 800 years and is known as the originator of traditional Chinese New Year pictures. It is known as the four major New Year Pictures in China with Yangliuqing New Year Pictures in Tianjin², Weifang New Year Pictures in Shandong³, Taohuawu New Year Pictures in Jiangsu⁴, they are the essence of Chinese traditional folk art. It is an important task for researchers to study the re-invention of the traditional New Year pictures in the process of commercialization.

At present, there are very few artists who know carving and printing plates in Tantou Town. If the ancient extraction technique of plant colors is not protected in time, the traditional New Year pictures of Tantou are likely to disappear completely. Based on such a situation, researchers should inherit and carry forward the protection consciousness of traditional New Year pictures, inherit the creative ideas of traditional New Year pictures, and realize the re-invention of traditional New Year pictures. Through the understanding of modern people and creation, make the traditional New Year Pictures are full of traditional culture and in line with contemporary trends, let the innovative creation of traditional New Year pictures develop further and further.

hand-paintings. From handmade paper to finished New Year Pictures are produced in one place, which is extremely rare in the production of New Year Pictures nationwide.

² Yangliuqing New Year Pictures of Tianjin was produced during the Chongzhen period of the Ming Dynasty in China. It inherited the traditions of Song and Yuan painting, absorbed the forms of woodcut prints, arts and crafts, and theatrical stages of the Ming Dynasty, and adopted the method of combining woodblock overprinting and hand-painting to create a bright, lively, festive and auspicious painting, and a unique style full of touching themes. On May 20, 2006, the heritage was approved by the State

2 The use and re-invention of composition as one of the important elements of the traditional New Year Pictures

The traditional New Year pictures of Tantou is composed by inheriting the expressive techniques of traditional paintings. It adopts the principle of parallel perspective, the characters are interspersed closely, the whole picture is full, compact, tight, there are few blank space. Most of the blank space will be added with auspicious flowers and plants to increase the compactness of the picture, making the picture more full and decorative.

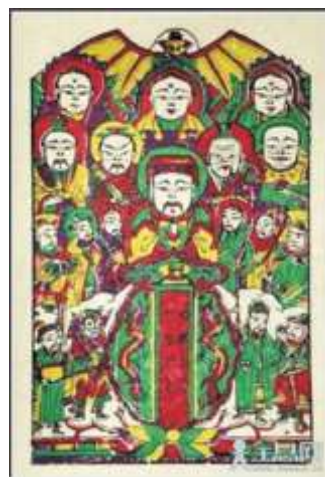


Figure 1: Wood New Year paintings composition

Source: Looking for the New Year Pictures of the Past: A Journey to the Tandou, 2007.

Council to be included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list.

³ Yangjiabu woodblock New Year Pictures of Shandong are traditional folk crafts with a long history in Shandong Province. Founded in the late Ming Dynasty, it was all hand-operated and made in traditional ways. In the early stage of development, it was influenced by Yangliuqingqing paintings.

⁴ Taohuawu New Year Pictures of Jiangsu are folk woodblock New Year Pictures in the south of the Yangtze River. It got its name because it was once concentrated in the Taohuawu area of Suzhou city.

As shown in Figure 1, the whole picture is very compact. Although there are many characters, it does not appear chaotic. The skeleton lines are clearly visible. Because the skeletons are evenly divided, the picture is clear in primary and secondary, and the relationship between the subject and the object is clear. The traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou are centered on the middle figure and the surrounding figures are auxiliary. Although the picture is full, it is not cumbersome, the composition is very symmetrical, and the decoration is very strong. The overall picture has a certain sense of rhythm, while taking into account the beauty.



Figure 2: Innovative design of wood New Year paintings

Source: Looking for the New Year Pictures of the Past: A Journey to the Tandou, 2007.

Combined with the full composition rules of the traditional New Year pictures of Tantou, in today's pattern creation and expression techniques, traditional elements can be broken up and reconstructed, while continuing the traditional parallel perspective rule, the composition method can be recreated to make the patterns more decorative. As shown in Figure 2, in the actual creation process, creators can combine their own painting characteristics to show modern pattern works with the flavor of New Year pictures, such as the re-invention of the traditional New Year pictures of Tantou.

3 The use and re-invention of lines as one of the important elements of the traditional New Year Pictures

The engraving lines of the traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou are divided into negative and positive carvings. Since woodblock carvings are used, the lines presented in the pictures are bold and unrestrained, strong and powerful, with strong contrast, hardness and softness, and full of charm. The traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou are made of peach wood. Peach wood has very strong toughness and can be easily carved with thick and thin lines. It adopts the iron line drawing technique of ancient figure painting, especially on the clothing pattern, which is very prominent, the lines are thick and strong, with a typical, unique, simple, thick and strong style of northern nationality. It pays attention to thickness, strength, density, smoothness, twists and turns, setbacks, starting and closing the knife, etc.



Figure 3: The use of lines

Source: Looking for the New Year Pictures of the Past: A Journey to the Tandou, 2007.

In terms of grasping the lines, the carving of the traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou borrows the techniques of ancient Chinese figure painting and calligraphy, and uses a knife instead of a brush, the use of knife is same as brush, It pays attention to thickness, strength,

density, smoothness, twists and turns, setbacks, starting and closing the knife, etc. The traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou pay great attention to the decorative effect of lines, and the decorative techniques used include scale patterns, short lines, dots, nail patterns, etc.

As shown in Figure 3, based on the charm of lines, modern creators mainly consider the rhythm and changes of lines in the process of creating patterns, forming a strong contrast between the performance of rough and unrestrained lines and delicate lines, but they are coordinated and unified, this makes the rhythm of the picture clear hierarchy, the content of the picture is both traditional and rich, and has a strong decorative charm of New Year Pictures.

4 The use and re-invention of figures as one of the important elements of the traditional New Year Pictures

The figures in the traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou vary in shapes and postures. These shapes and postures are neither conventional nor proportional. From the perspective of overall shape, the performance of these figures is almost beyond the normal proportion of ordinary people, and most of them are painted in the proportion of big head and small body. For example, the proportion of ordinary people is 1:7, while the proportion of figures in traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou is 1:3. The overall shape gives people a thick, solid and simple feeling.

When expressing the characteristics of the head image, creators need to pay attention to the characterization of the eyes and eyebrows. There are many images of the positive heroic figures in the New Year Pictures, and the real images of the heroic figures are expressed in an exaggerated way. The New Year Pictures of Tantou are mostly figure paintings, and most of them are heroic figures with tall images, mainly showing

the uprightness and impartiality spirit of heroes. Combined with the above characteristics, exaggerated expression techniques can be used in the process of pattern re-creation, whether it is the facial expressions of figures or the dynamics of figures can be exaggerated, and then re-created with reference to modern formal language.



Figure 4: Image innovation

Source: Looking for the New Year Pictures of the Past: A Journey to the Tandou, 2007.

The re-invention of the figures in the New Year Pictures of Tantou, which is shown in Figure 4, is an innovative pattern of New Year Picture with graffiti style. In the process of re-creation, creators combine their own expression techniques and creative habits, which will make traditional patterns more modern.

5 The use and re-invention of colors as one of the important elements of the traditional New Year Pictures

The development of traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou has faced many changes. In terms of colors, the previous New Year Pictures were hand-colored by artists one piece by one piece. After the development of woodcut watermarking technology, few New Year Pictures are hand-colored in their entirety, and the color registration technology is used to realize the mass production of New Year Pictures. The colors of traditional New Year

Pictures of Tantou seem simple, but the colors used are very sophisticated. The colors used are carefully prepared with traditional national techniques and plant colors. The colors are black, red, and locust sunflower purple, wood red, ink, gold printing, gold skimming, etc. The New Year Pictures printed with these pigments are very bright and not easy to fade.

The traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou boldly use simple and bright colors, such as red, yellow, green and purple, and they are also very bold in the amount of pigment, which is almost equal to the proportion of colors. For example, the image of Zhong Kui uses a lot of purple as the color of the face part, the whites of the eyes are yellow, the green robes are alternated with yellow and purple, the eyebrows and beard are also yellow and purple, looks angry and fierce, making the exorcism general more deterrent and shocking force. When expressing other themes, it is also inseparable from the use of these colors, there is just the emphasis changes of the colors proportion.



Figure 5: Color innovation

Source: Looking for the New Year Pictures of the Past: A Journey to the Tandou, 2007.

As shown in Figure 5, the color expression of traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou is saturated and intense, at the same time, it presents an optimistic, self-confident and masculine pride and a simple and innocent rural

atmosphere. The color of the current pattern can also be used for reference in the color technique of woodblock New Year Pictures. This color can give people a strong artistic appeal on their psychnology. This is also a great enlightenment for the contemporary pattern design given by the color in the woodblock New Year Pictures.

Summary

With the growing strength of China's national power, Chinese culture has begun to attract the attention of the world. As one of the important art forms in traditional Chinese art, traditional New Year Pictures have strong reference and inspirational value to Chinese folk art, painting, printmaking, modern art and design. On the exhibition stage of world art, the traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou shows its own uniqueness artistic charm and confidence. In the pattern of artistic diversification, woodblock New Year Pictures are facing the test of the world historical stage, which requires more researchers to explore and innovate, and dig out the contemporary art form with traditional national cultural heritage.

Research Objectives

1. To study the development background of traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou.
2. To analyze the re-invention of traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou in the Process of Commercialization.

Suggestions

What is the future of the traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou? Which form should be used in re-creating traditional inventions in the process of commercialization? In the paper, it is

found that the main problem is the lack of consumer market of New Year Pictures. Which form should the traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou be taken to the market is to save them in the true sense. The tradition should be re-created from a full-scale in terms of theme, content and form.

1. In terms of expression themes, the traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou can learn from the creative ideas of traditional woodblock New Year Pictures, take auspicious implication, historical stories as expression themes to evolve and re-create. Drawing lessons from the expression skills of traditional woodblock New Year Pictures, and using traditional Chinese history and culture for re-creation. From the educational significance of traditional culture, this can play a role in promoting the re-dissemination of traditional culture.

2. In terms of expression skills, appropriate adjustments can be made, such as adding fashion, cartoon, and modern changes to traditional New Year Pictures, and adding animation elements to traditional figures, making it easier for the majority of teenagers to accept.

3. In terms of expression forms, it is necessary to use the decorations of modern home life to display. Advertising, contemporary paintings, graffiti, gift packaging, desk calendars, pillows, stamps, household utensils, etc. can be added to the traditional pattern elements of woodblock New Year Pictures, making woodblock New Year Pictures more modern atmosphere, it is conducive to the effective dissemination of woodblock New Year Pictures.

Methodology

This article adopts the method of qualitative research, consults a large number of historical documents and materials, and fully grasps the important content such as the development

background, expression skills, and creation elements of New Year Pictures.

Through field work, the researcher has mastered the first-hand information and data of New Year Pictures of Tantou in the process of commercialization, and recorded the important feelings of the artists, tourists, and designers through on-site interviews, and formed the important basis of people of their real thoughts and mind about New Year Pictures.

At the same time, using modern networks and new media technologies, such as photography and recording equipment, to record and save a large number of important materials.

Finally, by sorting out the collected materials and data analysis, combined with own reasonable views and qualitative research, drawing conclusions.

Discovery of this article

Through the research of this paper, the researcher has discovered the importance and necessity of re-invention of traditional New Year Pictures of Tantou. In modern society, in the background of commercialization, the development and generation of things are diverse and complex, and New Year Pictures, as one of the important excellent Chinese culture for conveying positive culture, has its unique historical roles. Re-invention of traditional New Year Pictures is conducive to promoting the excellent traditional Chinese culture, advocating a good social atmosphere, helping the new generation of young people to establish cultural awareness and cultural self-confidence, and promoting the benign development of society.

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