



On the Beauty of Qiang Stone Building Art from the Perspective of Traditional Aesthetics

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Abstract. Qiang people are named as “the people on the clouds”, has a long history, with the origin of the Qiang area, the evolution of the study from the “Qiang stone” and the beauty of the Qiang stone building art. Based on the traditional aesthetic perspective, this paper analyzes the relationship between Qiang stone and stone architecture from the perspective of artistic aesthetics, aiming to study Taoping Qiang Village and Muka Old Village with qualitative research as the research idea. The artistic characteristics of “Qiang stone” in Qiang stone architecture are re-examined. Through the traditional aesthetic perspective for a long time, this paper combs, reflects and summarizes again, and re-examines the emotional artistic expression of Qiang stone architecture. In order to expand the way to explore the beauty of Qiang stone architecture art.

Keywords: Traditional Aesthetic · Qiang People · Stone Building · Art

1 Introduction

The Qiang are known as the “people on the clouds”. Today’s Qiang are mainly distributed in the Aba Tibetan Qiang ethnic group in Sichuan Province Mao County, Li County, Wenchuan, Heishui, Songpan and Beichuan Qiang Autonomous County and Pingwu County of Mianyang City, to which the autonomous prefecture belongs. Some of them are scattered in Danba County of Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Shiquan County and Jiangkou County of Guizhou Province. Qiang people built. The building is divided into official villages, villages, watchtowers, residential houses and trestles, of which watchtowers and watchhouses are the most well-known to the world. The unique construction technology has been valued by experts and scholars in various academic circles. However, most researchers focus on the study of Qiang architectural forms, and there is relatively little research on Qiang architectural art. This study focuses on the aesthetics of Qiang architecture. This research can not only improve the framework of the aesthetic research of Qiang culture, promote the diversification and specialization of the research content of Qiang culture, but also make some modest contributions to the aesthetics of local ethnic minorities.

Stone, as a natural material, has been widely used in traditional architecture and landscape Settings in China since ancient times. It is an important part of traditional building materials in China because of its inherent characteristics and cultural attributes.

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The Qiang stone building, with its unique layout and exquisite construction skills, has been widely spread in the world. The Qiang people are also named “the people on the clouds”, and their architectural art has evolved over time. After in-depth study of the stone architecture art of Qiang People, we can not only see the practical beauty of stone blockhouse buildings, but also feel the ancient beauty of Qiang stone masonry buildings through field research. These stone masonry buildings with different styles show the beauty of the characteristics of traditional building materials with the artistic expression of “hard” and “clumsy”.

2 Interpretation of Qiang Nationality’s Stone Architecture from the Perspective of Traditional Aesthetics

2.1 The Artistic Beauty of Stone as a Natural Material

Stone is widely used, because of its good strength attributes and durability, so it is often used in stone building walls, foundation mesa and other fields. In addition to being often used in the building structure, stone is also widely used in the field of architecture and landscape decoration, such as fine stone carving art, “stone” landscape and other aspects.

Stone is also divided into natural stone, artificial stone two categories, natural stone refers to sedimentary rock, igneous rock and other stone; Artificial stone refers to terrazzo, condensed stone and other artificial stone with different color texture. Stone as a natural material, careful observation is to see the stone is a texture of beauty, some texture presents a sense of change; Some textures show the effect of ink painting; Some textures present rich colors. Because its texture comes from nature, so when people apply stone in the field of architecture, the buildings created are also integrated with nature, showing the beauty of nature.

2.2 The Development and Evolution of Qiang Stone Architecture

The ancient Qiang people were a famous nomadic tribe in Chinese history. It was during their continuous migration and communication and integration with different ethnic groups that their living style also evolved continuously, from dome tabernacle to rammed earth house to the present masonry house, which completed the evolution from nomadic civilization to agricultural civilization.

The representative of traditional Qiang dwellings are stone masonry buildings, also known as Qiang blockhouses, including Diaolou and blockhouse. Among them, Qionglong is the ancient name of Diaolou. Its in the “book of the later Han Dynasty · Southwest Yi biography” in the record “the people are in accordance with the mountains to stop, base stone for the room, high more than ten zhangs, Qiong cage”. The prototype of Diaolou originated from the “watchtower” in the Han and Shu Dynasties. The original function of the Diaolou was to defend against the enemy and store food and firewood. Due to the steep mountains in the Qiang region, the Qiang people adapted to local conditions by lining up stones and reinforcing them with yellow mud to build their own unique Diaolou. Diaofang refers to the residential buildings of the Qiang people, and it is also a concentrated embodiment of the stone buildings of the Qiang people. Some blockhouses are connected to Diaolou, while others use the same exterior wall, making the whole Qiang settlement harmonious and unified.

3 The Beauty of Qiang Stone from the Perspective of Traditional Chinese Aesthetics

3.1 The Beauty of Practicality

The most important function of Qiang stone masonry buildings is practical beauty. If Qiang stone masonry buildings lose their practicability, there may be no Qiang block-house, because Qiang stone masonry buildings put the practicability of functions in the first place. In addition, although Qiang stone buildings are similar in appearance, they will make corresponding adjustments according to their own environment. For example, in the layout of Taoping Qiang Village, the stone dwellings in the village are connected by rings; In Muka Old Village, due to the large elevation difference of the terrain, the overall stone dwellings continue to form a natural settlement texture from high to low. Meanwhile, in order to alleviate the problem of elevation difference, dwellings of different heights are connected through the form of crossing blocks. It is this form of stone building adapted to local conditions that makes the Qiang people's settlements adopt different forms of stone building according to the different natural environments of Qiang people's villages, which not only meets the practical beauty of residential buildings, but also forms the real national architectural art.

Qiang stone is another concentrated embodiment in Qiang stone architecture -- white stone. Qiang people's belief in many gods is also reflected in their residential buildings, which makes the practicality of Qiang architectural spirit also show in the practical beauty. When people walk around Muka Qiang Village, they can see white stones enshrined on the roof. These white stone elements reflect the spiritual and practical beauty of Qiang stone-built buildings.

3.2 The Beauty of Firmness

From the perspective of essential attributes, the Qiang stone building is much stronger than other traditional building materials. During the construction of Qiang dwellings, the foundation will be dug down deep within the red line of the building, generally the depth of the excavation is consistent with the height of the dwellings, and the stone to fill the foundation needs to be large and high hardness, and the middle needs to be filled with gravel and yellow mud. This makes the foundation of Qiang dwellings blend in with the surrounding mountains. On this basis, the Qiang stone building is constructed. The selected raw material is quartz stone cut from the mountain. Local Qiang craftsmen will slice and build the stone according to the construction needs. The shape of the entire Qiang stone building is wide at the bottom and narrow at the top, but from the inside, the whole interior space is vertical, which will make the whole building stronger and have a certain effect of earthquake resistance. In the process of construction, the external walls of dwellings are stacked with large stones, and each stone is embedded together. Then small stones are filled to make them connected, and yellow mud and wood wall reinforcement are added to make them stronger. The seemingly random laying of large Qiao without work stems from the profound study of the attributes of stone by Qiang craftsmen. In addition, another solid beauty comes from the Qiang people's window in the residence. From the outside of the residence, the area of the window is similar to that

of a book, but from the inside, the area is about four times larger than the outside, and its section is trapezoidal. The bucket window is generally located on the second floor and above, the number of the whole residential houses is also small, so it can not form the window wind, which also makes the residential buildings less affected by the wind, solid more solid. Because of its sturdiness, the stone building of the Qiang people enjoys enduring vitality, which also reflects its sturdiness and beauty.

3.3 Beauty of Nature

After interpreting the practicality and sturdiness of Qiang stone architecture, returning to the macro perspective, the whole texture of Qiang people is integrated with the natural rocks, which forms the good name of “Ancient Castle of the East”. Take the old village of Muka Qiang as an example. When you stand at the foot of Muka Qiang, you can appreciate the mysterious and spectacular culture of the Qiang people. You can see row upon row of Qiang blockhouses, rich layers of folk houses, and the rhythmic layers beating with the relief of the land. Walking into the village, you can see that the roads running through the village are all narrow paths. The stone roads correspond with the stone walls on both sides, giving people a strong and direct visual feeling.

In addition to the natural beauty of Qiang stone, it is also inseparable from the embellishment of wood and native plants. When people see the scene only stone, it will inevitably bring visual aesthetic fatigue. At this time, the mahogany doors and Windows in the residential buildings make the whole building appear particularly vivid. In addition, some residents with better conditions will have exquisite window patterns on the street, which will add the beauty of details to the overall environment. The whole fabric of the Qiang village is composed of the points of the residential buildings, the lines of the roads running through the whole village, the terrace and the surface of the open square. From a microscopic point of view, the stone building of Qiang nationality is composed of the white stone on the top of the building as the point, the view wall as the line, and the longitudinal surface of the Diaolou as the face. The Qiang people adapt their measures to local conditions and integrate with the ecology, presenting the natural beauty of Qiang stone.

4 Emotional Interpretation of Qiang Stone Building Art

4.1 The Feeling of Antiquity

From the perspective of emotional interpretation, the ancient and clumsy feelings of the Qiang people’s stone building art refer to a natural and simple way of life, which also contains two cultural connotations: the first one refers to the “ancient and simple”, describing the simplicity without any modification; The second refers to “elegant”, describing the need for decoration without excessive pompous skills, showing the beauty of simplicity and elements. It is an interpretation of Qiang culture to describe the stone building art of Qiang people with the feeling of antiquity. The earliest Qiang folk house art did not emphasize the artistic form as the focus of construction, but emphasized the role of daily life and defense. Nowadays, as an “intangible cultural heritage”, people begin to understand the stone building art of Qiang people from the perspective of

artistic aesthetics. As an artistic form with stone and wood as the main elements, the stone masonry architecture of the Qiang people has been endowed with certain cultural aesthetic connotation by combining practical and aesthetic art.

The natural color and rough shape of Qiang architecture, among which the Qiang blockhouse, as a defensive building, has protected generations of Qiang people. In this way, the beauty of Qiang stone architecture is pragmatic, and it is these historic national traditional buildings that record the wisdom of Qiang people and their yearning for a better life in the future. The original material, simple color, tall and dignified, simple and mysterious are all the characteristics of Qiang stone architecture art. Qiang is mostly located in Sichuan province, the unique geographical location conditions created Qiang areas unique scenery, the sky is blue, the air is fresh, tan Diaolou bleaching room bathed in the warm sun, combined with the surrounding mountains, residential towers on the roof of the white stone delicate with among them, make whole QiangZhai full of primitive simplicity is purely a mystery, It is a kind of “ancient and clumsy” plastic art that embodies the architectural art of Qiang people.

4.2 Lofty Feelings

Lofty affection means having the infinite body, spirit, strength, although Qiang stone architecture is made up of rock “stack” of terrace, but when standing at the foot of Diaolou looked up to see, can be found throughout the Diaolou size, and color, texture and ingenious fusion around one, like a natural growth out of the building from the earth. At the same time, it will also set off their own insignificance, so that people unconsciously generate a heart of awe. This kind of visual psychological conflict can be called sublimity. This kind of mind is generated because people compare and think about the Diaolou and themselves, and then they are amazed by the majestic artistic form of the Diaolou. The tall and solemn features of the Diaolou make people feel awe in their hearts. At the same time, the white stone enshrined on the top of the Diaofang buildings will also make people feel awe and distance, which will eventually evolve into a lofty heart. In the Qiang people’s settlements, Diaolou stands in small groups among the mountains, reaching into the sky. From layout form, the layout of the towers is the biggest towers as the center, to spread step by step, and the number of towers will not reduce with the increase of height, it is this swarms of combinations, and stone material properties inherent in the hale and hearty, plus white symbol of the Qiang people’s beliefs, the verve of integrate the picture with the sublime of cultural connotation.

The existence of the white stone has a long history and has been passed down to the present day. The white stone is a symbol of god in the hearts of the Qiang people. It is dotted on the top of the Diaolou chamber and radiates light under the sunshine. It also expresses the desire of the Qiang people for the essential power. The Qiang people place their hope in the Qiang stone building, which is the cultural interpretation of the lofty feelings of the Qiang stone building.

4.3 Rhythmic Feeling

After the emotional interpretation and analysis of the Qiang stone building art, it can be found that in addition to the ancient and noble feelings, from the perspective of dynamic

emotion, we can see the rhythmic feelings of the Qiang stone building art. When the word “rhythm” is mentioned, the music with rhythm and dynamic notes must be played into the music. When we observe the Qiang people’s settlement in a vertical space, we can see the scattered and orderly space combination among the stone buildings, which is full of rhythmic feeling. In the Qiang stone building, the appearance of each single building is like a trapezoidal pyramidal block, and the intersperses and combinations of wood structures can be seen on the second floor or above of the building, which breaks the single block combination form and increases the sense of detail level of the residential buildings. Looking at each building individually, we can see more of the beauty of detail and simplicity of Qiang architecture. When stone buildings are combined into Qiang settlements, the ups and downs of the vertical facades are very important. Diaolu plays the highest role in the ups and downs, often appearing in the center of the settlement. From a functional point of view, it plays the role of observing the whole settlement and guarding the whole village. The height of Diaolou is usually four storeys or below, which is in great contrast to Diaolou. The Diaolou is arranged and grouped around the Qiang Diaolou. The ground floor dwellings of some dwellings are at the lowest point of the whole village, and the canal at the entrance of the village may be at the lowest point. It is this combination of ups and downs of dwellings that presents a dynamic picture when looking at the whole Qiang village.

The crossing block is an indispensable element in the rhythm of the Qiang people’s residential buildings. It is interspersed with the blockhouses of high and low combinations. Soft wood is used to soften the hard stone buildings and add warmth to the stone buildings of Qiang nationality, which not only satisfies the continuity of the passage of each residential building, but also makes the dwellings undulatory and natural, and further makes the passage system of the whole Qiang nationality more smooth.” In order to strengthen order, it is usually to highlight the center. The center is as opposed to the periphery. Where there is a center there is a periphery, and the two go hand in hand. The center dominates the periphery, and the periphery, whether centripetal or centrifugal, produces the pull or tension of art, that is, forming a strong order, achieving a unified overall effect, attracting people’s eyes, and arousing psychological resonance.”^①In the Qiang stone building combination, this rhythm tension is very obvious, in the whole village layout and facade composition is a sense of rhythm, is the richness of this combination makes the space is very full, with row upon row of space rhythm.

5 Conclusion

Based on the analysis of “Qiang stone” art in the Qiang stone architecture, the evolution of the Qiang people from nomadic civilization to farming civilization, from the dome tabernacle to rammed earth house, until today’s stone building with based-stone as the room, conforms to today’s social needs and artistic aesthetics. With the wide range of stone construction, Qiang stone art also promotes the process of stone construction art, and also enriches the emotional expression and aesthetic cultural psychology of stone construction in the Qiang region. The artistic beauty of Qiang stone architecture not only comes from the beauty of practicality, firmness and nature, but also comes from the beauty of its own nation. It can also provide some beneficial enlightenment and ideas for

the development direction of Qiang stone architecture art. Under the Chinese traditional aesthetic, with “Qiang stone” as the theme of Qiang stonework interpretation of art and culture, its specific form like that of love, lofty affection, rhythm of love, so people can further understand the Qiang stone art in the emotion, make Qiang stonework artistic feature more clear, continuously carry forward its unique Qiang regional culture.

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