The Cultural Stratification of Yunnan Art During the Anti-Japanese War Period

Zi’ang Zhang

Yunnan Art Institute, Kunming, Yunnan, China.

Abstract

During the Anti-Japanese War, the emergence of the problem of social stratification of art in Yunnan was the inevitable of the times, and art, as an important form of literature and art in the Anti-Japanese War, was closely related to the Anti-Japanese War, and it was not only the backbone of salvation and survival, but also one of the focuses of the research on modern Chinese art history. During the Anti-Japanese War period, art played multiple roles in the transformation of Chinese society, which is closely related, and relevant people in the literary and art circles and art circles must realize that there is a relationship of mutual influence and constraint between them, which is of unique and far-reaching significance. Based on the development of Yunnan art and culture during the Anti-Japanese War period, this paper divides the art works into the academy art layer, mainstream art layer, and Ethnic and folk art layer according to the content and style of expression, and conducts in-depth analysis.

Keywords

Culture stratification, Yunnan fine arts, art stratification

1. Root causes of cultural stratification

During the Anti-Japanese War, Yunnan was the rear area of China. Influenced by many aspects, the development of culture and art has become more and more obvious. The art and culture of Yunnan presented a complicated situation of unique differentiation and pluralism. During the Anti-Japanese War, some artists began to try to excavate the rich natural and cultural resources in Yunnan (Zhu Qi, 2019). Therefore, the art of Yunnan was characterized by its unique scenery, national cultural tradition and distinct regional characteristics. Although artists and artists in Yunnan have different understandings of local culture, their attitudes, thoughts and aesthetic tastes are the same. They praise Yunnan scenery and love the motherland.

Due to the lack of data collection at that time, resulting in the absence of some information, but also increased the current stratification of the Anti-Japanese War period of art culture research difficulties. Based on the latest data collected at present, the author tries to make an in-depth analysis from the perspective of art and social stratification, and promote the development of Yunnan art.

As the core area of national culture, Yunnan still lags far behind the rest of the country in artistic level. The main reasons for this situation are the economy, education, social environment and historical accumulation of Yunnan. From the economic point of view, Yunnan is an ethnic region, in the border areas of ethnic poverty in the long-term backward state. In education, before the outbreak of the War of Resistance Against Japan, Yunnan set up a number of colleges, universities, primary and middle schools. However, the corresponding educational facilities and teachers are relatively weak because of the small number and scale of schools. After the outbreak of the War of Resis-
tance Against Japan, Southwest United University, Yunnan University, Academia Sinica and a large number of other institutions and intellectuals came to Yunnan. In the art creation style, the Yunnan art creation style before the outbreak of the War of Resistance Against Japan, with distinct regional and national characteristics. After the outbreak of the War of Resistance Against Japan, Yunnan gathered a large number of artists and art elites, and this unique region of Yunnan provided them with creative materials, but also for them to form new creative possibilities. Due to the different regions, learning methods and artistic ideas of the artists coming to Kunming, they also caused the differences in artistic styles, and finally formed a complex and thriving Yunnan art.

2. Cultural Stratification of Fine Arts and Its Characteristics

Habermas believes that the formation of the public sphere requires face-to-face communication, as well as the role of the print media (Jurgen Habermas, 1989). Based on Habermas’ point of view, the art works of the Anti-Japanese War period are systematically analyzed. It is in this public sphere that the art works, as a special medium, are displayed by artists through their own artistic creation. Mr. Chen Jianxian proposed: "The culture is the human activity and the material and the spiritual achievement synthesis, and has many kinds of levels.” (Huang Guoyi, 2005). As Mr. Chen Jianxian said, the development of art in Yunnan during the War of Resistance Against Japan presented the characteristics of coexistence, differentiation and stratification. During the War of Resistance Against Japan, famous artists such as Jiang Xiaodi, Zhang Shanzi and Xu Beihong came to Yunnan from their hometown. They used their own brushes as weapons, combined with the local fine arts of Yunnan, and carried out anti-Japanese propaganda by means of exhibitions and charity sales. Pluralistic coexistence refers to the state of art development in Yunnan, in which the cultural traditions and artistic characteristics are not completely the same among the Yunnan strata, but they can merge with each other but not repel each other. From the perspective of the development of Yunnan art during the Anti-Japanese War, it is not a single level, but a complex state. According to the content of art works, the style of works, and the characteristics of works, the author divides them into the following levels: academic art, mainstream art and folk art. On the whole, there is a characteristic of stratified evolution between layers.

2.1 Academy art layer.

The Southwest United University, National College of Fine Arts, Yunnan University and Kunhua Art School, which came to Yunnan during the Anti-Japanese War, also played their respective roles. These colleges and universities not only brought in a large number of well-known artists, but also trained a large number of outstanding art talents for the Anti-Japanese War. Based on "society", college fine arts has formed pluralistic, localized features and unique style of the times. Their artistic personality and social influence are huge, with a distinctive spirit of patriotism and national independence. Its influence is mainly embodied in two aspects: one is to raise the attention of the society to the fine arts, to exert the influence of the fine arts;

The art creation and teaching activities of National Art College, Kunhua Art School, Southwest United University and other schools provide a continuous driving force for the development of art in Yunnan University. In 1939, the National Art College came to Kunming, bringing Chen Zhixiu, Wang Ziyun, Pan Tianshoup and other artists. In 1940, some teachers of the National Art College entered the "Art Education Committee”. In terms of artistic creation, the main achievements of Yunnan Academy of Fine Arts during the War of Resistance Against Japan lie in the inheritance and development of creative techniques, cultural thoughts and other aspects of the works, realizing the benign interaction between artistic creation, learning and cultural thoughts. Among them, Lin Fengmian and Pan Tianshou are more prominent. Lin Fengmian insists on the development path of "combining Chinese and Western painting", while Pan Tianshou insists on the traditional teaching mode of Chinese painting in his creation and art teaching. The National College of Art has formed the "integration school represented by Lin Fengmian and the traditional school represented by Pan Tianshoup” (Liu Yuanxi, 2015), two styles with great differences but mutual development, which has become the most prominent feature of college art.

2.2 Mainstream art layer.

During the Anti-Japanese War, the mainstream art appeared in the field of mainstream culture, and the works of the mainstream art mainly showed the mainstream art thought in content. After the outbreak of the War of Resistance Against Japan, some people engaged in artistic creation began to organize their own teams during the War of Resistance Against Japan. These teams include not only some professionals engaged in art creation, but also some
scholars engaged in art education, thought and theoretical research. These intellectuals have injected new blood into mainstream art, developed artistic concepts, enhanced artistic aesthetics and created new values. In the field of culture, the "New Trend" people produced and influenced the art field during the Anti-Japanese War. For example, after the establishment of the National Association of Resisting the Enemy in the Wood Carving Field, many artists participated and created a series of mainstream art works, including Wang Xing and Zhang Xincong. According to Ms. Hongfan of Yunnan Art Institute, 567 comic works were collected in Yunnan Daily from 1935 to 1945 alone. Together with comic works in other newspapers, the number is more than 700 (Red sail Zeng Rujia, 2018). At that time, newspapers became an important front for artists to publish mainstream art. Among them, Yunnan Daily was the most prolific. Among them, the most representative artist Li Heng, as the art editor of Yunnan Daily, published 179 cartoons in Yunnan Daily, making an important contribution to the propaganda of the Anti-Japanese War in Yunnan.

Generally speaking, the mainstream art in Yunnan during the Anti-Japanese War took on a complex and profound look. On the one hand, there were painters who actively devoted themselves to national liberation and national salvation, and on the other hand, painters who actively thought about the future of the country and the destiny of the nation during the Anti-Japanese War and showed the spirit of the Anti-Japanese War. Both of them reflected the diversification of Yunnan mainstream art thought and art field.

2.3 Ethnic and folk art layer.

The formation and development of Yunnan national folk art is developed by the artists from the traditional national art and combined with the influence of foreign art. This kind of creation style not only inherits the traditional national language, but also has the characteristics of foreign art, which is unique. The subject of creation not only includes the artists who use the national and folk materials to create, but also includes the education of Yunnan nationality and folk in the academy of fine arts. Based on their own cultural identity, all classes of people show their unique perspective and national characteristics in artistic creation. In the process of accepting national and folk art, people place their consciousness, belief and emotion in the art works, thus producing unique and profound emotional resonance, which makes the art itself have strong internal spiritual force.

National folk art works have obvious characteristics in expression and style. On the one hand, all ethnic groups actively participate in it to express their inner feelings; on the other hand, ethnic and folk artists will also express their concern for current political and social phenomena, as well as the solutions to practical problems. From the point of view of artistic creation itself, all classes express themselves on the basis of criticizing the reality, and finally form a unique ethnic and folk art stratification.

3. Conclusion

During the Anti-Japanese War period, The differences and contradictions between various groups in terms of ideology, value orientation, hobbies, values, knowledge and skills are particularly prominent. On the one hand, it is manifested as the opposite of the will of the old artists and the old intellectual class, they are more deeply influenced by the influence of the state and cultural traditions, have more self-awareness, and are consistent with the mainstream will of the country in terms of artistic style and content expression, resulting in the emergence of official art and official academy art. On the other hand, due to the effects of the war, intellectuals also tried to save their country with their hands. Consequently, the social stratification of fine arts not only faced the dispute between old and new ideas and culture, but also was influenced by Yunnan's politics, economy and other aspects, it can be seen that Yunnan's art stratification is the result of its own construction and artistic development, the result of changes in social class and ideological and cultural environment, is the result of the collision between traditional painting and modern painting in Yunnan, and is the result of Yunnan's art stratification reflecting the differences between different classes in politics, economy, ideology and other aspects, precisely because of the influence of many factors. Yunnan's art shows its unique characteristics of diversified coexistence, differentiation and layered evolution.

References
